

DELIVERING ON

the **workplace agenda 2007**



Introduction

In April the affiliated trade unions in Scotland published “A Workplace Agenda 2007” that set out our views on the key issues we would wish to see addressed in the 2007 Scottish Labour manifesto. The Scottish Policy Forum has reached agreement on the policy programme for next year’s elections and these will be considered at the Scottish Labour Party conference in Oban.

The trade unions supports this policy programme. We believe this programme delivers the Workplace Agenda providing a distinctly Scottish approach to the challenges facing the nation.

How the Workplace Agenda will be delivered by Scottish Labour.

Scotland in the World

- Launch specific initiatives with trade unions to ensure that all newcomers to Scotland, including those attracted through the *Fresh Talent Initiative*, are not exploited by unscrupulous landlords or employers.
- Expand the *One Scotland Many Cultures* campaign to challenge racism.
- Deliver a real presence at the heart of EU decision-making for nations within the EU that are not states, such as Scotland. This strengthens the benefits of being part of a large, powerful member state.
- Promote EU law defining, safeguarding and promoting public services.
- Build on the *Make Poverty History* campaign by developing Scotland’s partnership with the developing world, and with Malawi in particular.
- Commit to the principles of devolution – a Scotland better off and stronger in Britain, worse off and weaker apart. Continue to use the flexibility in the Scotland Act to allow any necessary changes to the existing disposition of powers.

Culture

- A new approach to culture, with legislation to set out cultural entitlements for everyone living in Scotland.
- Develop and extend the level of long term support that is provided for cultural participation and expression including the expansion of local government cultural services.
- Promote St Andrew’s Day as an opportunity to bring people together, regardless of social or cultural ancestry. Encourage employers to negotiate with trade unions to allow employees to celebrate our national day as a holiday.

Sport

- An integrated approach to providing sporting facilities from school to voluntary organisations – promoting healthy activity for all.
- Support local authorities to promote the use of sports facilities and ensure that the legitimate incentives that apply to charities are not used as vehicles for outsourcing by local authorities.

Crime

- Deliver long-term funding for community wardens and develop the roles of police support staff, recognising that to fight modern crime the police need staff with modern specialised skills.
- Demonstrate support for anti-social behaviour legislation amongst workers and local communities by building on the success of Community Safety Partnerships and delivering stronger communities.
- Support the founding principles of the Children's Hearings system in tackling offending behaviour whilst recognising that most young people are responsible individuals more likely to be the victims of crime than any other age group.
- Support the development of trade union safety representatives and take action to reduce accidents and deaths in the workplace. Challenge the safety culture of many employers. Work closely with employers, unions and health and safety experts to find appropriate corporate manslaughter/culpable homicide legislation for Scotland at devolved and reserved levels.
- Continue to tackle sectarianism, racism and other hate crimes such as homophobia including making sure that judges are able to consider any aggravating factors when passing sentence.
- Continue to take tough action on domestic abuse including working with employers to develop and implement effective procedures in the workplace to support those suffering domestic violence.
- Stamp out unacceptable violence and intimidation in the workplace across Scotland. Review the emergency workers legislation, including its scope and protect the others who provide services to the public, including altering the sentencing process so it recognises assaults on service providers as an aggravating factor. Extend the *Safe at Work* initiatives to raise awareness and encourage all employers, including those in the public sector, to take practical measures to minimise the risk of violence to staff.

Access to Justice

- Develop advice information and representation services, which are accessible to local communities including looking at ways of extending and developing law centres with the aim of creating new community advice networks.
- Personal injury cases to be dealt with in a manner which recognises the sensitivity and complexity of the cases, retaining the right of access to the Court of Session.

Education

- Significantly improve early years and childcare provision and funding to help hard working families to balance work and family life. Simplify funding as part of an integrated childcare and early year's strategy. Aim to progressively extend full-time childcare and early years learning for all ages.
- Improving the quality of provision by starting the process of substantially improving the qualifications, career prospects and rewards of early years and childcare workers.
- Commit to the modern comprehensive principle rooted in our belief in a decent society – that every child should have a genuinely equal chance of the best education in their local school.
- Create 'Skills Academies' in secondary schools and further education colleges as part of a drive to improve motivation, guarantee wider learning choices and add prestige to vocational learning.
- Develop stronger bonds between our careers service and our schools making the careers service an integral part of the school while retaining independent advice and a strong commitment to an all-age careers service. To deliver these commitments the new *Full Employment Agency* will set the strategic direction for the careers service, with delivery by regional groupings of local authorities.
- Ensure all school support staff are even better trained and that their contribution is fully valued and recognised. This includes establishing a task group – including trade unions and local authorities – charged with reporting to ministers by May 2008 on the further steps needed to gain stronger recognition and integration of the work of school support staff into the life of the school; the qualifications, career pathways and personal development of these staff; and to consider the potential implications of this work for pay and conditions.
- Schools play a central role in improving the health of our nation and the life chances of individuals. Health, nutrition, exercise, wellbeing issues and the skills to support healthy lifestyles are set to become much more central to school life. On food and drink the ambition is to progressively extend the entitlements for those most in need, by ensuring Ministers and local authorities have appropriate

powers to deliver, and to target support to particular communities to improve their health depending on local need.

Social Work

- Take the action necessary, including funding and training, to deliver on the findings of the *Changing Lives* report into 21st century social work. Ensure all working in this challenging area are better managed, supported, equipped and empowered to undertake their difficult task.

Life Long Learning

- Welcome the commitment of trade unions in promoting work-based learning, and support trade union learning representatives in identifying, facilitating and improving education and skills levels, in partnership with government and business.
- Take steps to ensure that we build on Scotland's qualification profile that is improving at a faster rate than for the UK as a whole, by adopting a power to levy a charge to ensure that all businesses commit dedicated resources to training should this become necessary.
- Enhance the role of ILAs and provide increased financial support to those from lower socio-economic groups who face cultural, social and economic barriers, and to those with the lowest qualifications and skills levels.

Communities

- Work towards full employment with a dedicated focus on getting people back to work and ensuring that they stay in work at jobs that are sustainable, fulfilling and fairly paid.
- Put local government at the heart of community planning to help public agencies work together with the community to plan and deliver better services.
- Enhance the capacity and role of the voluntary sector, though not as a means to cut public sector jobs. Deliver stable long-term funding for the voluntary sector – securing the future for many vital projects together with good governance and fair employment standards.
- Support the growth of credit unions and food co-ops to ensure fair credit and fresh, affordable food, and improve the quality of life for people in our communities.

Housing

- Deliver more affordable housing, expanding quality and quantity using all of the funding mechanisms at our disposal. This will include support for direct investment by local authorities – already totalling £500m a year on social rented housing.
- Raise housing standards and build on the success of the current grant schemes for heating, insulation and other energy efficiency measures so we can meet our firm commitment to end fuel poverty by 2016.

Local Government

- Develop a new concordat between the Scottish Executive and local government, which will; recognise that different decisions are rightly taken at different levels of government, build mutual respect, and recognise the important role local government plays in the democratic life of Scotland.
- Reform the system of local government finance through a commitment to a fairer, property-based taxation system. Reject the introduction of a local income tax that would penalise hard working couples on no more than average incomes. Consider changes to the business rate system as part of a commitment to strengthening local democracy and local economic development.
- Recognise public concern over the size of the quango state. The public service reform agenda will

consider how existing democratically-elected representatives, through the council as a corporate entity, can be given greater oversight over a reduced number of quangos. There will be a duty on all public bodies to involve service users, staff and the community meaningfully in decision-making.

Public Service Workforce

- Recognise that the quality of local services depends on the staff delivering them and ensure that they are esteemed, well trained and properly paid.
- Address the perceptions that *best value* is becoming too cost driven. Ensure that public sector procurement takes into account much more than price, and considers good employment conditions and sustainable, socially acceptable, environmentally friendly, and local procurement options.
- Review the approach to all PPP to ensure a level playing field between PPP and conventional finance arrangements. A substantial part of this review will have the aim of excluding soft FM services from future PPP contracts. In addition, we will review the implementation of the PPP staffing protocol to examine how to apply it across the public sector.
- Drive up performance on race equality across the whole public sector, in accordance with the Race Equality Duty, and in particular monitor the use of Race Equality Impact Assessments.
- Determine to make steady progress on implementing the new Gender Equality Duty including promoting best practice through procurement and specific action to deal with the continuing problem of occupational segregation. Recognise the importance of addressing past discrimination on equal pay and strive to ensure that all public service organisations make provision to meet their equal pay obligations.

Environment

- Reduce waste and increase recycling with an ambition to divert 100% of domestic waste from land fill– setting a challenging target of 70% by 2020 and seek to exceed this if possible.
- *Scottish Water* should remain publicly owned and accountable. Look at ways of strengthening ownership and accountability, improve the service, upgrade the water and sewerage system, reduce leakages and ensure regulation does not centre on short-term efficiency measures but on the quality and safe delivery of services in the long-term.

Economy

- Create an effective *Defence Diversification Agency* to plan the diversification of defence jobs.
- Re-focus RSA grants towards indigenous companies and attach repayment conditions to grants if certain criteria are not met.
- Ensure that the new *Manufacturing Advisory Service Scotland* is fully resourced and will deliver on its goals of improve the manufacturing capability of firms.
- Improve access to long term capital and equity to enable companies to grow by reforming our publicly-owned investment institutions - *Scottish Enterprise* and *Highlands and Islands Enterprise* - to establish a clearer investment framework for companies, maximise EU funding, close the equity gap, improve the governance and public accountability of the schemes that currently operate, and expand the investment in SMEs and manufacturing companies.

Employment

- Create a *Full Employment Agency* and to consult on its operation, to ensure that our companies have the modern skills and qualifications to compete successfully. The full-employment agency would be a partnership between government, trades unions and industry leaders.
- Fully implement the EU Directive on public procurement ensuring these provisions are used to best effect to support the Scottish economy and our social, environmental and fair employment objectives.
- For people in work, policies should focus on ensuring quality of employment and that employees have

a fulfilling work life. In order to increase dignity in employment there is a need to work with business organisations and trade unions to make sure equal pay legislation is implemented. While recognising that the most competitive and successful firms consult and ensure greater levels of participation with their workforce, the Scottish public sector does have a role in promoting good practice.

- Government can do much to make sure that employers are aware of their responsibilities. We must work with the private sector to change attitudes towards disability, and encourage employers to recruit more disabled people. We should work with the Department of Work and Pensions to promote workers rights through public information campaigns.

Energy

- Adopt an energy supply policy that gives consideration to all energy sources, including renewables, nuclear, gas, coal and oil to ensure a safe, secure, sustainable, affordable and diverse means of electricity production. We will also adopt a balanced planning policy in relation to development of energy sources.
- Within a balanced mix of energy sources Scotland can make a positive contribution to the UK mix by generating an increasing proportion of electricity from renewable sources. We will seek to ensure that the Scottish economy not only benefits from the expansion of this industry, but that new manufacturing and engineering jobs in the construction of this industry are created in Scotland.
- Support green jobs and developing a just transition programme with relevant partners. Commit appropriate funding to this.

Transport

- Re-regulate the bus industry along corridors to maintain and develop new services and links. Consider all legislative models to improve quality and develop new service links across Scotland, including the use of powers within the Transport Scotland Act to impose quality contracts where the creation of quality partnerships is subject to delay.
- Work to ensure value for money and greater public accountability for the delivery of the Scotrail franchise. Move towards establishing legally-based integrated timetabling and through ticketing between rail and bus operation, to ensure that the travelling public has a high quality, affordable, safe rail and bus system, with certainty over access and timetable. The case for running the Scottish franchise on a not-for-profit basis needs to be fully examined as part of the preparation for the next franchise.

Health

- The Health Minister is to be the champion of public health across government portfolios, looking across the board at how housing, transport, environment and employment impacts on the health of the nation and shaping policies which take account of all of these factors to build a healthier Scotland
- Recognise the positive and sometimes negative impact work has on the health of workers and their families. We will build the work of the *Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives* into a co-ordinated workplace initiative to improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of Scotland's workers.
- We will place a duty on Scottish ministers and local authorities to endeavour to ensure that all local authority schools are health-promoting environments. Regulatory standards will be informed by a *Food for Good* programme that will set high standards in the public sector as an exemplar provision.
- We need to be far more attentive to mental health issues as a society. We will promote good mental health in the workplace as well as encourage awareness of, and support for, good mental health in workplaces and communities.

NHS in Scotland

- Continue to drive the involvement of patients and the public in the redesign and development of services by piloting the direct election of a majority of health board members. Consider future structures for the broader reform of public services.
- Strong support for NHS dentistry including better support and incentives for practices demonstrating commitment to our NHS; and further support to encourage recruitment and retention of all dental team members. Continue to strengthen the salaried service in areas where it is most needed.
- Services should be as local as possible, and as specialised as necessary with quicker treatment through service redesign together with growing NHS capacity. Local services will require more GPs. There may also be a need for health boards to employ salaried GPs to meet the needs of local populations, a move we would support and encourage.
- No one should be prevented from accessing necessary medical treatment through insufficient means. We recognise the strongly-held public concern over the anomalies and inequities of the current system of prescription charges that results in some people being unable to afford the cost of medicines that have been prescribed for them. Therefore, we will introduce a system that will address these anomalies and inequities and ensure that people will be able to afford the medicines they have been prescribed.

Health Workforce

- We recognise the valuable role that NHS professionals such as cleaning, catering and administrative staff play in the smooth functioning of our National Health Service and we will continue to value and support these workers as a vital part of our modern NHS.
- Ensure that the contracting-out of services does not and has not become a vehicle that substitutes cheapness for cleanliness. This should be an important consideration in any review on the expiry of existing contracts when there will be a presumption that in-house services will be the norm.
- Develop wider roles for nurses and allied health professionals allowing doctors to spend their time dealing with other medical priorities but also allowing nurses and allied health professionals to further develop their skills.
- Ensure that we develop enough nurses to deliver these new roles and our expanding NHS capacity. We will develop in partnership with the health unions a series of measures to address drop out rates, including consideration of salaried student nurses, better mentorship and support when working in the NHS, financial support for those with carer responsibilities and transport challenges, as well as pre-training employment and support.
- Take measures to further reduce dependency on agency nursing and ensure that overseas nurses are not exploited during their stay.



This Agenda has been produced by Scottish Trade Unions affiliated to the Labour Party (STULP). For further information on Delivering the Workplace Agenda or on STULP contact the Secretary:

**Dave Watson, UNISON House, 14 West Campbell Street Glasgow G2 6RX.
E.mail d.watson@unison.co.uk.**

Please also check out the website at www.unionstogether.org.uk