

How do I propose a motion to my local Labour Party? A Guide for UNISON Labour Link members.

1. Introduction

Proposing a motion at your local Labour Party meeting can be a great way to raise the profile of a campaign and get it on the agenda of local politicians.

UNISON East Midlands's **Protect Our Jobs Campaign** is more likely to be successful where we have buy-in from MPs, council leaders, councillors and council candidates as well as employers. As Labour politicians will regularly attend local Labour Party meetings in order to discuss local issues, it is the perfect forum to raise the campaign. It is also vital that the campaign is promoted beyond UNISON members and into the wider community – and Labour Party members are key to help build up support.

UNISON is asking you to consider submitting our Protect Our Jobs motion to your next Labour Party meeting – it's a great way you can directly help make this campaign a success. Don't worry if you haven't done it before – this guide can help you. Should you need any further support please contact UNISON East Midlands Labour Link Officer Nadeem Samari at n.samari@unison.co.uk

Don't worry if your UNISON branch doesn't have an active Labour Link committee – you can still take a motion to your local Labour Party.

2. How do motions work?

Proposing a motion is simple, but how you go about it will depend on your local Party structures. The basic process will be:

- Send the motion to the Branch Labour Party (BLP) / Constituency Labour Party (CLP) Secretary and ask for it to be tabled at the next meeting – there will probably be a cut-off date for sending in motions (usually about a week before the meeting), and if you miss this it will have to wait until the following meeting;
- Attend the meeting, speak in favour of the motion (you could ask the Secretary to let you know how long you will be able to speak for);
- Other people may also speak on the motion, in favour of it or against it;
- A vote will be held, and the result announced.

If you have an All Member Meeting structure:

If your CLP meets as an All Member Meeting, any individual member of the Party can put forward a motion. A week or two ahead of the meeting, send the motion to your

CLP Secretary and ask them to table it to be debated and voted on. On the day, anyone who is a member of the local Party will be entitled to attend and vote.

If you have a General Committee (GC) structure, and you are a union delegate:

If your CLP has a General Committee (GC) structure, and you are a union delegate to it, then you will be able to submit the motion directly to the GC on behalf of your union branch – you'll probably want to discuss it with your branch colleagues in advance. A week or two ahead of the meeting, send the motion to your CLP Secretary and ask them to table it to be debated and voted on. On the day, only delegates to the GC will be able to vote on the motion (although in some local Parties, any Party member is entitled to attend the meeting).

If you have GC structure and you are not a delegate, or if you are a delegate from your Labour Party branch

If your CLP has a GC (General Committee) structure, and you not a delegate, or if you are a delegate from your Labour Party branch, then you'll probably need to propose the meeting to your branch meeting first – if it's passed, then the branch can propose it to the General Meeting. A week or two ahead of the branch meeting, send the motion to your Branch Secretary and ask them to table it to be debated and voted on, and proposed to the General Meeting if passed. On the day, anyone who is a member of the local Party branch will be entitled to attend and vote. Once it has been passed by your branch, your Branch Secretary should send it to the CLP Secretary and ask for it to be tabled at the CLP's General Meeting. If you're a delegate from the branch, you will probably be able to propose it at the General Meeting. If not, one of your branch delegates will speak in favour of it.

3. Tips for proposing the motion

- Read the motion carefully and familiarise yourself with it.
- You might want to tweak the text before you submit it to reflect your views and the local situation. You'll also need to delete either Branch or CLP throughout the motion, as appropriate.
- Ask the Secretary how long you'll have to speak on the motion, and what the structure is for speeches for and against.
- Plan what you want to say in advance and run it past a supportive friend/fellow UNISON member. Add personal anecdotes and examples of our shared victories to make your speech more powerful.
- Speak to UNISON and Labour Party colleagues who you think will be supportive of the motion in advance – remind them to attend the meeting to vote for the motion and ask them to speak in favour of it in the debate.
- After the meeting, email UNISON East Midlands Labour Link Officer Nadeem Samari at n.samari@unison.co.uk to let us know how it went.

