

SUCU Emergency General Meeting, 2nd Dec 2019, 11.30-12.30

Chair: Robyn Orfitelli, SUCU Branch Vice President

Minutes: Jane Rodger, SUCU Branch Administrator

1. Welcome and introduction

1.1. Robyn Orfitelli welcomed all members to the meeting.

2. USS Special Sector Conference 6th Dec

2.1. We would like to discuss and have a mandate from our members ahead of the USS Special Sector Conference this Friday.

2.2. Motion 4 (City University of London Branch motion) was discussed. SUCU delegates to the Conference suggest that the two resolves for the following motion are taken in parts, as there is a risk that UCU's hands could be tied in terms of planning for the next set of strike days. Members at the meeting indicated by a majority show of hands, that they were in favour of this approach.

Scheduling inclusive and equitable strike action: selecting days and weeks **City University of London**

Conference notes that:

1. different institutions have different term dates
2. most university teaching recurs weekly on the same day
3. strike action that hits one day harder than another produces inequities around which students are affected and inequities for staff
4. staff inequities may be most consequential for casualised staff whose teaching is concentrated on particular day(s).

Conference believes that:

- a. student support is critical for members' confidence and our effectiveness
- b. face-to-face classroom-based interaction is an essential mechanism by which members gain student support
- c. members' typically want actions that are equitable and inclusive
- d. well-designed action makes it easier for members to participate.

Conference resolves that:

- i. future USS strike-days be spread across the week as equally as possible
- ii. to facilitate prior face-to-face discussion with students, concurrent national action is timed so that no branch begins strike action earlier than week two of the teaching term.

Comments regarding resolves i. included:

- "as equally as possible" does give flexibility.
- Would this resolves prevent a strike pattern similar to the USS strike of 2018?
Ans. It is possible if it is taken literally.

An advisory vote was taken on resolves i. The majority were against the resolves, and there were 17 abstentions.

Comments regarding resolves ii. included:

- When is the earliest point at which the strikes might start?
Ans. We do not know.
- This resolves could frustrate co-ordinated national action.
- This could be a guidance, but should not be mandatory.
- More flexibility could be introduced in the wording.

An advisory vote was taken on resolves ii. The majority were against the resolves and there were 7 abstentions.

2.3. Motion 3 – an amendment to the Open University Branch motion was proposed.

Proposed amendment to Motion 3:

Amend the third sentence to read:

This should aim to include commitments going beyond the next valuation and improved governance of USS.

Amend the fourth sentence to read:

This conference instructs our negotiators, dispute committee and Superannuation Working Group to aim for settlements to the USS dispute that are long-term in nature.

Original motion: No more groundhog days, Open University

This conference believes we need a satisfactory long-term settlement to the USS dispute, rather than one that will require us to fight the same battles repeatedly. We therefore need an agreement that will protect us in the long term. This should include a full commitment to the recommendations in the first report of the JEP, to the principle no detriment going beyond the next valuation, and to improved governance of USS.

This conference instructs our negotiators, dispute committee and Superannuation Working Group not to accept settlements to the USS dispute that are short-term only in nature.

The proposer spoke in favour of the amendment and gave some background. If we accept the original motion (above) there is a risk that we will be bound to “no detriment” in the future, and this might make it unnecessarily hard to reach a resolution to the dispute.

Proposer: Robyn Orfitelli on behalf of SUCU Committee

Seconded from the floor.

A vote was taken and the amendment which was passed nem con.