

**NORWICH  
AND  
DISTRICT  
TRADES COUNCIL**

**RULES  
AND  
STANDING ORDERS**

Reviewed and agreed February 2010

These rules and Standing Orders supersede all others

# **NORWICH AND DISTRICT TRADES UNION COUNCIL**

## **RULES AND CONSTITUTION**

### **1. NAME**

The name of the Council shall be "Norwich and District Trades Union Council". The Council shall be registered annually by the TUC.

### **2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of a TRADES UNION COUNCIL recognised by the Trades Union Congress (TUC) is to bring together union branches at a local level to campaign around issues affecting working people in their workplaces and local communities. The role of TRADES UNION COUNCILS as recognised by the Trades Union Congress (TUC) is to:

- a) Raise public awareness of rights at work and the union role in enforcing those rights.
- b) Promote organising and recruitment drives to build union membership.
- c) Promote equality in all their activities.
- d) Follow the programme of work agreed by the Conference and TUCJCC.
- e) Support union and community campaigns for dignity and respect in the workplace and beyond.
- f) Promote the interests of all of its affiliated organisations and to secure united action on all questions affecting or likely to affect those interests.
- g) Improve generally the economic and social conditions of working people in the local area.
- h) Campaign in support of local or regional industrial action officially authorised by the union or unions concerned.

### **3. CONSTITUTION**

The Council shall only consist of representatives of Trade Unions or branches of Trade Unions affiliated to TUC whose places of meeting are within the area covered by the Council or who have members working in or living in the area. The application (on or as soon as possible after 1st January in each year on the approved form) of any organisation desiring to affiliate shall be submitted to the full Council for its approval or otherwise.

Workplace affiliations of groupings of TUC affiliated members are permitted as well as Branches if not represented in other ways. In such cases those groupings will be described as '(Union) (Workplace) Group'.

#### 4. REPRESENTATION

(i) Organisations affiliated to the Council shall be allowed representation on the following basis:-

For 50 affiliated members or under - 1 delegate  
For between 51 and 100 members - 2 delegates

Plus 1 delegate for each additional 100 members or part thereof, with a maximum of 10 delegates from any one organisation. Delegates must be bona fide members or permanent paid officials of organisations appointing them. No person shall act as delegate for more than one organisation.

(ii) Should any delegate be absent from the Council, three meetings in succession, the Secretary shall notify their branch of the fact.

Secretaries of affiliating organisations shall inform the Secretary of matters on the approved application form (especially numbers of Branch members and delegates in Norwich and District). A whole or part of a Branch membership may be affiliated.

Branches who wish to affiliate & receive information but are unable (for the time being) to elect delegates may affiliate such proportion of their membership as they may think fit and shall be entitled to receive one copy of the Council papers until such time as delegates are informed to the Secretary. The Secretary of such Branches shall be deemed to be that Branch's delegate until the Secretary is informed otherwise. The aim of the Council should be the affiliation of all TUC affiliated Trade Unions in the area of the Council.

#### 5. CONTRIBUTIONS

Each affiliated organisation shall contribute an affiliation fee of such an amount as shall be determined by the October Trades Council meeting each year.

#### 6. COMPOSITION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- (a) The Executive Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Council and shall be composed of all the officers and 4 elected members. The Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt temporarily non voting members for specific functions as necessary.
- (b) In the event of the resignation or death of any member of the Executive, branches shall be circulated for nominations.

#### 7. NOMINATION OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

All nominated candidates must be delegates to the Council, and nominations for the Executive and Officers shall be invited during November and received not later than 5 weeks before the Annual Meeting.

## 8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Officers and Executive Committee shall be elected by secret ballot vote at the Annual Meeting of the Council. Each nominee may submit an election address not exceeding 100 words, which shall be circulated to delegates.

Casual vacancies may be filled at any Council meeting after due advertisement of vacancies.

## 9. MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee shall conduct the detailed business and report to meetings of the Council.

Any member of the Executive Committee being absent at three Executive Committee meetings shall, unless a satisfactory reason for such absence has been sent to the Secretary, be deemed to have vacated office, and the vacancy shall be filled by the Council. Executive meetings shall be held prior to Council meetings.

A special meeting of the Executive Committee may be called in the event of urgent business arising as and when deemed necessary by the President and the Secretary or on written request to the Secretary by any three members of the Executive Committee.

## 10. SUB-COMMITTEES

The Council may establish Sub Committees to deal with special aspects of Trades Council work, but such sub committees must obtain approval of all actions taken in the name of the Trades Council, and must report regularly to the Council.

The Council may appoint delegates to represent it on other bodies, or at special events, but such delegates must report to the Council.

## 11. COUNCIL MEETINGS

(a) The Annual meeting of the Council shall take place in February each year.

The ordinary General meetings of the Council shall take place on the fourth Wednesday in each month. (No meetings will be held in the months of August and December.)

Each delegate shall receive from the Secretary not less than 5 days' clear notice of the business to be transacted at meetings.

(b) A Special meeting may be called at any time by the Executive Committee, or in the case of urgency, by the President and the Secretary, or upon a written request from three affiliated Trade Union branches. In the latter case, the object of the meeting must be clearly stated upon the requisition.

Only those matters detailed in the notice convening the Special meeting may be discussed at the meeting.

Five days' clear notice shall be given for these special meetings.

Rule changes may only be made in accordance with Rule 20.

12. VOTING AT MEETINGS AND ENTITLEMENT TO STAND AS OFFICERS/DELEGATES

(i) Trades Council/Executive meetings.

Only delegates of those Branches which have affiliated for the current year (or have undertaken to in writing within 6 months) shall be permitted to vote at meetings of the Council/Executive and/or to stand as Officers or delegates

(ii) Annual General Meetings and Special Meetings.

Only delegates of those Branches which have affiliated for the current year (or have undertaken to in writing within six months) shall be permitted to vote stand as Officers or delegates. Due account shall be taken of different AGM timings of different Unions for this purpose. Waivers of this Rule may be granted by the Council in exceptional cases.

(iii) No Officer Executive Committee member or delegate shall be entitled to more than one vote.

13. OBSERVERS AND GUESTS

ALL Council meetings shall be open to observers and guests provided those persons

(i) are current paid up members of a TUC affiliated Trade Union and can produce evidence of such OR

(ii) have been invited to Trades Council; OR

(iii) are members of a recognised Students Union or Claimants Union.

Observers/guests have no right to vote but may (with the approval of the Council) be given speaking rights on request.

14. OFFICERS

(a) The Officers of the Council shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Publicity Officer, Equal Opportunities Officer and Education Officer. They shall be entitled to such honorarium as may be decided upon by the Council upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

(b) The duties of the Officers shall be as laid down in the job descriptions (see Annexes A to H) which shall be deemed to be part of these rules.

(c) A person may hold more than one office only if:

(i) no other person is willing to perform the duties in question; or

(ii) the Council deems it convenient that particular Officer(s) hold more than one post. Vacant posts will continue to be advertised until filled by separate individuals. Dual posts can only be held:

(i) until post is filled; or

(ii) if Council deems it convenient for present situation to continue; or

(iii) in an emergency.

- (d) At meetings where the President is not in attendance, the Vice President shall preside; in the absence of both, the meeting shall elect one of the members present to preside.
- (e) Any Officer who fails to perform the functions assigned in accordance with job descriptions shall be reported to the Executive Committee who shall make appropriate recommendations to the Council including removal from office. Before any such action the Officer concerned shall be given reasonable notice of any meetings that will discuss the matter and shall have the right to attend to present their case.
- (f) The President, Secretary and Treasurer shall have Executive functions to decide on urgent action needed between meetings of Council and Executive. 'Emergency matters' are defined as those matters needing attention before a scheduled meeting of the Council or Executive.
- (g) All Officers shall seek to implement the policies of the Council, shall comply with all Rules and Standing Orders, seek to encourage unity and co-operation and shall preserve confidentiality of all sensitive information unless otherwise instructed by the Council.
- (h) Upon retirement from office Officers shall hand over to their successors or to the Executive Committee all books, cash, keys, papers and other property of the Council.

## 15. AUDITORS

The Council at its Annual Meeting shall appoint two Auditors, whose duty it shall be to audit all accounts and subsidiary papers and the Annual Financial Statement, certify as to their correctness or otherwise, and report upon their findings at the Annual Meetings of the Council.

They shall not be members of the Executive Council.

They should also demand an account of the property of the Council for the time being and ensure there is a statement to this effect in the Annual Report.

## 16. HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Honorary Life Membership shall be awarded to those persons whom the Council recognise as having given long and valuable service to the Trade Union Movement. Persons in receipt of Honorary Life Membership may participate in debates at Council meetings but may not vote.

## 17. DEPUTATIONS

Any delegate who is appointed to attend any conference or transact any business on behalf of the Council, shall be allowed out of pocket expenses, which must not exceed the actual standard class railway fare and allowance for hotel expenses and remunerative time, when they are called to stay overnight or otherwise a fee to cover incidental expenses during the day.

The payments aforesaid are dependant upon the Secretary receiving appropriate receipts and a written report of the meeting in question.

## 18. POLITICAL PARTIES

In no circumstances shall this council co-operate with or subscribe to: the funds of fascist parties or any subsidiary organisation of these parties; any organisations whose policies or activities are contrary to those of the Trades Union Congress; or any industrial organisation which has been proscribed by the General Council. Nor shall the council subscribe to the funds of any political party. The council may co-operate with the local Labour Party, providing that no part of the funds of the council derived from the general funds of affiliated trade unions shall be applied directly or indirectly in the furtherance of the political objects specified in Section 72 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.”

## 19. DISRUPTIVE DELEGATES

The Council has the right to refuse to issue credentials to, or to withdraw credentials from a delegate who has disrupted the work of the Trades Council.

## 20. ALTERATION TO RULES

No alteration or suspension of rules shall take place except as decided at the Annual Meeting or a specially convened Special General Meeting, and then only if two thirds of the delegates present and voting vote in favour of the proposed alteration.

Two months' written notice shall be given to the Secretary of any proposed alteration or suspension of rule which it is desired shall be discussed at the Annual Meeting or Special General Meeting.

END OF RULES

## **NORWICH AND DISTRICT TRADES UNION COUNCIL**

### **STANDING ORDERS**

#### **1. AGENDA**

Business shall be taken in the following order:

1. President's remarks
2. Apologies for absence.
3. Minutes of previous meetings.
4. Matters arising
5. Guest Speaker(s)
6. Executive Committee Report.
7. Workplace and Branch reports.
8. Secretary's Report.
9. Financial report
10. Sub Committee and other reports not dealt with under 7.
11. Motions of which notice has been given.
12. Any other business of which notice has been given to the President by the beginning of the meeting.

#### **2 QUORUM FOR MEETINGS**

- (i) The quorum for meetings of the Council shall be 7 of the delegates notified for the time being to the Secretary.
- (ii) The quorum for meetings of the Executive Committee shall be five members (which may include Officers).
- (iii) If within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting to commence, a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be postponed.

#### **3 MINUTES**

- (i) The minutes of the previous Council meeting and Executive Committee Report shall (subject to funds) be circulated to Branch Secretaries and delegates with the agenda.
- (ii) No motion or discussion shall be allowed on the minutes except in regard to their accuracy. After the confirmation of the minutes they shall be signed by the President, and the delegates shall then be at liberty to ask any questions in regard to matters arising out of them. Such questions shall be allowed for purposes of information and/or clarification only, and no debate on the policy outlined in the minutes shall take place. New items connected with that policy may be introduced for discussion however.
- (iii) The Executive Committee Report shall be in a form approved by Council.

#### 4. ADMISSION TO MEETINGS

- (i) Admission to meetings of the Council shall be by:
  - (a) current delegates credentials card; or
  - (b) on proof of identity and entry in the Attendance Register; or
  - (c) by letter of authorisation from the Secretary in relation to all other persons.
- (ii) Observers and guests shall sit in a separate designated part of the room to differentiate them from voting members.

#### 5. NOTICES OF MOTION

Notices of motion shall be sent by affiliated branches to the Secretary in writing not less than 7 days before the Council at which they are to be discussed. Such motions shall be placed on the Agenda in the order in which they are received by the Secretary.

#### 6. SPEAKING RIGHTS

- (i) The mover of an original motion, but not an amendment, shall have the right to reply but no other delegate shall be allowed to speak more than once on the same question unless permission be given to explain, or on a point of order addressed to the President, when remarks must be strictly confined to the explanation or point of order.
- (ii) Five minutes shall be allowed to the mover of a motion, and three minutes for each succeeding speaker. The mover shall have five minutes to reply to the discussion, but they shall introduce no new matter into their reply. The motion shall be put immediately the mover has replied. The time limits for speakers shall not apply in a special address to the Council.
- (iii) All speakers shall be taken in the order determined by the President and before speaking shall state their name and trade union branch.

#### 7. MOTIONS/AMENDMENTS

- (i) If an amendment be carried it shall displace the motion and itself become the substantive motion, whereupon any amendment may be moved thereto.
- (ii) After all amendments have been considered voting will take place on the substantive motion.
- (iii) The President may demand that all motions and amendments should be handed to them in writing.
- (iv) No amendment shall be taken (nor debate allowed) on an amendment unless and until it has been seconded immediately.

## 8. SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT AMENDMENTS

When an amendment is made to an original motion, no second amendment shall be discussed until the first amendment is disposed of.

## 9. ENDING DEBATE

When the delegates consider a question has been sufficiently discussed the motion may be proposed "that the question now be put", but it cannot be proposed or seconded by any delegate who has taken part in the discussion. If this proposition is carried the President shall give the mover of the original motion the opportunity to reply, after which the motion under discussion shall be immediately put to the vote.

## 10. POINTS OF ORDER

- (i) The President shall rule on any points of order raised.
- (ii) If the President's ruling is challenged and duly seconded the President shall temporarily vacate the chair and hand over to the Secretary.
- (iii) The matter must immediately be put to the vote by a show of hands in the following form. "All those in favour of the President's ruling" and "all those against".
- (iv) If the challenge is supported by two thirds of the delegates present and voting the President must then accept that decision and conform to it in his ruling.

## 11. VOTING

- (i) All voting (except contested elections which shall be by secret ballot) shall be by show of hands except where a ballot vote is specified in General Rules or by the Council (or by Executive in Executive meetings).
- (ii) A ballot may be demanded by at least 10% of those present rising in their place after a show of hands vote.
- (iii) Where deemed necessary by the President two scrutineers or tellers shall be elected by the meeting.
- (iv) The President may vote on any issue as an ordinary member. If, having done so, the voting is level, The president may if they wish, exercise an additional casting vote to decide the issue OR may declare the matter not passed.

## 12. RESCINDING OF RESOLUTIONS

No resolution passed by the Council shall be rescinded or amended at the same meeting at which it is passed. Notice of its rescindment or amendment must be given as provided for by Standing Order No. 5 but the resolution shall not be rescinded or amended unless by

the consent of two thirds of the delegates present and voting.

### 13. ADDRESSING MEETINGS

Any delegate wishing to address the Council should rise in their place and address the President, stating their name and Union, and when any delegate is called to order they shall resume their seat until the point is decided.

### 14. INTERRUPTION

If any delegate interrupts another whilst addressing the Council, or uses abusive, profane or racist or sexist language, or causes disturbance at any of the meetings, and refuses to obey the President when called to order they shall be named by the President. They shall thereupon be expelled from the room and shall not be allowed to enter again until an apology satisfactory to the meeting be given.

### 15. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

- (a) Any delegate wishing to suspend any Standing Order must state the number of the Standing Order, the purpose for which the suspension is sought and the length of time such suspension shall last. The motion being seconded shall be forthwith put to the meeting without debate or amendment and if two thirds of the delegates present and voting vote in favour thereof, but not otherwise, the suspension moved shall immediately take effect.
- (b) Suspension of Standing Orders for other items of business is also permissible provided that in ALL cases the extension of time shall NOT exceed 20 minutes. No suspension shall take place except by a two thirds majority vote of the members present.

NB. The Rules cannot be suspended under this provision(see Rule 20 for Rules suspension procedure).

### 16. COMMENCEMENT AND ENDING UP MEETINGS

Meetings shall commence at 7.30 pm and shall end at 10.00 pm.

### 17. TIMING OF MOTIONS/SPEAKERS

In order to ensure that Motions are dealt with, motions shall be heard before 9.00 pm.

### 18. MATTERS NOT REACHED

All matters on the agenda not reached at the conclusion of the meeting shall be referred to the Executive Committee, or next full Trades Council as appropriate.

### 19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Any other business shall be any matter which has arisen since the publication of the agenda

of that meeting, but prior notification must be given to the President before the commencement of the meeting.

20. EMERGENCY MOTIONS

The subject matter must be such as has arisen since the publication of the agenda of that meeting, and the President shall rule on whether or not it is an emergency at the commencement of the meeting.

21. AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders may be amended in the same way as provided for by Rule 20. Temporary suspension of Standing Orders is covered by Standing Order 16 and not by Rule 20.

**END OF STANDING ORDERS**

## **ANNEXES A to H: JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

### **PRESIDENT**

The President shall :-

- (1) so far as is reasonably practicable, attend at and preside at all meetings of the Council, Executive & Committees;
- (2) Familiarise themselves with all Rules, Standing Orders & general practice regarding meetings
- (3) Ensure that the business at meetings and of the Council generally is conducted in a proper manner according to Rules & Standing Orders & general practice;
- (4) Preserve order and unity at meetings;
- (5) Preserve impartiality by allowing all views an equal airing;
- (6) Not Intervene in debates whilst chairing the meeting, without prejudice to the President's right to leave the Chair to speak as an ordinary delegate
- (7) Start meetings on time and keep to the agreed agenda
- (8) Give a short Presidential address to each Council & Executive meeting and to May Day rallies and other appropriate gatherings ;
- (9) Welcome and entertain Council visitors and introduce them properly to the Council
- (10) Have Executive functions as defined by the Rules
- (11) Ensure they are adequately prepared on all agenda items;
- (12) Jointly with other Officers represent the Council at various social & other occasions which the Council is invited to.

### **VICE PRESIDENT**

The Vice President shall:-

- (1) exercise any of the functions of the PRESIDENT during temporary or permanent absences of the President.
- (2) Familiarise themselves with all matters the President is expected to be familiar with in preparation for such deputising as may arise.
- ( 3 ) Propose a vote of thanks regarding any speaker to the Council.

## SECRETARY

The Secretary shall:-

- (1) So far as reasonably practicable, attend all meetings of the Council, Executive Committee and sub committees,
- (2) If absent from meetings brief appropriate & available Trades Council Officers on all relevant matters;
- (3) Receive all monies due to the Council, and shall pay these to the Treasurer without delay
- (4) Draft the Annual Report
- (5) Encourage and record affiliations of TUC affiliated Trade Unions,
- (6) Maintain a mailing list of Branch Secretaries and delegates for the current year;
- (7) Compile agendas for all Council & Executive Committee meetings
- (8) Arrange for all materials for Trades Council to be produced;
- (9) Organise the distribution of all necessary papers to all delegates & Branch Secretaries of affiliated Branches (& such others as Council may decide);
- (10) Receive and deal with all Council correspondence according to Councils directions
- (11) Maintain records & files of Trades Council and record attendances of delegates at Council and Executive Committee meetings;
- (12) Have custody of appropriate Council property and give it up to successors in office or to Executive Committee in the event of vacation of office,
- (13) Co-ordinate the administrative work of all Officers of Trades Council;
- (14) Notify Branch Secretaries of the attendance of their delegates annually;
- (15) Have Executive functions as defined by the Rules;
- (16) Jointly with other Officers represent the Council at various social and other occasions to which the Council may be invited

## TREASURER

The Treasurer shall:

- (1) keep account of all sums of money received from the Secretary or elsewhere,
- (2) bank such monies as soon as possible in the name of the Council in an account approved by Council,
- (3) make such payments as may from time to time be authorised by the Council or the Executive Committee, and when necessary sign for authorised payments & keep receipts
- (4) keep a copy of affiliations received by the Secretary & forward to the Secretary receipts for sending to Branches,
- (5) send invoices and reminders to Branches who have not paid affiliation fees
- (6) Deal with all claims for expenses, send donations & affiliation fees as directed by the Council as quickly as possible,
- (7) Provide a monthly detailed report to the Executive Committee and the Council;
- (8) Prepare an annual budget estimate in December for inclusion in the Annual Report;
- (9) Ensure that arrangements are made for the paying, collecting and banking of money at fund raising events;
- (10) Ensure that all books and accounts of Trades Council shall be kept in Norwich and District and that duplicates of those records are sent quarterly to the Auditors who shall maintain these records,
- (11) In the case of temporary or permanent absence, the Treasurer shall give all books and records into the joint custody of the President and Secretary or a temporary Treasurer elected by the Council,
- (12) Produce all books, records, receipts etc if required for audit at any time;
- (13) submit a financial report whenever requested by the Council or Executive Committee;
- (14) Prepare an annual statement of accounts for inclusion in the Annual Report to the AGM;
- (15) Have Executive functions as defined by the Rules

## ASSISTANT SECRETARY

The Assistant Secretary shall:

- (1) Deputise for the Secretary during their absence,
- (2) Attend all meetings of the Council, Executive Committee and other meetings, so far as is reasonably practicable,
- (3) Record the minutes of Council, Executive Committee & other meetings and sub committees,
- (4) produce minutes as soon after meetings as possible, where possible using any Trades Council computer by arrangement with the Secretary;
- (5) Liaise closely with the Secretary on all matters.

## EDUCATION OFFICER

The Education Officer shall:

- (1) Project a good image of Trade unionism
- (2) Liaise closely with the Trade Union Education Course Tutor at Norwich City College and with the TUC Regional Education Officer to provide workshops etc for Schools, Colleges, Industry etc and shall actively seek to have an influence in all these places within our area using trained personnel;
- (3) obtain or produce education & exhibition materials supportive of a trade union viewpoint for use in schools, Colleges and Industry, where necessary;
- (4) organise any educational programme that Council may approve;
- (5) organise such annual competitions for Schools as may be decided by the Council;
- (6) seek to use May Day/Trade Union Week as a vehicle to involve schools, College, Industry, Unions etc in Trade Union educational activities;

## PUBLICITY OFFICER

The Publicity Officer shall:

- (1) Produce Press Reports where appropriate;
- (2) Produce publicity material for the Council to assist affiliations and to enhance Council's image generally,
- (3) ensure the production of all posters, leaflets, programmes brochures for Trades Council events,
- (4) To arrange production of campaigning materials in accordance with Council's wishes
- (5) Produce a periodic newsheet for circulation as wide as possible within our budgetary limits
- (6) Co-ordinate and help produce all exhibition material for use at Council events (eg May Day/Trade Union week),
- (7) Advise on presentation and design of other Trades Council, publications
- (8) Provide the media with Trades Council spokespersons as appropriate

## EQUALITIES OFFICER

The Equalities Officer has responsibility for coordinating Trades Council's work on equality issues.

The Equalities Officer can perform this role in a number of ways:

- (a) consulting branches about equality issues which affect their members;
- (b) obtaining, receiving and distributing to all relevant branches and Trades Council Officers correspondence and/or information;
- (c) advising the Executive Committee on how to promote equality within Trades Council;
- (d) advising affiliated branches on issues involving equality /discrimination;
- (e) making contact with organisations that specialise in equality matters;
- (f) liaison with the education officer and publicity officer concerning education and publicity on equality issues.

**END OF JOB DESCRIPTIONS**