



# **Annual Representative Conference**

**2016**

**Final agenda**

**21 to 23 May**

**The Bristol Hotel**

**Prince Street, Bristol BS1 4QF**

# ANNUAL REPRESENTATIVE CONFERENCE 2016

<b>SATURDAY 21 MAY</b>	3:00pm	Doors open
	3:30pm	Chair formally opens Conference
		Report from the Standing Orders Committee
		Obituary
<b>Annual Report</b>		General Secretary's speech introducing the 2015 Annual Report of the Council
		Open Space introduction
<b>Equality and Diversity</b>		Motions on Equality and Diversity
	6:00pm	Conference adjourns
	7:00pm	Submissions for Open Space sessions accepted
<b>SUNDAY 22 MAY</b>	9:00am	Chair formally re-convenes Conference
		Report from the Assistant General Secretary Industrial and Organising
<b>Live Performance</b>	9:10am	Motions on Live Performance
<b>Variety, Circus and Entertainers</b>	10:20am	Motions on Variety, Circus and Entertainers
<b>Internal Union Business</b>	11:30am	Motions on Internal Union Business
	12:50pm	Appeal on behalf of the International Committee for Artists' Freedom
	1:00pm	Lunch
	1:30pm	Open Space sessions
	2:30pm	President's address
	2:50pm	Motions on Internal Union Business continue
<b>Accounts</b>	3:40pm	Honorary Treasurer's submission of 2015 annual statement of Accounts
		Formal adoption of the 2015 annual statement of Accounts
<b>Communications and Membership Support</b>	4:00pm	Report from the Assistant General Secretary Communications and Membership Support
	4:10pm	Motions on Communications and Membership Support
	6:00pm	Conference adjourns
<b>MONDAY 23 MAY</b>	9:00am	Chair formally re-convenes Conference
<b>Guest Speaker</b>		Thangam Debbonaire, MP for Bristol West and Shadow Minister for Culture, Media and Sport
	9:30am	Report from the Assistant General Secretary Industrial and Organising
<b>Recorded Media</b>	9:40am	Motions on Recorded Media
<b>Policy</b>	10:40am	Motions on Policy
	1:55pm	Formal adoption of the 2015 Annual Report of the Council
	2:00pm	Conference closes

**STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE** — the Standing Orders Committee will be in formal session and available for advice and questions on this agenda or Conference procedure at the following times: Saturday: 2:00 to 2:30pm. Sunday: 8:30 to 9:00am and 1:00 to 1:30pm. Monday: 8:30 to 9:00am and 2:15 to 2:30pm .

**STUDENT WORKSHOP — Professionally Made Professionally Paid** 2.45pm on Sunday: a session specifically for student members looking at the current situation of low and no pay and how Equity is seeking to improve the situation and promote good practice.

**FRINGE EVENTS** — see your representative's pack for details.

# EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

## **MOTION 1: Deaf and Disabled Members Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference is concerned about the lack of access to casting venues. Deaf and Disabled Equity members are regularly excluded from the casting process by either physical or other barriers, putting them at a great disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers. This represents a breach of the duty to make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act. Conference believes that, until access requirements are prioritised as a routine part of the casting process and accessible casting spaces used automatically, the acute under-representation of disabled people on stage and screen will persist.

Conference calls on the Equity Council to assist the industry by promoting accessible casting spaces. This will be done by establishing a national database of professionally audited venues.

### **AMENDMENT: Yorkshire Ridings General Branch**

In line 9, after: "accessible casting spaces", insert: "and put pressure on those that are not currently accessible"

## **MOTION 2: South and South East London General Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference notes that, despite an increase in the proportion of working, active and financially independent older people within the population, the advertising and entertainment industries are failing to represent this demographic.

Our older members face not only age discrimination in the industry but also a rising retirement age. Conference asserts that age discrimination is a neglected area within our equalities policy and calls on Council to consider creating as a priority an Older Members' Committee within the union's democratic structure.

### **AMENDMENT: Manchester and District Variety Branch**

At the end of the motion insert: "Such a committee should include some Honorary Life Members of Equity."

## **MOTION 3: Minority Ethnic Members Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference is concerned that, despite the consensus about the importance of greater diversity of actors and performers on stage and screen, we still see little progress. Following the updating of the union's policy on inclusive casting, Conference remains concerned about the lack of incidental casting, in particular where the performer's racial heritage is irrelevant to the role.

Conference believes that the onus should be on employers to make clear — proactively and up front — that they welcome actors from all backgrounds, to demonstrate their visible commitment to creating change.

Conference notes action taken elsewhere internationally to tackle this problem. Canadian Equity has successfully negotiated the following wording to be included within its theatre agreement: "The theatre now shall declare its inclusive policy in all casting notices and breakdowns, and in the absence of such a policy, the following language shall be used: *We are committed to diverse, inclusive casting. For every role, please submit qualified performers, without regard to age, disability, ethno-cultural identity, gender, or any other basis prohibited by law unless otherwise specifically indicated.*"

Conference asks that the Equity Council should promote this principle in all its contract negotiations and its discussions with all industry bodies (including casting platforms such as Spotlight to consider the inclusion of an active encouragement of inclusive casting in all breakdowns in lieu of currently non-committal legal disclaimers) to push for this vital change.

#### **MOTION 4: North West London General Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference asks the Equity Council for assurance of increased proactivity from all Equity staff and members towards achieving gender equality on behalf of the membership and more visible inclusion of this issue in Equity's public statements, together with consistent documented transparency on actions being taken to address this issue.

This motion is about focus and fairness. 51% of Equity membership comprises women in all our diversity. Inequality of opportunity, representation and pay for female performers are known issues, well-documented in data collected by Equity, Elizabeth Freestone, Purple Seven, etc. These respected statistics show that, prior to the arts cuts, funding for female members was already cut and is still diminishing. The Women's Committee and other members have been actively campaigning for years for this situation to be redressed.

However, Arts Council England's current Creative Case, mainly constructed on data for permanent staff, exhibits a concerning lack of emphasis on gender parity for freelance creatives. It is apparent that gender equality is not considered a priority and there is a lack of acknowledgement that, when gender intersects with other protected groups i.e. ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, etc, this situation worsens.

The implication is that until ACE better monitors this issue and processes the results of their data our female members will continue to wait for this to be properly addressed and equal distribution of public funding to become a reality.

# LIVE PERFORMANCE

## **MOTION 5: Opera Deputies Committee and Singers Committee (composite motion)**

This Annual Representative Conference believes that opera is not just for a privileged elite, opera is for all. Audiences deserve to see the art form at its best: large-scale productions with high production values. Opera singers want to be singing in the highest quality productions to the widest and most diverse audiences. This can only be achieved if opera is properly funded by the Arts Council and opera companies not forced to depend too heavily on philanthropy or business sponsorship, neither of which can be guaranteed.

Conference is deeply concerned at the recent situation at English National Opera and notes that ENO is the only standing opera company that performs all of its repertoire in English and, as such, plays a vital role in bringing opera to a wider and younger audience.

Conference calls on Council to press Arts Council England (ACE) to fund opera properly so that it can develop its full potential and attract new audiences and to make clear to ACE how important ENO is both to opera and to culture more generally in the United Kingdom.

## **MOTION 6: Northern Ireland General Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference

notes that actors and stage managers working in theatre are often confused about their rights and entitlements. This seems to have increased since the change to National Insurance and the continuing changes to tax and their status. This is particularly true around the question of holiday pay when working for a theatre company.

Conference is seeking that the Equity Council considers ways in which this can be highlighted to both members and theatre companies through direct communication to all members as well as external organisations whom we negotiate with, as well as the funding bodies.

## **MOTION 7: West End Deputies Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference welcomes the improvements in the Code of Conduct for Auditions in the West End Agreement, following recent negotiations. However, despite this, we are still often being required to learn large amounts of new material in a short time frame before auditions/castings. This is partly due to the ease and cheapness of electronic communication. Such demands discriminate against those with caring responsibilities and/or additional employment.

Conference calls upon the Equity Council to investigate the extent of this problem within the whole industry and devise and take forward a plan of engagement with the producers/casting directors to make the necessary improvements to the current practice.

## **MOTION 8: South Wales Variety Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference calls on the Equity Council to consider introducing a programme of monitoring the charges made by theatre ticket booking agents as the charges made by these companies for their services range from expensive to extortionate.

For example, the UK's largest and most powerful agents are Ticketmaster and Seetickets. They will add anything up to 25% to the ticket price as they are allowed to do so by law. The other big companies — Ticketline, Gigantic and Star Green — generally impose similar levies.

Conference fully understands that in this day and age tickets should be available on-line to the public around the clock. And we understand that it would be unreasonable to expect the theatres themselves to provide this facility, so they need to employ agencies such as Ticketmaster, etc, to distribute tickets on their behalf.

But let us consider this: in South Wales the average price of a single ticket for a show is typically around £25. That's £100 for a family of four. Add the ticket levy and the price can go up to as much as £125.

Theatres have been struggling to survive during the last decade or more and far too many are closing their doors forever.

We believe that these ticket surcharges act as a deterrent to members of the public wanting to attend the theatre.

### **MOTION 9: Northern Ireland Annual General Meeting**

This Annual Representative Conference believes that the so-called austerity cuts have had a devastating effect on professional theatre companies who rely on public investment. This has resulted in the closure of some companies, and companies doing fewer productions with a smaller cast. It's not surprising therefore to see a growth in co-productions within the funded sector. Whilst understanding the need and in many cases the benefit of co-productions, it should not be done at the detriment of our members.

Conference is seeking that, in all negotiations with UK Theatre and the Independent Theatre Council (ITC), the Equity Council seeks to ensure that, when two or more companies' co-produce, salaries are maintained throughout the entire job and not according to the lowest salary grade or level. This is irrespective of whether in repertory it's between grade one and grade three theatres or between a theatre on a rep contract and a theatre on an ITC contract.

#### **AMENDMENT: Stage Committee**

In line 7, delete: "in all negotiations with UK Theatre and the Independent Theatre Council (ITC),"

In lines 10 and 11, delete: "This is irrespective of whether in repertory it's between grade one and grade three theatres or between a theatre on a rep contract and a theatre on an ITC contract. "

### **MOTION 10: Central England General Branch.**

In order to prevent employers paying rates below Equity minimums or even below the National Minimum Wage, this Annual Representative Conference believes that Equity should seek to raise awareness among managers of tour venues, such as schools and venues which host summer tours, and let them know of companies which are using appropriate terms and conditions of employment. The goal is to encourage people booking touring shows to insist on the use of Equity contracts. Equity is already doing this to some extent.

#### **AMENDMENT: Northern Ireland National Committee**

In line 6, delete: "Equity is already doing this to some extent." and insert: "Equity should seek to engage the help of the educational unions within the Trades Union Congress (TUC), Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) and Irish Congress of Trade Unions Northern Ireland (ICTU NI) to assist in highlighting such practice and get their support."

# VARIETY, CIRCUS AND ENTERTAINERS

## **MOTION 11: North East Variety Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference reaffirms its support for the Humberside Variety Branch motion to the 2014 ARC calling upon the Equity Council to campaign for the rights of buskers to work in more public spaces throughout the UK. Conference acknowledges the efforts made by the Variety, Circus and Entertainment Committee (VCEC) to address this issue.

However, Conference notes with concern the increasing use of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) by local authorities. These orders have the potential to seriously restrict the rights of buskers and street performers.

Conference therefore calls upon the Equity Council and the VCEC to campaign alongside the Musicians' Union, the Keep Streets Live! campaign, and other interested parties to oppose the implementation of PSPOs in areas which are detrimental to our members or potential members. Furthermore, to seek consultation meetings with local authorities intending to implement PSPOs with a view to having input into producing guidelines for local authority employees and the busking profession/community.

### **AMENDMENT: Variety, Circus and Entertainers Committee**

In line 10: delete: "in areas"

## **MOTION 12: Variety, Circus and Entertainers Committee**

With 2017 being the 50th anniversary of the incorporation of the Variety Artistes' Federation into Equity, this Annual Representative Conference believes that 2017 should be designated the year of Variety, Circus and Entertainment. In addition to commemorating this anniversary, Equity should launch a high profile campaign to reach out primarily to the new generation of performers, maximising the use of social media, to highlight the relevance of the union to them. The campaign should also aim to raise the profile of the art form within the entertainment industry, including the broadcasters and with the public, with the aim of improving working conditions.

### **AMENDMENT East Anglia Variety Branch**

In line 2, after: "Equity," insert: "also being the 110th anniversary of the founding of the VAF,"

In line 3, delete: "anniversary", and insert: " important double event"

## **MOTION 13: Manchester and District Variety Branch**

In view of the fact that a number of entertainers, singers, etc, have joined another union, this Annual Representative Conference asks the Equity Council to consider adding a strap line to the title "Equity incorporating Variety Artistes' Federation" whenever possible. The strap line could be similar to "The union for the acting profession and the variety of acts and entertainers".

### **AMENDMENT Kent General Branch**

In line 4, delete: "The union for the acting profession and the variety of acts and entertainers", and insert: "Equity — The Performance Union"

## **MOTION 14: North and West Yorkshire Variety Branch**

In light of many problems in the working lives of variety members, and with difficulties in recruitment and retention of entertainers, and also to stop the worrying drift of members to other unions due to lack of informed knowledge, this Annual Representative Conference asks for a more prominent and appealing presence of variety issues in the Journal, and more importantly on the front page of the Equity website, to encourage new variety artistes and entertainers of all kind to join the union, with an easy access direct link to a variety and entertainment area on the front page, allowing new and existing variety members to quickly access appropriate forms, contacts and emergency help line numbers of all the Variety Branch Secretaries whilst working around the UK and abroad.

# INTERNAL UNION BUSINESS

## **MOTION 15: Women's Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference notes that the Women's Committee's membership includes two members who are also elected to two of the three industrial committees. As a result, the committee believes it benefits significantly from this relationship.

The Women's Committee and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee believe that collaboration and communication between the equality committees has improved in recent years – partly due to an informal biannual forum that brings the chairs and vice-chairs of the equality committees and the Officers together – but also from a determined drive from within recent Equalities committee members to do so.

However, the Women's Committee and indeed the LGBT Committee are concerned that there is still a disconnect between the dialogues within the equality committees and within the industrial committees.

Therefore, Conference urges the Equity Council to agree that one equality observer is added to each of the industrial committees to improve the lack of horizontal communication between both sets of committees. This role could be filled by rotation by a representative of each of the equality committees, exposing the observer to the industrial debates of the union and informing the work of the industrial committees from an equality point of view.

## **MOTION 16: Devon and Cornwall General Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference believes that it is of benefit to Equity for branches to affiliate with the various local Trades Union Councils (TUCs). For our members to attend these TUC meetings does cost a small amount in travel expenses.

Conference also believes that, where a branch has elected a member to attend TUC meetings as a representative of Equity, those expenses should be reimbursed by Equity rather than by the branch. Branches have limited opportunities to raise extra funds for such expenditure.

Therefore Conference requests Council to consider authorising branches to nominate one representative to each local TUC and to reclaim the basic expenses from Equity.

## **MOTION 17: Dorset General Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference calls upon the Equity Council to consider amending the Rules and Standing Orders for branches to allow branches to use video calling (including but not limited to Skype and Facetime) for members to participate in meetings where facilities exist for such technology.

This motion proposes that, as with the Guidelines for Telephone Conferencing for Council Meetings, all members would have to state at the beginning of the meeting that no third parties or non-members were in a position to hear or see the meeting. As per the same guidelines, this motion also proposes that there has to be a quorum present in the room for a meeting to be quorate and that members joining through this facility are not included in the quorum of the meeting. For practical reasons we would also propose that video calling is limited to a maximum of four each on individual equipment.

Conference believes that this would allow branches, especially in rural areas, to enable more members to participate in their branch. Many members are disenfranchised by distance and difficulty with transport, etc, especially when branches cover a large geographical area.

## **MOTION 18: The Council**

Rule 14 Qualification for Council or President

In 14.1, line 3, after "by two members in benefit" insert: "or nominated by a Branch".

Rule 15 Election of the Council

In 15.3, after: "All nominations for candidates for the Council shall be on the recognised printed form, shall be signed by the proposer and seconder (or by such officer as the National Committee may appoint in the case of candidates for Nations nominated by such Committee", insert: "or the Branch may appoint in the case of candidates nominated by such Branch)".

### **MOTION 19: The Council**

Rule 15 Election of the Council

In 15.4.4, after: “in the case of candidates seeking to represent Young Members,” delete: “that they are 26 years old or under at the close of nominations”, and insert: “that at the close of nominations they are below an age to be determined from time to time by the Council”.

### **MOTION 20: The Council**

Rule 22 Election of the General Secretary

Delete all of 22.1.2.4 and insert: 22.1.2.4 until death or retirement

### **MOTION 21: The Council**

Rule 28 Disciplinary Procedures — Delete the whole of 28.4 and insert:

28.4 Procedure on receipt of a Complaint

28.4.1 A complaint in accordance with Rule 28.2.1 shall be acknowledged by the General Secretary (or, in the case of a complaint by or against the General Secretary, the President) within two weeks of its receipt with the further processes communicated at regular intervals to the complainant.

28.4.2 The General Secretary (or, in the case of a complaint by or against the General Secretary, the President) shall cause such preliminary enquiries to be made as the General Secretary (or President) thinks fit.

28.4.2.1 If preliminary enquiries lead the General Secretary (or President) to conclude that the complaint is trivial, vexatious, lacking in evidence, does not fall within the charges in Rule 28.3, or is not sufficiently particularised despite the complainant being given the opportunity to clearly particularise the complaint, it shall be dismissed by the General Secretary (or President) and the complainant will be notified of this as soon as reasonably practicable. Otherwise, following the preliminary enquiries, the General Secretary (or President) shall forward the complaint to the next meeting of the Council for discussion in accordance with Rule 28.4.6.

28.4.2.2 The General Secretary (or President) shall, following the preliminary enquiries, report any dismissal of a complaint to the next meeting of the Council. Such report shall include the date the complaint was received, the date the complainant was informed that the complaint was to be dismissed following the preliminary enquiries under Rule 28.4.2.1 and under which charge or charges in Rule 28.3 the complaint was made.

28.4.3 If during such preliminary enquiries information becomes available which leads to the member bringing the complaint to withdraw it, no further action shall be taken. This does not prevent the Member, or any other member making the same or similar complaint at another time. In any event, a member making a complaint can withdraw such complaint at any time up to the point that the Council either refers the matter to the Disciplinary Sub-Committee or dismisses it. Once withdrawn, the complaint shall cease to exist and there shall be no requirement for a withdrawn complaint to be reported to the Council.

28.4.4 A complaint forwarded to the Council for discussion shall be considered within two months of its receipt by the Council and the next steps as decided by the Council shall be communicated to both complainant and the subject of the complaint.

28.4.5 Any report made to the Council under Rules 28.4.2.1 and 28.4.2.2 shall, where possible, not disclose the identities of the individuals involved.

28.4.6 If the Council believes that in relation to a complaint forwarded to it for discussion there is no case to answer or it is not sufficiently serious as to justify disciplinary action, or the consideration of the possibility of it, and decides no further action shall be taken, it shall so inform

the person laying the complaint and the complaint shall be dismissed. Otherwise the Council shall refer the charge to the Disciplinary Sub-Committee which shall proceed as provided for under the regulations referred to in Rule 28.1.3.

28.4.7 If the Council considers that it has insufficient information properly to consider the complaint it shall direct the appropriate Officer or member of staff to make further enquiries and to report to a subsequent meeting of the Council.

28.4.8 Any person who is the subject of or materially affected by the charge shall take no part in the investigations into or consideration of the complaint, charge or any penalty as provided for in this Rule. In particular any member of the Council laying such charge or involved as above shall not be present at the Council meeting during any discussion of it or at any subsequent Council discussion where penalties are discussed.

**AMENDMENT: Directors and Designers Committee**

In Rule numbered 28.4.2, insert at the end: "Such preliminary enquiries shall be completed within three months from the first receipt of the complaint."

**MOTION 22: Audio Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference agrees that when there is a motion at an ARC that requires a change to an internal rule, such as composition of the Equity Council, a two-thirds majority at that ARC shall be binding, obviating the need for an expensive referendum of the entire membership. In the event of this motion being passed, it is hoped that the Council will consult with representatives of those empowered to attend an ARC in determining which rules would be affected.

**FIRST AMENDMENT: Screen and New Media Committee**

Add at the end of the motion: "and further investigate the legality of implementing any rule change on a trial basis for two years. This would mean the rule book would not have to be changed until after the trial period was over, thus obviating the need to go to referendum."

**SECOND AMENDMENT: Greater Manchester and Region General Branch**

Add at the end of the motion: "It is the view of this Annual Representative Conference that only Rules 3, 22 and 46 should remain as Protected Rules and it offers this for consideration in the proposed consultation."

**MOTION 23: Birmingham Variety Branch and East Midlands Variety Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference believes that the lack of representation of walk-on and supporting artists on Equity's Council is a matter of concern.

In order to ensure fair and equal representation of all members, Conference urges the Council to hold a referendum to include a Walk-On and Supporting Artists Councillor on the governing body as soon as practicable.

**MOTION 24: East Anglia Variety Branch**

As a cost saving exercise, branch expenses have been drastically cut, especially regarding communication with members. This Annual Representative Conference asks that the union's own communications expenses are also reviewed with the intention of saving more of the members' money. Following this, a report of the outcome should be made available to members.

# COMMUNICATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT

## **MOTION 25: Stage Management Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference notes that practitioners have consistently raised concerns to the Committee about being provided with out-of-date, confusing and impracticable digs lists.

Conference calls on the Equity Council to support the Stage Management Committee and approve the creation of standardised accommodation paperwork to be made available to all venues and via the Equity website. With the Committee input, Conference asks that a member of Equity staff formulate the following templates: an accommodation list trusted by members when looking for digs, a guide for landlords welcoming practitioners into their home and a feedback form which allows users to communicate back to the venue.

Conference also asks that Council encourages venues and companies to have an allocated person to maintain and update local entries and be a named point of contact for both theatre practitioners and landlords, with a view to including such provision as part of our claim in the next renewal negotiations of the collective agreements.

These changes would benefit all members who regularly work away from home but even more so for those who are less experienced in deciphering the current accommodation listings. Digs lists are a valuable unique service offered in our community that are in danger of becoming redundant, partially due to the rise of online services but also because of the complacency of some venues.

### **FIRST AMENDMENT: Variety, Circus and Entertainers Committee**

In line 5: delete: "and"

### **SECOND AMENDMENT: Stage Management Committee**

In line 6, delete: "templates", and insert: "documents"

### **THIRD AMENDMENT: Deaf and Disabled Members Committee**

Insert the following at the end of the motion: "The lists should also show the nature of access and other support offered by digs to deaf and disabled people, following existing models of good practice."

## **MOTION 26: Greater Manchester and Region General Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference urges the Equity Council to establish an on-going list of current policies available to all members in both online and other forms as required. Policies which lapse would be removed. This will avoid agreed policies falling into disuse, such as that made at the 2000 Annual Representative Conference to provide child care and other caring costs for members involved in Equity committees. It will also save valuable time and resources by obviating the need to discuss and research existing policies.

## **MOTION 27: Screen and New Media Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference notes that a few years ago the Equity Council decided that it is too expensive for Equity to take legal action against employers who are outside the legal jurisdiction of the UK. As a result of this policy, one Equity member now has no chance of ever getting her fee of 700 Euros owed to her by a film company based in Luxembourg, and that employer will never face legal proceedings from Equity.

Conference understands the reasons for the Council's policy, but urges the Council to consider how Equity can help and advise members who lose earnings as a result of this policy, or who suffer other breaches of contract by non-UK employers, for example the EU European Small Claims Procedure.

### **MOTION 28: Stage Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference calls on the Equity Council to produce more modern and up to date information (both on paper and for social media) to explain the workings of the union and to educate and inspire members as to how, as well as why, to be an effective activist.

The union can appear remote, irrelevant and bureaucratic and we should strive to be more modern and more accessible. We should harness the wonderful energy of those passionate about the industry, but frustrated with the Union. We should specifically target social media, building a series of posts, videos and pamphlets that can be easily understood and shared. These can be used by all members to help recruit new members.

Conference specifically calls for Council to:

- 1 devote resources to articulate Equity's relevance in the specific context of our industry today;
- 2 better explain the mechanisms by which members can effect change in their working conditions from within the union.

### **AMENDMENT: West and South West London General Branch**

At the end of the motion insert: "3 while applauding staff for the award-winning success of the magazine, consult members regarding the effectiveness of the magazine (2015 cost = £154,247) versus, for example, employing more social media staff."

### **MOTION 29: South West Area Annual General Meeting**

This Annual Representative Conference calls upon the Equity Council to make arrangements to provide branches with a non-identifiable audit of the skills base of branch members on a rolling six month basis. This would allow branches to engage with those members who may feel that they are often neglected as their skill set is more specialised than the majority of branch members. For example identifying how many members are stage managers, or choreographers, DJs, actors, etc, would also help branches to run events that would encourage more members to participate in the their local branch and with the union as a whole. Inclusive not exclusive.

### **AMENDMENT: The Council**

In lines 2 and 3, delete: "on a rolling six month basis", and insert: "on demand, but no more frequently than every six months".

### **MOTION 30: Brighton and Sussex General Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference congratulates Equity on the rise in membership. In order to nurture and fulfil the relationship we have with our members, Conference proposes that all future welcoming packs sent out to new members contain the full details of their local branch and would include the name and contact details of the Chair or Secretary, time, date and address of the meetings. This would benefit the union and strengthen our branches.

### **MOTION 31: West of England Variety Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference notes that members of Equity suffer from higher premiums when renewing motor insurance, where premiums relate solely to their occupation.

This Annual Representative Conference calls on the Equity Council to:

- 1 deplore this discriminatory activity;
- 2 commission research into Equity members' actual motoring activity to offset generalised misinformation that appears to lie behind premiums in the motor insurance business;
- 3 locate and negotiate with a supplier or suppliers of motor insurance preferential rates for members; and
- 4 campaign to add union membership as a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

### **AMENDMENT: Bristol and West General Branch and Stage Committee**

In lines 8 and 9, delete: "and 4 campaign to add union membership as a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010."

# RECORDED MEDIA

## **MOTION 32: Liverpool and District General Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference ask the Equity Council to put pressure on all state-funded broadcast organisations to actively seek out new talent when casting actors in their drama programmes. This would benefit those entering the profession for the first time, but equally should include experienced actors who are currently excluded from the core group that these organisations seem to favour.

We applaud initiatives such as BBC Radio 1's In New Music We Trust campaign that sees new and emerging musical talent championed, and we would like to see a similar approach taken when casting actors.

### **AMENDMENT: Scottish National Committee**

In lines 1 and 2, delete: "state-funded broadcast organisations", and insert: "programme makers and broadcasters"

## **MOTION 33: West and South West London General Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference notes that Equity is in discussion with the BBC about how it limits access to casting breakdowns. Last year the West and South West London Branch researched every programme broadcast by the BBC in 2014, identifying the actors it employed and the agents they were with. Whilst not a perfect piece of research, the results were interesting.

Of the 3,440 actors employed, 59% were men and 41% were women. One in five of these actors were represented by three agencies. 298 agencies supplied actors with over 50% coming from the top 20 agents. 0.7% of the actors employed by the BBC in 2014 were unrepresented.

In *Death In Paradise* over half the actors were represented by the top five agencies, and over a third of the cast of *Inside No 9* were represented by a single agency.

The research gives Equity solid data from which to build its argument. Conference urges the Equity Council to fund an ongoing research project for 2015 and 2016, possibly even expanding its remit to include age and ethnicity. The estimated cost is £5,000 per year. This would support current negotiations and enable the Union to track any change.

## **MOTION 34: Merseyside Variety Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference asks Equity to look into the situations with regard to period dramas, documentaries and quiz shows on television, in many cases which our members have worked on, in relation to the background music being played too loud and therefore the dialogue becomes hard to hear, resulting in many cases that viewers are unable to hear and understand the content of the programme.

## **MOTION 35: Northern Ireland National Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference notes that Ulster Television (UTV), despite being one of the most cash-rich and successful commercial broadcasters, invested very little in indigenous drama and professional entertainment and comedy production in Northern Ireland over the past 25 years. In effect it turned its back on the professional talent who work and live in Northern Ireland whilst maximising profits. In 2015, ITV bought UTV for £100 million which effectively gives ITV a near monopoly of the channel three network within the UK.

Conference asks that the Equity Council calls on ITV nationally to redress the years of under investment by having UTV produce and commission Drama and Entertainment content in Northern Ireland. Conference further call on Council to discuss the matter with OFCOM with a view to persuading the regulator to have a quota of production done in national and regional areas that reflects a percentage of the income generated in each area.

**MOTION 36: Scottish Annual General Meeting**

This Annual Representative Conference recognises the crucial role played by the BBC across the range of drama, arts, music and media and calls for an ongoing review of where the BBC executive allocates its funding throughout its operations. In particular, the amount of money spent in the nations and regions should be an issue for democratic debate involving all governments and assemblies of the UK. Proposals in the Calman and Smith Commissions clearly stated the need for the Scottish Parliament to be involved in setting the licence fee.

Conference believes it is also essential for the BBC to be held accountable for the proportionality of spend in relation to licence fee collected in those nations and regions. As such, facilities for local accountability should be part of an ongoing debate on these matters. Conference strongly recommends that pressure be brought to establish increased production spend outside of the M25 area.

# **POLICY**

## **Motions 37 and 38 will be debated together but voted on separately**

### **MOTION 37: Northern Area Annual General Meeting**

This Annual Representative Conference welcomes the Parents in Performing Arts campaign and encourages Equity Council to work with the campaign to ensure that the basic right to family life does not prove a barrier to a career in the performing arts industry.

In particular, Conference asks that the Equity Council works with UK Theatre, the Society of London Theatre and the Independent Theatre Council to improve advice and guidance to theatres and theatrical producers when it comes to supporting parents in touring productions. Such advice and guidance should seek to provide a more consistent approach from theatres and producers on issues including, but not limited to, backstage access to theatres by the children of performers on tour, and the range of theatre digs included on digs lists.

### **MOTION 38: Stage Committee**

In a climate with an ageing population, reduced pension opportunities and spiralling childcare costs, this Annual Representative Conference insists that the Equity Council challenges all employers to recognise that the Equity members they employ may also be the primary carers for children or adults outside of their work. It should not be the case that working in the arts should preclude anyone from parenting or caring responsibilities by dint of outmoded and often blinkered practices. Simple changes in working practices can enable members at work to plan and fulfil their caring responsibilities more easily.

Specifically, Conference calls on the Council to ensure that employers understand the benefits that improved work scheduling can bring when caring responsibilities are addressed in an understanding and efficient manner; for both employees and employers themselves.

### **MOTION 39: Screen and New Media Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference notes that our industry is evolving fast, with new technology changing the way we work. One hot new development is that of the self-tape casting which is becoming increasingly more common, not just for film and TV castings, but also even for theatre. While it can bring benefits, such as allowing actors to audition for jobs without having to travel, for some people it has introduced a whole new range of challenges that are throwing up even more barriers to them getting work. As casting directors' self-taping demands become ever more complex, requiring certain backdrops, lighting, compression, upload platforms and password protocols, there is a risk that entire sectors of the acting population will find themselves shut out before they can even begin.

Conference calls on the Equity Council to urgently address this matter with those involved in casting in order to make casters aware of members' issues and to work towards a mutual solution that could include a self-taping agreement and options for those who are unable to self-tape.

#### **MOTION 40: Young Members Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference notes that every November the TUC holds a month dedicated to promoting the value of trade unions and union membership for young workers.

Equity's Young Members Committee have been enthusiastic supporters of Trades Union Congress Young Workers' Month since its inception in 2013. We have held training and networking events nationwide, both in conjunction with other unions and by ourselves, run a series of Twitter competitions designed to increase engagement among our peers with sponsorship from a diverse range of companies and organisations such as Bloch Dance, The Stage, Game and SOLT, created a handbook about Equity for young members and hosted Q&A sessions on social media with Equity's President, West End Producer, and many more.

We are proud of what we have achieved in recruiting new members into Equity, but now we need to encourage our new younger members to not just join the union but be active in it. It is right that this work is led by the Young Members Committee, but the responsibility for retaining and organising young members lies with all of us – irrespective of how old we are, what part of the country we live in, or what part of the industry we work in.

Conference calls on the Equity Council to endeavour to ensure that every branch and committee across the union works with the Young Members Committee to develop a programme of events and initiatives for TUC Young Workers' Month each November, targeted at the recruitment and retention of young workers.

#### **MOTION 41: Scottish National Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference expresses its opposition to the proposed far-ranging tax and national insurance changes. Conference further calls on the Equity Council to continue to update members on these changes and to consider hosting a series of open briefings across the country to help inform members.

#### **MOTION 42: Dance Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference expresses concern about how the United Kingdom's arts councils' policies on pay are being applied in practice. Committee members have anecdotal knowledge of workers on state-funded projects being engaged on less than minimum union rates. Conference agrees that concrete evidence would be valuable in understanding how widespread this practice is and that this evidence could form the foundation of a campaign to encourage higher accountability of the arts councils to their policies on pay.

This Annual Representative Conference calls on the Equity Council to consider committing resources to undertake an audit and report of companies and individuals who have received public funding from the arts councils of the United Kingdom, for the purpose of investigating whether the councils' policies on pay are being applied in practice. Conference further calls on the Equity Council for the option of developing a campaign based on the findings of the report.

### **MOTION 43: Welsh National Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference believes that it is essential that the performing arts in particular, and the creative industries in general, are given serious consideration on the political agendas of the nations. Yet so often the arts are disregarded, overlooked or, if we are lucky, squeezed in as the also-ran question.

Conference asks the Equity Council to look at the possibility of organising general hustings as a matter of course for all elections and in all parts of the nations: general hustings as opposed to hustings concerned exclusively with the arts as the latter may be seen as preaching to the choir and, as is the case in Cardiff recently, the choir might not bother to turn up. We need to reach ordinary voters and they need to hear the arts debated equally with other topics of importance to the nations' well-being. As a politically independent organisation, Equity is ideally placed to stand as a legitimate host or co-host of such events and in so-doing make our interests an unavoidable part of the agenda.

#### **AMENDMENT: The Council**

In line 5, delete: "look into the possibility of organising", and insert: "consider giving authority to National Committees and local branches to organise"

### **MOTION 44: Oxford General Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference calls upon the Equity Council to campaign for the abolition of drama school audition fees. Conference notes that a potential barrier to people auditioning for drama school could be the high fees charged for auditions. It is the aim of this Conference that the acting profession be more representative of the population as a whole. All barriers to this end should be removed. Therefore, Conference calls upon Council to put together a campaign to encourage drama schools to abolish the audition fee.

#### **FIRST AMENDMENT: North and East London General Branch**

In line 1, delete: "campaign for the abolition", and insert: "carry out an audit"

In line 2, after: "fees", insert: "charged by all drama schools in the UK and the exact level of income raised by these auditions each year"

In line 5, delete: "removed", and insert: "addressed"

In line 5, after: "Council", insert: ",on the results of the above mentioned audit,"

In line 5, delete: "put together a"

In lines 5 and 6, delete: "to encourage drama schools to abolish the audition fee", and insert: "for an agreed UK-wide cap on audition fees to be implemented"

#### **SECOND AMENDMENT: Screen and New Media Committee**

In line 2, after: "abolition of", insert "dance and"

In line 2, after: "auditioning for", insert: "dance or"

In line 6, after: "encourage", insert: "dance and"

### **MOTION 45: Directors and Designers Committee**

This Annual Representative Conference asks the Equity Council to consider forming a working party with the Personal Managers' Association and the Co-operative Personal Management Association, for the purpose of drawing up a published and binding code of practice for agents representing workers in the entertainments industries.

#### **AMENDMENT: The Council**

In line 3, delete: "drawing up a published and binding", and insert: "discussing a"

#### **MOTION 46: North Lancashire and Cumbria General Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference congratulates Equity and all of its members for their campaigning under the Stop Arts Cuts banner, and the role members played in forcing a favourable funding settlement for Arts Council England in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement. However, Conference condemns the further funding cuts imposed upon local authorities in England, which will likely apply further pressure on the budgets for their non-statutory spending commitments, like arts and culture.

Whilst resourcing Equity's branches to run effective local campaigns when Local Authority seek to cut arts funding, Conference believes that the Equity Council should also work with the Arts Council to ensure that the funding gap between London and the English Regions does not become further widened as a consequence of the financial squeeze on Local Authorities. Furthermore, the Equity Council should lobby the Arts Council to ensure that revenue funding outside of London is not confined to the great cities like Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Sheffield, but extends to all provincial towns and cities, so that our members can work in and enjoy theatre wherever they live.

#### **MOTION 47: Kent General Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference calls on the Equity Council to campaign for all professional performing arts training courses to take note of and fulfil their health and safety obligations. This includes, but is not limited to, teaching and training students in the appropriate use of warm-ups, both physical and vocal, in order to prevent injuries in students' future careers and also to cope with the constant excessive hours students are expected to work at many educational institutions.

#### **MOTION 48: Humberside Variety Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference proposes that the Equity Council establishes a system of assessment of the success of campaigns it organises so that it is able to report back to Conference annually on the result of each campaign using that system of assessment.

#### **MOTION 49: London Annual General Meeting**

This Annual Representative Conference believes that theatre is becoming increasingly fragmented with new companies springing up daily. Some are project-specific. Others aim for a longer term future. Equity staff and the industrial committees are doing an incredible job in improving the terms and conditions for members working under Equity agreements and Conference applauds and thanks them for their skill and ambition. The success achieved under the Professionally Made Professionally Paid campaign demonstrates how focus and co-ordination can persuade companies to use our contracts. However, increasingly, members are being offered non-Equity contracts.

Alongside negotiations with management groups, Conference encourages the Equity Council, the Screen and New Media Committee and the Stage Committee to work with Equity staff to develop a strategy to increase the number and range of theatre and recorded media producers using Equity agreements, including those who do not belong to management groups.

#### **MOTION 50: North and East London General Branch**

This Annual Representative Conference believes that the forthcoming referendum on whether or not Britain should leave the EU is a cause for some worry. Britain's leaving might affect performers in very tangible ways; not only non-British European Equity members, whose immigration status and permanence in the UK might be called into question, but also those members who heavily rely on working abroad. Musical theatre performers on European tours, as well as dancers and singers who are more likely to get engagements abroad, might be asked to get work visas every time they get a job abroad. This would seriously undermine their ability to get the job in the first place as the red tape involved would make such engagements cumbersome for the performers and possibly non-viable for employers. Britain's exit could also seriously endanger transnational collaborations: there are 63 EU funds for culture and media to which EU artists and organisations have access. The status of the UK in case of an exit is, at the moment, undefined. So whether cultural products originating in the UK and devised by UK artists would still meet the requirements to apply for those grants is not clear.

Conference calls upon the Council to investigate the consequences of a Brexit on our members and the UK cultural sector and, dependent on the results, devise an information and lobbying campaign.

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# STANDING ORDERS

## TELLERS AND STEWARDS

The tellers and stewards shall be members of staff of the union who will examine the credentials of all members attending and of authorised visitors.

## PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING

Other than the official photographer and any recording undertaken by the union, photographs may be taken during the Conference only with the express consent of the subject and no audio or visual recordings will be allowed.

## AGENDA

**Compositing motions and/or amendments** The movers of motions and amendments shall be asked to co-operate with the Standing Orders Committee prior to or during the Conference in order that composite motions may be obtained wherever possible.

**Remittance of motions** A motion which has been moved and seconded may not be remitted by the mover to the Council for consideration without the consent of the Conference.

**Withdrawal of motions or amendments** A motion or amendment which has been moved and seconded may not be withdrawn by the mover without the consent of the Conference.

**Unfinished business** All matters on the agenda not reached at the conclusion of the last day of the Conference shall be remitted to the Council.

## ORDER OF DEBATE

**Limitation of speeches** The mover of a motion shall be allowed not more than five minutes to move the motion. The seconder and subsequent speakers, including the right of reply, shall be allowed not more than three minutes. One minute before the expiry of each speaker's time limit a warning shall be given, and again at the expiry of the speaker's time.

**Amendments** No amendments of any kind will be accepted at the Conference. Requests to move references back of sections of the Annual Report of the Council or annual statement of accounts, to withdraw a motion, to composite motions or amendments, or any other request that would have the effect of altering the timetable must be made to the Standing Orders Committee in the committee room and not from the floor of the meeting.

## ADDRESSING THE CONFERENCE

- Representatives shall indicate they wish to speak by holding up a voting card.
- Representatives and Councillors shall come to the rostrum and speak to motions only when called by the Chair. They shall address the Chair and give their name and whom they represent.
- On questions, points of order, formal moving and seconding of motions, representatives shall stand in their place (unless unable to do so) when speaking and not come to the rostrum unless invited by the Chair.
- Should the Chair stand during a debate, the representative speaking shall give way and neither s/he nor any other representative shall speak until the Chair gives leave.

## VOTING

Only elected Representatives and members of the Council shall be allowed to vote. All voting shall be by a show of voting cards.

All other matters of procedure are governed by Rule 39: Rules of Debate in the Rules of the union.

### Standing Orders Committee

Julia Carson Sims (Chair), John Carnegie (Vice-Chair)  
Maureen Beattie, Adam Burns, Di Christian, Chris Cotton,  
Jeremy Phillips, Pab Roberts, Terry Victor