

**No. 068/26**

11<sup>th</sup> March 2026

**To: All Branches**

Dear Colleagues,

## **CWU POLICY FORUMS – REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES**

Branches will recall that, at the Special Restructuring Conference (SRC) held on 28 June 2025 in Blackpool, the CWU debated and subsequently agreed the NEC Policy Paper covering CWU Conferences and Delegations.

This policy paper also included an important section setting out the intended policy that the NEC would be taking in relation to “modernising Conference and maintaining our democracy”. An important aspect of this was the utilisation of decision-making policy forums.

Reproduced below for ease of reference is the relevant section of the agreed policy paper:

*“In order to ensure that the CWU is able to respond to urgent and important issues outside of the biennial Conference, the NEC will ensure that the CWU can utilise different decision-making processes. This will include using decision-making policy forums, which can be called by the NEC, branches and Industrial Executives, subject to the rules of the union.*

*These should only be utilised if an urgent issue arises, a major issue of an unforeseen nature, or one requiring strategic direction between Conferences. This approach will ensure that when policy is agreed it will be at the right time and with the full involvement of those impacted.*

*Guidelines for calling policy forums will be produced by the NEC or the Industrial Executives, where appropriate, including the delegation sizes and the bylaws to govern these forums. This would have to include the necessity for policy forums to be convened at short notice and ensuring there are procedures and processes in place that will not prevent this from occurring.*

*Where appropriate, holding policy forums online can also provide further flexibility. The success of these during the pandemic can be used as the basis to make further improvements to supplement both future Conferences and Policy Forums. The Industrial Executives or the NEC, where appropriate, will adjudicate whether Policy Forums are held online or in-person. For any events held online, we will ensure we have the appropriate accessibility adjustments in place.*

*The measures above will not only contribute to the financial reductions to put the CWU in the best position to remain as a standalone union but will help to support a more contemporary policy-making process going forward.”*

Branches will appreciate the wording contained within this section is very clear and establishes Policy Forums as an essential part of our democratic decision-making processes.

To supplement this the NEC submitted rule amendments to rules 8.1.7 and 8.4.3 at the Special Rules Revision Conference (SRRC), also held in Blackpool on 29 June 2025. The carriage of these rule amendments ensured the essential principle that Policy Forums were now “decision making” forums of the CWU and became enshrined in our rule book.

Prior to the commencement of the Conferences and following several questions from Branches, LTB 126/25 was published. This LTB illustrated how the NEC would be dealing with Policy Forums going forward and made it clear that Policy Forum regulations and guidelines would be produced by the NEC.

These restructured policies also reinforce the NEC commitment to maintaining and protecting our democratic principles of holding conferences, while supporting and supplementing these by the introduction of modernised decision-making processes such as policy forums.

This will result in urgent decisions being made as quickly as possible and made at a time when contemporary issues need to be dealt with swiftly. This would also include having the ability to utilise, where appropriate both in person and online/video conferences and policy forums as required.

Accordingly, any agreed and published regulations and guidelines need to ensure that mechanisms are in place that allow the NEC, Industrial Executives and branches to be able to call Policy Forums (in accordance with the rules of the union) in a speedier way and where necessary, at relatively short notice and with less restrictive timelines where this is necessary and unavoidable.

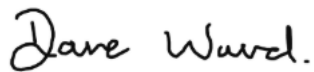
Additionally, to ensure we have a consistent approach across the CWU in respect of policy forums it is essential that we have a single set of regulations and guidelines in operation throughout the CWU that cover all planned policy forums i.e. General NEC related issues and for Industrial policy forums for Postal and TFS industrial issues. It was originally anticipated these would be agreed and circulated during September 2025 but there has been a delay due to the culmination of other redesign work and industrial developments.

At a meeting on 25th and 26th of February, the NEC agreed to the regulations and guidelines attached at Appendix 1 and 2 respectively. These were drafted following consultation with the two industrial departments, as well as the President and Vice President. Both capture the relevant policy contained in our rules, as well as the agreed conference policies covering decision making policy forums. These contain the guiding principles and procedures that allow the NEC, Industrial Executives and Branches to have the ability and flexibility to act as quickly as necessary to make urgent decisions as and when they are required.

The completion of the Policy Forum regulations and guidelines mean that a further strand of our restructuring work is now complete. Branches should however note the intention is to keep these regulations and guidelines under review and report back to the NEC should further amendments or clarification be needed as policy forums are called and documents have been put into practice.

If you have any questions, please contact the General Secretary's Department at [dlynch@cwu.org](mailto:dlynch@cwu.org).

Yours sincerely,



Dave Ward  
**General Secretary**

## **Appendix 1 - CWU Policy Forum Regulations**

1. All CWU Policy Forums must be convened in strict accordance with the CWU rules.
2. These regulations have been produced in accordance with CWU rule (s) 8.1.7 and 8.4.3 and shall be used to govern all CWU decision making Policy Forums
3. *The NEC*, or where applicable the relevant Industrial Executive shall be responsible for authorising and convening CWU Policy Forums and shall produce and publish guidelines for decision-making Policy Forums as required.
4. Decision making Policy Forums may be called by the NEC, the relevant Industrial Executive Committee or at the request of Branches representing not less than 40% of the relevant CWU membership.
5. Where branches are seeking to request a decision-making policy forum which is being convened in accordance with the rules then this must be not less than 40% of the relevant CWU membership. The request must be sent by email to the CWU General Secretary or where applicable to the relevant Industrial Deputy General Secretary who shall arrange for the request to be placed before the NEC or Industrial Executive Committee
6. The request must clearly state the subject matter and the reason why the request is being made. All Branch requests must be the result of a decision taken at a properly constituted Branch Membership Meeting.
7. In respect of separate Collective Bargaining Units/Businesses these shall be entitled to coordinate requests from the relevant branches to call a decision-making policy forum solely related to their collective bargaining unit/businesses.

However, the principle being that, in accordance with the CWU rules only the relevant Industrial Executive or those branches with members within the collective bargaining units/businesses can request a decision-making policy forum related to that collective bargaining units/businesses shall be upheld.

8. Decision making Policy Forums shall only deal with the specific issues published to branches that require an urgent decision.
9. All decision-making policy forums will be report based. Once the report has been published branches or where applicable any Business Coordinating Committees/Collective Bargaining Units shall be entitled to submit amendment (s) to the report subject to any published regulations, guidelines, entitlements and deadlines.
10. The timelines and guidelines for decision making policy forum shall be agreed by the NEC or Industrial Executive (where applicable) and will be published to branches and shall allow sufficient time for branches to consider the report and submit amendments.

11. Entitlement to submit amendments will be clearly stated when notification of the Policy Forum is published to branches along with the closing date for submission of amendments.
12. The Method of Voting at a policy forum will be by a) Show of hands or b) card vote as decided by the Chair of the policy forum. To be deemed as carried the vote will require a simple majority of those votes cast.
13. All decision-making policy forums shall be chaired as appropriate by either the CWU President or CWU Vice President. Industrial Policy Forums shall be Chaired by the Chair of the relevant Industrial Constituency or a designated substitute agreed by the NEC or the relevant Industrial Executive.
14. The NEC or relevant Industrial Executive shall determine whether the decision-making policy forum shall be a in person policy forum or an online policy forum. This decision will be published to branches at the earliest opportunity to branches in an LTB.
15. Delegation sizes for policy forums shall be agreed by the NEC or relevant Industrial Executive and shall be published in the policy forum notification and guidelines.
16. The publishing of guidelines and the administration, coordination and publication of reports and amendments will be conducted by the President/Vice President (General Policy Forums) or the Chair of the Industrial Constituency (Industrial Policy Forums)

## **Appendix 2 – CWU Policy Forum Guidelines**

The purpose of these CWU Policy Forum Guidelines is to provide help and assistance to Branches and, where applicable Business Based Committees and Collective Bargaining Units in respect of the organising, administrative arrangements and procedures to be used for a Policy Forum which has been convened in accordance with the CWU Rules (please see CWU rule 8.1.7 and 8.4.3).

Additionally, the attached guidelines are compliant with the relevant policies of the CWU and with the CWU Policy Forum Regulations agreed by the NEC and published to Branches.

It is important to remind Branches that the primary purpose of CWU decision making policy forums is to allow the CWU to deal with urgent issues, a major issue of an unforeseen nature, or one requiring strategic direction between conferences.

To achieve this, it is therefore necessary to be as flexible as possible in respect of the timelines, administration and the issuing of notifications etc whilst ensuring that our democratic principles are continued to be upheld by giving Branches an opportunity to consider reports and submit amendments should they wish.

The attached regulations are applicable to the Policy Forum detailed below:

### **INSERT POLICY FORUM TITLE AND REASONS WHY THE POLICY FORUM IS REQUIRED**

- NEC POLICY FORUM
- POSTAL INDUSTRIAL EXECUTIVE POLICY FORUM
- T&FS INDUSTRIAL POLICY FORUM

### **POLICY FORUM GUIDELINES**

- 1. Policy Forum Title/Subject Matter**  
TBA
- 2. Date and Time of Policy Forum**  
TBA
- 3. Format of Policy Forum**  
TBA - In Person or Online
- 4. Policy Forum venue (In Person Policy Forums Only)**  
TBA
- 5. Details of Online Policy Forum**  
TBA
- 6. Date That The NEC/Industrial Executive Report to be published**  
TBA
- 7. Opening and Closing Time and Date for amendments to the report**  
TBA
- 8. Branch Delegation and Speaker Entitlement**  
TBA
- 9. Credentials/Registration for Credentials**

Branches are reminded to fill in the registration form, including visitors where applicable that may be attending the Policy Forum. This should be emailed to [TBA@cwu.org](mailto:TBA@cwu.org) prior to the Policy Forum commencing.

The person responsible for collection the voting cards should also collect their Branch credentials.

## 10. Voting Cards

The Branch Representative will be issued, upon registration, with the appropriate voting cards.

These will be clearly marked YES, NO & Abstain.

The voting strength will vary depending on the Policy Forum which has been convened i.e. General/Industrial however the voting strength will be based on the relevant latest CWU membership numbers available at the time that the Policy Forum is convened.

## 11. Amendments to Report Recommendation (s)

Branches and where applicable, Business Co-ordinating Committees/Collective Bargaining Units will be entitled to submit one amendment per NEC/Industrial Executive recommendation. Opening and closing dates for amendments will be circulated with the Policy Forum report. Amendments can be submitted via the relevant published form to the recommendations contained at the end of the Report.

## 12. Withdrawal of Amendments

Branches, Business Co-ordinating Committees/Collective Bargaining Units can withdraw amendments by emailing the designated published email address up to the closing date.

Any other withdrawals after this date can be done from the floor on the day of the Policy Forum.

## 13. Voting Procedures

Voting will be by a show of hands unless a card vote is called by the Chair of the Policy Forum. The card vote strength will be based on the relevant latest Membership numbers held on the CWU Central Membership Records at the time that the Policy Forum is convened.

A simple majority of the votes cast is required for the proposition to be carried.

## 14 Challenging the Chair

1. Any Branch can challenge the Chair prior to the moving of the report on the following basis:
  - The Chair's rulings, which includes out of order amendments and consequential

- Order of amendment
  - Time allocated
2. For good business, challenges will not be taken after the Policy Forum has been opened 15mins.
  3. If the Chair is challenged, the Chair will immediately hand over to the Vice Chair to proceed.
  4. The Branch will put their challenge and the Chair will reply.
  5. The challenge will be put to a hand vote and carried by a simple majority.

## **15. Suspension of the order of debate**

1. A branch can suspend the order of debate provided no amendment is being debated.
2. The mover should state clearly their intention to reorder the debate.
3. This will be put to a show of hands and carried by a simple majority.
4. Suspension cannot be moved again for another 1½ hours.

## **16. Point of order**

1. Attendees can move a point of order on the following basis:
  - Use of unparliamentary language
  - Digressing from the subject of the amendment
  - Rules of the Union being broken
  - An infringement of the customary rules of debate
2. The Chair's ruling on this matter will be final.

## **17. Order of Debate**

1. NEC/National Officer to move recommendation.
2. Where appropriate Branch/Business Coordinating Committee and/or Collective Bargaining Unit to move single amendment or composite amendment
3. Seconded from Branch /Business Coordinating Committees and/or Collective Bargaining Unit in single amendment or composite.
4. Amendments can be formally seconded.
5. Open to debate – delegates to speak on behalf of their Branch.
6. NEC or where applicable the respective Industrial Executive to speak on amendment.
7. Branches/Business Coordinating Committee/Collective Bargaining Units will have the right to reply on composites and amendments if opposition is moved.
8. Where applicable Senior Field Officials may move, second and enter debate on behalf of a Branch or Business Coordinating Committee.
9. No Branch can speak more than once on any amendment except the moving Branch.
10. A Branch that has not entered the debate may move “the vote be taken”. If carried the vote will be taken after PE speaker and the composite mover has replied if opposed.
11. The amended report will be put to the vote by the Chair for adoption. This will be done after the last debate on amendments and put straight to the vote without debate.

## 18. Speaker Times

	<b>Mover</b>	<b>Secunder</b>	<b>NEC/IE</b>	<b>Right to reply (If opposition)</b>
NEC/Industrial Executive Recommendation	10 minutes	Formally	X	5 minutes
Single or Composite Amendments	5 minutes	3 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes
Speaker Entering Debate	3 minutes			