

No. 084/21

1st March 2021

Dear Colleague,

TAKING PROPORTIONALITY FORWARD – GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE CWU VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

Branches will be aware that LTB 034/21 dated 1st February 2021 contained information in relation to the deferment of the NEC elections scheduled for April 2021 to allow for a Special Virtual Rules Revision Conference to take place to debate and vote on proposed changes to the structure and composition of the NEC as part of the CWU “Taking Proportionality Forward” agenda.

The Special Virtual Conference is being convened to deal with rule amendments to CWU rule 8.1.3 and the NEC has now agreed the arrangements for the Special Conference which are contained below.

Further discussions are currently taking place with the Standing Orders Committee following which a further LTB will be published containing the relevant dates and arrangements for the submission of rule amendments.

The information published below is being provided to branches to set out the decisions taken by the NEC on the guiding principles that will govern the organising and administration of the Special Conference and the rationale for making these.

NEC Decision/Authority in these Matters

Prior to the NEC taking the decision to convene the Special Conference the CWU sought the views of our legal representatives on this issue and they have advised that rule 15.4.2 provides the NEC with the necessary authority/power to interpret the rules of the union and decide upon any issues in respect of which the rules are silent which of course they are in regards to the organising of a CWU decision making Conference during a pandemic.

Rules Governing CWU Conferences

Against the background of the ongoing pandemic the NEC have agreed that all relevant CWU rules that would normally govern the organising and specific arrangements for a Conference are suspended with immediate effect. For ease of reference these are CWU national rule 10, 15.1, 15.2 and 15.3.

Date of Conference/Timeline

The Virtual/Online Special Rules Conference on NEC Proportionality will be held on Saturday 24th April 2021. Further discussions are due to be held with the SOC on the agenda and timeline for the Conference i.e. dates for submission and publication of rule amendments, etc. which once finalised will be published to branches.

Virtual Conference Arrangements

The Special Rules conference will be a decision making conference convened to debate rule amendments submitted by the NEC, Regions and Branches and these will be limited to CWU rule 8.1.3 only.

Special Rules Conference Delegation

3 delegates per branch will be entitled to attend the Virtual Special Rules Conference.

All Regional Secretaries and Business based Field Officials can also attend in an ex-officio capacity. They may participate in discussion at the specific request of their respective parent Committee or of a branch within that committee but shall not vote.

Voting

All rule amendments submitted will be decided upon by the taking of an electronic card vote.

When a card vote is taken it will be based on the Branch Membership count excluding retired members.

A proposition shall be treated as carried if it receives an overall majority and a majority in each of the Postal and TFS Constituencies.

Branches will only be able to vote once on amendments. The specific details on how the voting system will operate will be sent to Branches in advance of the conference.

Entitlement to Submit Amendments

Branches and Regional Committees shall be entitled to submit up to 1 amendment.

The NEC shall also be entitled to submit amendments as appropriate.

The Involvement and Role of the Standing Orders Committee

As with all CWU conferences the SOC will need to be fully involved in the organising and logistics of the virtual conference and further discussions are currently taking place with the principle officers of the SOC to agree how this will operate in practice.

Finally, we will shortly be publishing to Branches a document that sets out the changes the NEC will be proposing and a narrative around why the NEC has made the decisions it has.

Any enquiries regarding this Letter to Branches should be addressed to the Senior Deputy General Secretary's Department on telephone number 020 8971 7237, or email address sdgs@cwu.org.

Yours sincerely,



Tony Kearns
Senior Deputy General Secretary