

Remits for Unite Union AGM 2026

Remit 1: Sam Burnside-Woods

Celebrating and Supporting Union Members through Artistic Expression

This AGM believes that Unite should make a commitment to engaging and supporting our members in a way that allows them to develop outside their primary working life and contributes positively to the union, through their artistic endeavours.

Art in this case is not limited to visual media such as painting and drawing but includes all creative works. Additionally, the production and sale of union merchandising would create additional revenue and allow support from non-members.

This AGM notes that recently the Unite Executive has directed the organisation to reduce the use of AI in developing material for use in Unite publications and communication. This reflects an existing preference for the use of human-made artistic works.

This AGM therefore resolves that the union will:

1. Create, publish and distribute a free publication made up of union members artistic works, with attribution made to individuals to promote said work.
2. Collate all contributed works to utilise in the future in other union material or cultural endeavours (with attribution).
3. For works utilised in the production of union merchandising, artists will be appropriately compensated financially.

Remit 2: Simon Edmunds

Stronger Bargaining, Campaigning and Industrial Action

This AGM notes that many recent Unite collective employment agreements have resulted in real wage cuts for our members. We note that context is important here: Minimum wage rises have been well below inflation for three years, and over 40% of workers in NZ received no wage rise at all last year.

This AGM believes that while the union cannot control external pressures, it can strengthen the way it organises, campaigns and uses industrial action to improve bargaining outcomes. Union power comes from three sources - power in numbers through collective bargaining, the ability to take strike action and public support - which Unite has used successfully in historic campaigns for the living wage, to Supersize My Pay and to defeat Zero Hours contracts.

This AGM therefore resolves that the union will:

1. Maintain a focus on recruitment and developing strong delegates so that we can exert power in our workplaces.
2. Develop workplace and public campaigns that leverage employers' brands to win public support.
3. Improve the union's ability to use mainstream media effectively, including developing strong public messaging and confident union spokespeople who can effectively communicate workers' experiences and demands. Build relationships with local journalists.
4. Make greater use of effective public campaigns and industrial action in order to win better bargaining outcomes. The need for super-majority participation or the ability to close a workplace should not be a barrier to taking action.
5. Create opportunities to review campaign strategies and learn from successes and failures.
6. Prioritise building alliances and collaborative actions with other unions, activists, community groups, progressive politicians, the CTU and LACs.
7. Provide accurate information about employer offers to members before votes on offers or industrial action are taken, including the real value of offers after inflation and any negative impacts on conditions.
8. Direct bargaining teams to avoid recommending offers that include real-term pay reductions, in principle. Where the union believes it cannot get a better deal at the bargaining table, it should make "no recommendation", while clearly explaining the need for industrial action if members vote no. Members can then democratically decide how to proceed. There may be specific situations where the union and bargaining teams decide to be flexible on this approach.

Constitutional Remit 3: Gerard Hehir

Add 15.4 "Any Officeholder or member of the Executive who breaches their duties as an office holder (as defined in the Incorporated Societies Act 2022) or breaches an applicable code of conduct, may at a meeting of the Executive convened for the purpose, be removed from office or position by a two third majority vote of the Executive."

Constitutional Remit 4: Gerard Hehir

Unite Union Disputes Resolution and Complaints Process

Background: *The current Unite Constitution is not compliant with the Incorporated Societies Act 2022 in that it does not provide for a situation where a complaint may be made against a member that is trivial or lacks merit. The purpose of this remit is to ensure consistency with the Dispute Resolution provisions of the Act*

The following update to the Constitution is proposed:

Appendix A

Unite Union Disputes Resolution and Complaints Process

Receive the Complaint

Add: "Assess the complaint, and whether it requires progressing or lacks merit.

The National Secretary and Co-Presidents (except those with a conflict of interest in regard to the complaint) may jointly decide not to proceed further with a complaint if—

- (a) the complaint is trivial; or
- (b) the complaint does not appear to disclose or involve any allegation of the following kind:
 - (i) that a member or an officer has engaged in material misconduct;
 - (ii) that a member, an officer, or the society has materially breached, or is likely to materially breach, a duty under the society's constitution or bylaws or this Act;
 - (iii) that a member's rights or interests or members' rights or interests generally have been materially damaged;
- (c) the complaint appears to be without foundation or there is no apparent evidence to support it; or
- (d) the person who makes the complaint has an insignificant interest in the matter; or
- (e) the conduct, incident, event, or issue giving rise to the complaint has already been investigated and dealt with under the constitution; or
- (f) there has been an undue delay in making the complaint.

If a decision is made not to proceed the National Secretary/Co-President will inform the complainant in writing of the reason for that decision.

Unite Executive Resolutions

5. 2026 Fee Review

Background

At the 2025 AGM it was resolved:

“That, as per the resolution adopted at the 2024 AGM, the Executive will present to the 2026 AGM the option of a further adjustment in 2027 that reduces the variable percentage fee to 1.1% without increasing overall fees to members.”

However, the process was always to be reviewed year by year depending on circumstances:

“That the 2027 and 2028 adjustments are dependent on inflation, wage increases and the union’s financial viability and such factors will be considered and reported on before any increases or adjustments are made.”

The proposed structure would increase fees for over half of our membership while part-time members would have a decrease. Reducing the variable fee from 1.2% to 1% would require a maximum rate increase of between 75 cents and \$1 per week. This is a substantial increase for around 45% of members. After over two years of real wage decline for most members (directly resulting from the minimum wage increases being substantially lower than inflation) the Executive feels that this is not the right time to implement such a big change. The issue can be re-considered in 2027 when, hopefully, we can look forward to real wage growth which would make the change much easier to implement.

Resolution:

That implementation of a fee re-structure as per the 2025 AGM resolution be deferred for consideration until the 2027 Unite AGM.

6. Workers Councils for 2026-2027

Background

Each year the Executive is required to recommend to the AGM which Workers Councils should be allowed to have direct representation on the Unite Executive. Additional provisions passed at the 2025 AGM ensure that Councils must be active and meet the meeting requirements to retain their representation on the Executive throughout the year.

Resolution:

That, as per the constitution, the following Workers Councils be established and have representation on the Unite Executive, subject to them meeting the ongoing requirements set out in the constitution:

- McDonalds
- SkyCity
- Restaurant Brands Ltd (KFC, Carl’s Jr, Taco Bell and Pizza Hutt)
- Tahua Brands (Burger King, Starbucks and Popeyes)