

No: 500/19

20th August 2019

TO: ALL BRANCHES

Dear Colleague

NEW DEAL FOR WORKERS CAMPAIGN

The purpose of this LTB is to update branches and representatives on progress with our New Deal for Workers Campaign and set out our next steps as we move towards the Trades Union Congress in September.

As branches will be aware this campaign is a key strategy for the CWU and our union is leading a debate across the movement on how unions must act together to fundamentally shift the balance of forces in the world of work, reassert trade union values in society and deliver a bold new deal for workers.

The campaign is also designed to be relevant to our own members' work place issues, in particular the growing pressure on frontline workers through the use of technology and low-cost employment models that constantly threaten CWU members' terms and conditions. We see examples of this in all the companies where the union is recognized. In Royal Mail Group and BT for instance, both employers are currently acting out strategies to break up their businesses; to maximise profits and executive pay; and to exploit the insecure forms of employment that have become the foundation of the UK economy.

In taking the New Deal campaign forward it is very important that all of us in the CWU recognise the connection between what is happening in our own industries, the wider world of work and how this is being shaped by the economic and political forces that stand in our way.

What's becoming increasingly clear is that we cannot represent our members to the best of our ability without linking our own industrial strategies with those of the wider trade union and labour movement.

The approach that CWU has taken is to constantly push this issue within the TUC and its affiliated unions and to make the case that the real fight for workers' rights will not be defined by Brexit but instead will be determined by our ability to make what's happening in the world of work the defining political issue of our time.

To remind branches, our approach to date has been focused around the need for all trade unions to rally around the following key points:

1. The need for unions to agree a common bargaining agenda across sectors of the economy to tackle insecure and low paid employment models.

The CWU has been working hard to shift the focus of the TUC on this point and progress has been made on this both at the TUC and through the Labour Party and the CWU is also working closely with Laura Pidcock (Shadow Employment Minister) and the Institute of Employment Rights. A new comprehensive TUC paper on Sectoral Collective Bargaining will feature at this year's Trade Union Congress.

2. The need for greater co-operation (not internal competition) across the movement to agree a modern Bridlington style agreement that can pave the way to significantly increase union density across the UK.
3. A Manifesto setting out what constitutes a New Deal for Workers. A TUC Executive paper which is attached to this LTB (Appendix A) has been worked up by all unions to be published in August as a New Deal Charter. This needs to be strengthened, but we should not underestimate the fact that all unions are now moving to the position of agreeing an overall Manifesto for workers and this will feature at September's Trade Union Congress.
4. A day of action to build the campaign. This is also getting traction within the TUC, although it will not go as far as we want without unions like ourselves pushing forward on this independently. At Congress this year, we will be calling for a day of action to take place on 1st May 2020 and we are starting to work towards this with other unions now.

TUC 2019

The Union is determined to raise the profile of the Campaign at this year's Congress and we have submitted two motions setting out a clear plan with concrete measures to achieve this. The first motion sets out more ambitious demands for the new deal including: a four-day week by 2025; maximum pay ratios to start tackling inequality; a lower retirement age; worker ownership funds to transfer a stake in businesses to frontline workers; and controls over the use of technology at work. The second motion directs the whole movement on what must now be done to campaign for a New Deal, including a day of action in May 2020. A copy of these motions are attached (Appendix B) and they are being seconded by USDAW and by Unite and the GMB respectively.

Next Steps

In addition to our TUC motions, the NEC has agreed that we must build the campaign through the following:

- We will be publishing a pamphlet on the New Deal just before TUC Congress.
- We are building a narrative on the campaign which we believe will make it relevant to our members and all UK workers. As part of this we will look to develop and strengthen the demands in the TUC Charter.

- We are developing a New Deal website with the ability to host a survey for all workers in support of the campaign.
- We will develop the range of actions that unions can choose from on the day, including innovative ways of engaging workers who do not yet belong to trade unions.
- We will commence discussions with the Postal and T&FS Constituencies to bring forward ideas on how we can make the campaign more relevant to our own industrial priorities and consider what actions the CWU could take, once a movement-wide day of action has been agreed.
- We will utilise the new regional structures to widen the campaign and build networks across the UK with other unions, community groups and TUC and Labour Party Regional structures.

Summary

The CWU is clear that to support our own members and the priorities within our own industries and to shift the balance of forces in the wider world of work, unions must now operate in a more collaborative way and the campaign on a new deal for all workers is the focal point to achieve this.

In the coming weeks and months, we will explain the campaign in more detail to strengthen understanding of what we are trying to achieve within our own union and we will also continue to lead and influence this debate across the whole movement. In the meantime, we will ask that Branches share the content of this LTB with all representatives and debate it at your next Committee meeting.

Any enquiries on the above LTB should be addressed to gsoffice@cwu.org

Yours sincerely

Dave Ward.

Dave Ward
General Secretary



Appendix A - New Deal Charter.docx



Appendix B - CWU Motions.docx