

## National Executive Council Elections 2023: Nomination requests

<p><b><u>CLAIRE DIXON</u></b> Whittington Health Membership Number: 11868220 Standing in the Health service group Female seat</p> 	<p><b><u>KEVIN CORRAN</u></b> Meadowbrook Hospital Membership Number: 135902 Standing in the Health Service Group Male Seat</p> 	<p><b><u>JORDAN RIVERA</u></b> Homerton Hospital Membership Number: 8784095 Standing in the Health service group, Female seat</p> 
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Dear Branch Secretary,

We are writing to ask your branch to consider nominating us for the following seats for the 2023 NEC elections:

- **Claire Dixon, Health Service Group, Female seat**
- **Kevin Corran, Health Service Group, Male Seat**
- **Jordan Rivera, Health Service Group, Female seat**

All UNISON members face the threat of a spiralling cost-of-living crisis and now we face further austerity from a Tory Government which is determined to make us pay for the economic crisis. These elections are hugely important in determining the way that UNISON tackles these issues. We are standing in solidarity with the Time for Real Change majority on the current NEC. We fully support the democratisation of the union and making the union's strategy and organisation fit the needs of the current situation facing our members.

### **Experience and background**

#### **Claire Dixon, Membership Number: 11868220**

My name is Claire Dixon, I am asking for your branch nomination to stand for the Female Candidate for Health in the forthcoming NEC elections.

The nomination period is from 9<sup>th</sup> January until Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

I am a senior phlebotomist and have worked at the Whittington Hospital in north London for over 20 years. I have been Branch Secretary for over 10 years and am the Co-Chair of Staff Side. I have served three terms on the NEC.

In the NHS we face an unprecedented situation. It has reached crisis point after over a decade of being run-down by the Tory government and their ruthless policy of privatisation and cuts. It is the same for social care. Now is the time for them to go.

What we do and how we engage with our members who work in health is vital. This has been shown by the pay campaign of 2022 where there is much more work to do.

It is no accident that strikes have broken out everywhere – we must show our solidarity and encourage co-ordinated action wherever possible.

We need strong and determined leadership that will not back down whether it be pay or the fight for better conditions for health workers. We need more resources to encourage and train activists on the ground in our branches.

We need pay rises in line with inflation – better conditions for health workers to address the drain in staffing – and better care for our patients. No more unnecessary deaths!

I have and will continue to fight racism and any other form of discrimination. 2023 marks the Year of the Black Worker in Unison – let us make it count by what we do and ensure real change happens.

**KEVIN CORRAN, Membership Number: 135902**

For over 30 years I have worked as a support worker in NHS settings. This experience has given me ample opportunity to see the devastating effects of austerity, the criminal waste of public money in PFI deals and the obscene attacks on workers by the privatisation of Health Services.

I have held a range of positions in UNISON branches. I gained valuable knowledge and experience as a Membership Officer, as a delegate to the NW Regional Council and all this is underpinned by over 12 years` experience as a workplace steward. Representing colleagues as a steward has given me the opportunity to defend members rights and terms & conditions.

Promoting a safe workplace, free from bullying, discrimination and racism, has been the centre of my work.

I will fight to change the union, making it more democratic, organised around the needs of members and accountable.

We need an NEC that will lead our union to oppose austerity, privatisation, and to fight for decent pay and fair pensions in the Health Service.

For an NEC that stands on the picket lines and not the side lines.

**Jordan Rivera Membership Number: 8784095**

I am seeking nomination for the National Health (female) seat on UNISON's NEC. I am branch secretary of my branch, and have been an active UNISON rep for 15 years. I am also joint chair of our staff side Committee.

I have worked as an occupational therapist in the NHS for the last 16 years. I work on a busy elderly care ward. I have seen the impact of underfunding the NHS by the Tories over the last 12 years at first hand, and have always fought to defend the NHS. Working on an elderly care ward, I really see the impact of the cuts when patients cannot get a nursing home placement or cannot be discharged because suitable care packages are not available. I see the impact of austerity in our patients lives, we must do all we can to alleviate this poverty that is wrecking people's lives.

Since the pandemic started, I have been very involved in campaigning for a pay rise, organising protests and demonstrations at my hospital and across London and encouraging members to attend these with me. Our pay is too low for the work that we are currently doing, and our colleagues are leaving. We need a decent pay rise to help us to recruit the colleagues that we need. I have spoken up as frequently as possible to try

to win the pay rise that we need.

I am standing for the NEC because I believe we need more resources in branches to build fightbacks locally. We need a leadership at national level who will encourage this and give members the confidence to fight. The difficulty in reaching a ballot turnout in many hospitals was very hard for members, who really wanted to strike, we need to consider every method we can find for increasing the turnout so that members who want to strike are able to do so.

The Government continues to push a racist agenda to try to divert attention away from their crisis. A despicable example of this is the attacks on refugees, and the attempts to deport refugees to Rwanda. It is vital that we defend the right to freedom of movement. The NHS has always depended on our colleagues who come to work with us from around the world. Racism must be opposed in all its forms whether this be the institutional racism - that means our black colleagues don't get the same chances of promotion and are more likely to be disciplined - or the growth of the far right.

### **What we stand for**

**UNISON must be a member-led union** – We believe this means that elected members should run our union, not selected full-time officials. We want to work with all our paid officials, but it is members and their elected representatives that should be the real leaders. **We need to be an organising, not a servicing, union** – we cannot solve all of our members' problems on a one-by-one basis. Members will always need individual support, but the focus should be on collective action. We need to increase UNISON's collective and organising activities and to empower our members. **Every large city and county** should have a proud UNISON resource centre in the high street: we need to make it as easy as possible for members to find us. We must present UNISON as a vibrant, democratic, fighting and organising union.

**The pay crisis** – UNISON must end the scourge of low pay. For too long UNISON has failed to adequately fight poverty pay, pay freezes and below-inflation deals. We cannot simply approach pay negotiations the way that UNISON's leadership has done in the past. Hikes in the price of fuel, heating and food are seriously impacting our members. No UNISON member should have to rely on food banks. We need fully funded and staffed public services. Members should not pay the cost of Tory austerity. To achieve this, we want **more cooperative relationships with other unions**. We should work together whenever we can.

**We must support members needing to take industrial action**. Strike pay rates have increased substantially, but there is more to do. UNISON only has a national strike fund of £21 million. This must change if we are to show employers and government we mean business. Also, we need to ensure that every region supports branches who need to carry out effective strike action.

**UNISON's finances** – We need full disclosure and transparency as to how members' money is spent. We must make best use of the surpluses made nationally and locally during the pandemic. Also, we must review UNISON's large property estate and where appropriate, free up resources for organising. We must continue to bring the UNISON Staff Pension scheme deficit down to manageable levels. Members' subs should not be required to keep the scheme afloat. **We should insource all outsourced UNISON services wherever feasible**, based on our trade union values and our aspirations for our union. **We need a green agenda within UNISON**, including an audit of UNISON company cars and the proliferation of meetings requiring members and staff to travel long distances.

**We believe that UNISON should play a positive but challenging role in the Labour Party**. UNISON resources and influence should be used to promote the removal of anti-trade union laws, public delivery of public services and a green new deal that tackles the climate emergency through the creation of green, well-paid, union jobs.

**Equalities in UNISON** are central to our vision. There have been some major developments over the last two years. But there is much more to do to make equality a reality through our entire union, not just its NEC but at all tiers of our union, including within its staffing.

**Legal advice** – We must review UNISON’s main legal services contract and particularly the difficulties branch secretaries have accessing timely employment law advice.

**We need a robust and effective review of staffing** to ensure that the great work our staff do is as efficient and meaningful to members as it can be. **We believe UNISON members should decide whether our most senior roles should be elected.**

**We must end once and for all the punitive culture of disciplinary action.** Disciplinary investigations into members take far too long, with no regard for welfare. We must continue to look at these processes from top to bottom and end their use to resolve political differences.

We are confident that the ideas we support will build on the progress made over the last two years. We urge all UNISON members to vote for Time for Real Change candidates in these NEC elections and, if you are able, to help us campaign for real change in UNISON.

Yours sincerely,

**Claire Dixon, Kevin Corran, Jordan Rivera**