

No: 426/20

21<sup>st</sup> August 2020

**TO: ALL BRANCHES**

Dear Colleague

## **CWU ONLINE FESTIVAL/ENGAGEMENT EVENT – 28<sup>TH</sup>, 29<sup>TH</sup> AND 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020**

The lockdown and ongoing Covid restrictions have presented the CWU with major challenges in both the day-to-day and strategic operation of the union. However, despite this, the Union and all our Representatives can be proud of the way of the way we have maintained the focus of the union on all aspects of our work during these very difficult times.

One positive to come out of this period has been the increased use of video platforms by all Unions to hold meetings and engage workers across the movement and once again the CWU has been at the forefront of utilising this technology in the most effective way.

Although the CWU will always prioritise face to face meetings, we must also recognise that some form of Covid restrictions will continue to apply for a considerable time and therefore it's crucial that we continue to look at new and innovative ways of building engagement at all levels.

With this in mind and given the understandable absence of any Conference or Branch gathering in recent months, the purpose of this LTB is to advise branches that the NEC has agreed to hold a 3-day online (via Zoom) CWU Engagement Festival/event, on the 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020. This will enable us to bring all CWU Branches together and provide the platform for important debates and discussions across the whole union.

The event will be themed around how we build representation, the strength of the union and indeed the whole movement, in a post Covid environment. The event will enable Branches, Representatives and activists to discuss and debate the key issues that have surfaced as a result of Covid and that are bound to have a major impact on our industries, the wider world of work, the economy and the very nature of politics in the UK and internationally.

We will work with Branches to maximise participation in the event and encourage all participants to come forward with their own ideas on our future and the future of trade unionism. We want to make it clear that this is an informal event and it is not designed to replicate or substitute for a Conference, Policy Forum or a standard National Briefing, rather it will be structured to provide high quality and informative sessions with the opportunity for meaningful and constructive engagement with Branches. We are working with Chris Webb and our Communications Team to ensure the event will be highly interactive and innovative.

Further details on the structure of the event are as follows:-

- The event will be held over 3 days on the 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> September.
- The event will be structured around 9 separate sessions (3 per day), with appropriate breaks in-between.
- Branches will be invited to register for the event (details to follow) and will be able to select, pick and choose different representatives to participate in the various sessions. There will be no limit on attendees for any Branch or session and we will work with our Branches to maximise their attendees, ensuring new reps/activists are encouraged to take part and that overall participation reflects the gender, ethnicity and diversity of the union.
- The programme for the event will cover important and contemporary topics linked to the Covid theme. The provisional programme is set out at Appendix A (this is subject to change).
- Although the event covers general union topics, we are scheduling 2 industrial roundtables providing the opportunity for the DGS (P) & DGS (T) to give an update on current industrial issues. These roundtables will be held at the same time with Branches being allocated to their respective industrial constituency.
- We will be inviting high profile speakers to participate and these will be announced in due course.

To summarise, the NEC believe this is the right moment to take our online engagement activity to another level. In the coming weeks we will be developing the programme and further information will be sent out in due course, including details on registration, more information on the programme, alongside any appropriate documentation that will facilitate discussion and debate.

Any general queries should be addressed to [jdunn@cwu.org](mailto:jdunn@cwu.org).

Yours sincerely



Dave Ward  
**General Secretary**

## **APPENDIX A**

### **CWU ONLINE FESTIVAL/ENGAGEMENT EVENT – 28<sup>TH</sup>, 29<sup>TH</sup> AND 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020 – PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME**

**(THIS PROGRAMME IS BEING DEVELOPED FURTHER AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE, INCLUDING TIMINGS. FURTHER INFORMATION WILL BE SENT OUT IN DUE COURSE)**

#### **DAY ONE - 28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

10:00-12:00 – Opening of the event, post Covid challenges and direction of the CWU – Karen Rose President and General Secretary

12:00-12:30 – Lunch

12:30-14:30 – The Future World of Work and New Deal for Workers – General Secretary and Andrew Towers (GS Team)

14:30-16:30 – Industrial Roundtable – DGS (P) and DGS (T) (separate breakout rooms)

#### **DAY TWO - 29<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

10:00-12:00 – Unions after Covid-19 – Including new CWU App and New Opportunities to grow – General Secretary, Ray Ellis, Amie Retallick (Comms Team)

12:00-12:30 – Lunch

12:30-14:30 – CWU Political Engagement – General Secretary and Liam Young (GS Team)

14:30-16:30 – CWU Against Racism – Kate Hudson/Team

#### **DAY THREE - 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

10:00-12:00 – Climate Change/Green New Deal, Safe Working Environment – Tony Kearns and Dave Joyce

12:00-12:30 – Lunch

12:30-14:30 – Future CWU Communications strategy - Chris Webb

14:30-16:00 – Summary of event and next steps – General Secretary and Karen Rose President