



Meeting of: LGBT+ Members Equality Conference

Location: Aston University Conference Centre, Birmingham, B4 7ET

Date: Saturday 10 December 2022

Unconfirmed minutes

Present

Jennie	Appleyard	Luminate Education Group (Leeds City)
David	Ashby	London School of Economics
Thomas	Bartsch	Loughborough University
Emma	Battell Lowman	University of Leicester
Mark	Bendall	
Vicky	Blake	University of Leeds
Peta	Bulmer	University of Liverpool
Bupie	Busier	University of Bristol
Ray	Campbell	Royal Holloway, University of London
Luan	Carpes Barros Cassal	University of Manchester
Ryan	Davey	Cardiff University
Stephen	Desmond	Solent University
Jennifer	Dods	Leeds Beckett University
Stephen	Doyle	Jisc
Anthony	Drummond	Leeds Beckett University
Craig	Edwards	University of Birmingham
Peter	Evans	West London College
Anja	Finger	University of Bedfordshire
Claire	Graf	The University of Edinburgh
Marcel	Graves	New City College
Gina	Gwenffrewi	The University of Edinburgh
Richard	Hadley	University of Worcester
Rebecca	Harrison	The Open University
Daryl	Hodge	University of Liverpool
Ruth	Holliday	University of Leeds
Bee	Hughes	Liverpool John Moores University
Philip	Inglesant	London Retired Members' Branch
Mary	Jennings	E & H C Retired Members' Branch
Kenisha	Linton	University of Greenwich

Sophia	Lyacouras	The University of Edinburgh
David	Murphy	University of Cumbria
David	Murphy	University of Lancaster
Robyn	Orfitelli	University of Sheffield
Mark	Pendleton	University of Sheffield
Alain	Reynier	Tyne Coast College
Patricia	Roche	Blackpool & Flyde College
Cecilia	Wee	Royal College of Art
Yashi	Yuan	University College London

In attendance

Seth Atkin	Equality Support Official
Swati Patel	Equality Administrator (Minutes via online)
Quinn Roache	Acting Head of Equality and Policy

1 Welcome and housekeeping

- 1.1 Bee Hughes welcomed all the delegates to the conference.
- 1.2 Bee Hughes outlined the role and function of the conference as well as some housekeeping rules.
- 1.3 The standing rules were adopted.

2 Conference business

- 2.1 Minutes of LGBT+ members' conference 2021
- 2.2 The minutes of the LGBT+ Members' Annual Conference 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record.
- 2.3 Annual report of the LGBT+ Members Standing Committee (LGBT+MSC)
- 2.4 Bee Hughes thanked the members of the LGBT+MSC for the work carried out during the year.
- 2.5 During the course of the year there have been webinars which have focussed on taking action for LGBT+ equality, international LGBT+ issues and trans awareness week.
- 2.6 A CPD has been developed from the webinar LGBT+ Language in Use, which has been very successful.
- 2.7 A new CPD is being developed around challenging normativities based on feedback from participants at Language in Use CPD sessions.
- 2.8 To mark Trans Awareness Week (13-20 November) UCU organised a webinar with Bee Hughes, Gina Gwenffrewi, Quinn Roache and Seth Atkin as speakers. The speakers' contributions focused on experiences of Trans and non-binary people in post-school education, and how we can all support trans and non-

binary people in post-school education.

- 2.9 UCU was present with a walking group at London Pride and ran a stall at Birmingham pride.
- 2.10 LGBT+MSC committee members participated in Congress and sector conferences 2022 (May). Motions which LGBT+MSC put forward and were passed included fighting political attacks on LGBT+ people, conversion therapy, mental health, LGBT+ inclusion in education and protecting older workers in FE.
- 2.11 UCU had its largest delegation to TUC LGBT+ conference, which was followed by London Pride. Martin Chivers was elected to the TUC LGBT+ committee as UCU's rep. Rohit Dasgupta has recently been co-opted onto the committee due to a vacancy being available. UCU motion about Challenging anti-LGBT+ sentiment was carried.
- 2.12 Peter Evans continued as the LGBT+ rep for FE on NEC. Bee Hughes continued as the LGBT+ HE rep on NEC. Bee Hughes was re-elected as Chair of the LGBT+ MSC committee.
- 2.13 The LGBT+MSC members have been Jennie Appleyard, Gavin Brown, Martin Chivers, Stephen Desmond, Anthony Drummond, Peter Evans, Matilda Fitzmaurice, Kirsty Graham, Bee Hughes, Katie Nicholl Baines, Mark Pendleton and Megan Povey.

3 Speakers Panel 1

- 3.1 Bee Hughes introduced the first panel of speakers.
- 3.2 **Saorsa-Amatheia Tweedale** was speaking about transphobia and the Far Right. Saorsa-Amatheia Tweedale is PCS's national Trans rep and vice-chair. She also sits on the TUC National LGBT+ committee. Outside of union work, she is the DWP National Diversity Ambassador on Trans issues helping across Government and with employers to develop Trans inclusive policies and practices and delivering Trans Awareness Training.
- 3.3 Saorsa-Amatheia Tweedale thanked for being invited to speak at the conference. Saorsa-Amatheia Tweedale is on the international TUC committee and the far-right sub-committee and been involved with fighting the far right from an early age.
- 3.4 The far-right is a real threat to the Trans and LGB+ community, as well as to immigrant, women and black people. Far-right is on the rise at present. The question is why are the far-right on the rise and who and why are the far-right being empowered.
- 3.5 There was the rise of Nazism in 1930s Germany. In 1924 Hitler's Nazi party was a small fringe party but in 1933 Hitler was elected Chancellor of Germany. The first group to be attacked by the Nazi party was the LGBT+ community and sent to death camps. However this is not known widely, as being LGBT+ was criminalised in most allied countries at the time. When Germany was liberated, LGBT+ people were re-arrested and sent to prison in their own countries.

- 3.6 With the invention of molly in the 18th century the concept of the gay man was developed. This was triggered during the English revolution. It was during the English revolution that the concept of sex, sexuality and gender were being challenged. Feudalism was in decay and there was the rise of capitalism during this period.
- 3.7 At the present moment capitalism is in decay and the existence of LGBT+ community points to a new society. Each according to their needs does not take into consideration the diversity of sexuality, gender identity, race or disability. LGBT+ lives embody the new society and therefore are attacked as one of the first targets.
- 3.8 Far-right do not like the fact that the LGBT+ community are organising their own lives. Far-right ideology is to embrace exclusion of LGB, trans and feminism.
- 3.9 The ideology of biology within the marginalised movement is divisive and deliberate. The aim of far-right is to deliberately create division between women's movement and trans women and across the board within the trade union movement. Whilst these groups are exhausted by bickering with each other, they are not fighting the far-right.
- 3.10 In the TUC there is the strategy of deradicalization. People who identify as gender critical are not fascists or far right but put forward the simplistic biological concept which poses trans women as a violent threat in women's spaces, where there is no evidence.
- 3.11 Similarly with gender identity there is an argument that there will be an increase in sexual assault on women. These are lies which are being fed into the movement by far-right agitators but the movement needs to step up and counter these lies.
- 4 Dr Gina Gwenffrewi** was speaking about stoning of Stonewall. Dr Gina Gwenffrewi is a lecturer and academic manager at the University of Edinburgh. She divides her research between trans cultural production, digital humanities, and media studies, in the latter case with a focus on the anti-trans bias of the UK legacy media.
- 4.1 Owen Jones has pointed out that there has been a full-blown attack of trans rights in the British media recently. In the 60s to 90s LGB+ people were being attacked and now the attack is directed at trans people in the media.
- 4.2 The ILGA Europe 2022 highlighted that Britain has moved down from 10 to 14 place. This comes at a time of widespread political and media anti-trans sentiment, while the British government is not moving on long-promised reforms on gender recognition and banning so-called 'conversion therapy' for all.
- 4.3 A Council of Europe report has highlighted that there has been a substantial rise in hate speech, both from political figures and leaders, including government representatives, religious leaders, in the media and online against transgender persons. This is happening in Poland and Hungary but increasingly in UK as well.

- 4.4 The Levenson enquiry was important in highlighting how marginalised groups were represented in media. Marginalised groups are demonised in the media. Leveson enquiry got buried by the Conservative Party who are friends of the Murdoch press.
- 4.5 The watershed moment was when the media went on an attack on trans rights. Previously the media focused on benign or lifestyle stories but with increased focus on policy making, journalists were writing about a subject they were not good at, together with their prejudice.
- 4.6 In 2018 Theresa May's government launched a public consultation reforming the Gender Recognition Act (GRA) in England and Wales. A majority of respondents approved updating the GRA. Due to Brexit, Theresa May was replaced by Boris Johnson. GRA does not touch women only spaces, but the media just focused on this issue and this became the narrative no matter how many times they were challenged.
- 4.7 When Boris Johnson became the Prime Minister, he initiated the new "anti-woke" culture, towards LGB and trans community. The Johnson government wanted to block any legislation promoting LGBT+ rights and was trans exclusionary.
- 4.8 Baroness Kishwer Falkner was appointed chair of the government's equalities watchdog Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). She was accused of being transphobic during her leadership of EHRC. Thus the body set up to protect minority groups is trans exclusionary.
- 4.9 The government was hostile to LGBT+ community and this led to an attack on Stonewall. In light of this the negative media coverage of trans debate increased considerably.
- 4.10 There was an increase of negative media coverage about Stonewall, with stories of how organisations were abandoning Stonewall's diversity scheme, despite Stonewall's membership actually increasing. Stonewall was smeared with a lot of false allegations but this did not seem to matter.
- 4.11 The mainstream media was not about just attacking trans people but the institutions that protect trans rights.
- 4.12 However there were some media outlets which countered the mainstream media's stories by debunking the myths about trans people and their rights.
- 4.13 Recently at University of Edinburgh the gender critical network were going to show a documentary at an event. The documentary has a far right anti trans speaker. UCU has asked the University not to show the documentary. However the Vice Chancellor has said that in the name of free speech the documentary can be shown. Now UCU is looking into ways to counter this documentary being shown.
- 4.14 The challenge now is how are universities be held accountable when they allow transphobic speakers to speak at events in the name of free speech.
- 4.15 It was agreed to send a message of support to UCU branch of University of

Edinburgh.

- 5 David Murphy** was speaking about normativities and barriers to LGBT+ inclusion. David Murphy is a PhD student at Lancaster University researching notions of a queer British response to queerphobia in Uganda, and how it relates to colonial histories. David is a UCU PG rep at his university and has been working with UCU looking at normativities and how they impact LGBT+ exclusion.
- 5.1 Cisnormativity and heteronormativity are a set of power dynamics that place heterosexuality and cisgender identity as the norm and thus create inequality in society by excluding LGBT+ persons. These normativities are structural and intentional which impact on health care, education, access to services and material goods.
 - 5.2 Cisnormativity is the idea that the normative person in society is cisgender and heteronormativity is the idea that the normative person in society is heterosexual.
 - 5.3 Are liberation and inclusion the same thing?
 - Inclusion looks at how LGBT+ people can be included in the current structures within society.
 - Liberation looks at how LGBT+ people can be liberated from oppressive structures, not simply included in them.
 - 5.4 The normative systems of power are oppressive and so do LGBT+ people want inclusion within this system or do LGBT+ want to be liberated from these power structures which are harmful or oppressive.
 - 5.5 The Conservative Party brought in the right to have gay marriage although they voted against gay marriage. At the last election there was vile transphobia being peddled by the Conservative Party as an election issue.
 - 5.6 Reporting of HIV, Monkey Pox in the last year, is all queerphobic.
 - 5.7 How to combat these normativities? There are campaigns which have successfully challenged transphobia. Liberation from these structures means the dismantling of these normativities. As the reporting is getting more prevalent about transphobia, the LGBT+ community has to get louder in combatting these normativities.
 - 5.8 UCU has done a lot of work around combatting normativities. However, in HE transphobia and the free speech legislation is getting a lot worse and difficult to call out.
 - 5.9 David Murphy gave an example of a trans working group which was set up at his institution in 2019 but it was disbanded after one and half year after meeting once. This shows the level of commitment that universities have on this issue.
 - 5.10 The LGBT+ community have to push for the change as the Vice Chancellors are not going to do anything.

6 Q&A

- 6.1 Q. What could be the reason for papers like Guardian / Observer which are liberal papers not allies of trans people, as one would expect?
- 6.2 A. It is usual to think of transphobic people being on the far right but a lot of the journalists working for Guardian / Observer who think of themselves as being on the left are gender critical. One of the reasons being is that the mainstream media is made up of elites. Journalists at Guardian / Observer are part of the status quo as the status quo protects them. Gender critical feminists who promote exclusionary feminism have existed forever. Historically there were feminists who did not wish women of colour to have the right to vote. Also the boundaries between social media and mainstream media are very blurred. There is a structural problem of British media in terms of the elite who are ill equipped to talk about marginalised identities.
- 6.3 A. The reason this happens is that some people on the left genuinely believe that because the trans issue is dealing with biological reality, whereas gender identity and sexuality are beliefs, that they are pursuing a left-wing position by supporting gender criticism. It is a misunderstanding of gender identity and sexuality but it is their heartfelt position. They do genuinely regard themselves on the left and defending a left wing feminist position, even though in reality it is a right wing feminist position.
- 6.4 Q. How can we learn from countries where there have been far right governments such as Poland, Hungary, Turkey and Brazil? How can we learn from those trade unions and LGBT+ movements?
- 6.5 Q. How can we bring intersectionality and discussion about race with the intersection of LGBT+?
- 6.6 A. At the Trans Day of Remembrance ceremony on 17 November which was hosted by University of Bradford, Uduak Archibong gave a powerful speech about violent deaths of trans people this year and in previous years. She finished by a powerful saying that trans lives matter. Saorsa-Amatheia Tweedale spoke about the racial aspect with a very high percentage of trans women murdered in USA are Afro Caribbean, Latino or immigrant trans women. There is an intersection of race, trans misogyny and poverty all impacting in the murder of trans people globally. The sharing of data and platforms is imperative, as the far right are attacking all these groups.
- 6.7 A. A recent PACE motion mentioned five countries which they were concerned about LGBT+ rights. These were Russia, Hungary, Poland, Turkey and United Kingdom. Although it was suggested that "United Kingdom" should be removed, PACE voted overwhelming not to remove those words. There is a tendency to think that UK is a free democratic state, but UK is actually a far right state. We need to be working with the trade union movement of Turkey, Poland, Hungary and Brazil which have lived through the far-right regimes and learn from them the strategies and tactics of defeating them and getting progressive left-wing governments elected as has happened in Brazil.

- 6.8 What does TUC's de-radicalise strategy look like in practice and what should UCU do to de-radicalise people who we encounter?
- 6.9 Q. For UCU weaponisation of free speech is hugely problematic with the media targeting UCU. Office of Students has recently announced that there is going to be a new free speech question on national student survey just for England. How do we organise against the weaponization of free speech in the face of these challenges through direct action or education-based activism?
- 6.10 A. TUC's de-radicalisation programme strategy is just being put together. The aim is to produce a video which will support a document. The document will tackle some of the main gender critical / far-right arguments around gender identity. The aim is to just use simplistic arguments which can be put in sound bites and bullet points to counter the gender critical ideology and the stereotyping of gender identity and sexuality and what are the threats. TUC have just begun this process.
- 6.11 A. In the case of University of Edinburgh if the Pro Vice Chancellor is taking a right-wing definition of free speech then they should be brought to account as that video is producing an intimidating atmosphere of harassment for trans students and that is illegal. Legal action should be considered against the university for allowing to show that video under the Equality Act 2010 harassment laws.
- 6.12 Bee Hughes thanked Saorsa-Amatheia Tweedale, Dr Gina Gwenffrewi and David Murphy.

7 Speakers panel 2

7.1 Quinn Roache (Acting Head of Equality and Policy)

- 7.2 Quinn Roache commenced by introducing Jenny Sherrard who is currently on maternity leave but will be returning as Head of Equality and Policy in a few months.
- 7.3 UCU believes in building an inclusive culture through words and deeds which supports trans and non-binary members, so they can live a life in safety, dignity and respect like the rest of society. UCU will act towards eliminating discrimination trans and non-binary members face in the workplace and in other facets of their lives. UCU's goal is to use the collective strength to bring about more broadly wider societal changes to counter discrimination against trans and non-binary persons.
- 7.4 Living your life in safety, dignity and respect is a basic human right within democratic societies. Unfortunately this is not something that trans and non-binary people can expect or experience in UK.
- 7.5 The best estimate is that about 1% of the population identifies as trans or non-binary in UK but hate crime against trans and non-binary persons is continuing to rise on a yearly basis and it is known that hate crime is underreported.
- 7.6 The media discourse is toxic around trans and non-binary persons and this has

intensified that hate. Anti-trans discourse is linked to the far-right.

- 7.7 UCU has held a few round table discussions with trans and non-binary members to get their views on what is happening. The concerns raised by members is their everyday safety, living a life free from violence, being treated with dignity, being respected at work, in classroom and in virtual environments. They were concerned about getting and staying in work with access to progression and promotion.
- 7.8 They also wanted timely and efficient access to health care, including but not solely to gender recognition clinics and support for mental health issues. Members would like safe access to toilets and changing rooms and access them without fear.
- 7.9 While trans and non-binary members continue to experience violence at work, in public and at home, there is a role for UCU, our branches and members.
- 7.10 Trans and non-binary members were asked how they would like these issues to be addressed by UCU. They would like UCU to continue to explicitly and publicly support trans liberation and embed it in progressive politics and policy, which UCU is doing.
- 7.11 They also want to educate members on LGBT+ issues to support UCU LGBT+ members and students. They would like UCU to develop a guidance for trans and non-binary allies to be confident in supporting trans and non-binary members.
- 7.12 UCU has produced a guidance on how to help "Trans and non-binary narrative – how to help with discourse". The aim of this guidance is to help allies start meaningful conversations.
- 7.13 It gives tips on how to engage by setting out the vision of trans and non-binary people having access to work and health care.
- 7.14 UCU is unequivocal in its support for trans and non-binary members and will continue to strive forward in the same way.

8 Lee Gregory is Associate Professor in Social Policy in School of Sociology and Social Policy at University of Nottingham. He runs a queer populations and policy network once a month. He has written several papers on social policy and its intersection with LGBT+ lives.

- 8.1 Lee Gregory spoke about one of the projects he is member of, which looks at LGBT+ people's experiences of the social security system and building up assets and savings. The reason why it is an important project is it is one of the only project globally looking at LGBT+ people's experiences of accessing welfare benefits.
- 8.2 One aspect in the project is about number crunching and the other is people's experiences of accessing social security and what their lives are like whilst on benefits.
- 8.3 One of the reasons why the project is interested in the assets and not just the

welfare is related to historical legacies. If you are applying for mortgage as a gay man, you will be questioned when you last had a HIV test and your HIV status.

- 8.4 A woman would have difficulty in securing mortgage by herself in 1950s to 1980s because a woman would not be able to have a mortgage without a man.
- 8.5 From the survey analysis done so far, it is known that LGB people, (the survey does not have information about trans people as it has not been asked often in surveys) they are more likely to be on work related benefits, income related benefits and disability benefits. The reasons why they are on these benefits is not clear but this is not standard across LGB people. This varies according to relationship status, whether they have children and a little bit by gender.
- 8.6 The common themes from the interviews done so far, for LGB people accessing a whole range of benefits, is that there is barely enough money to survive.
- 8.7 A lot of younger and some older participants have returned to their parental home as that means lower or no rent and thus find a way to survive. For LGBT people this is more problematic because not everyone can express their identity in the same way in their parental home.
- 8.8 For LGBT people the additional needs and support which might need to be in place because of issues around sexuality or trans identity start to become more precarious or start to disappear. A few of the participants cannot afford gender affirming care or ways of expressing their gender.
- 8.9 In relation to applying for the benefits itself and interviews, the DWP staff often get a positive review in terms of their engagement with the claimants.
- 8.10 Some claimants willing out themselves whilst others do not as they feel that if they out themselves they will not receive support. For trans people there are a number of cases of misgendering but once corrected, it is not an issue again.
- 8.11 Some older participants found the process of claiming universal credit easier as it is online as opposed to claiming in the 1980s when you had to make the application in person. When they had to do the face to face application there was anxiety about their sexuality being revealed and being treated differently for that reason.
- 8.12 LGB people tend to be more educated and have degrees and going into the job centre with that background seems to lessen the expectation at the job centre, as there is an assumption that they will find work straight away. However over time that conditionality has changed in terms of being forced to apply for jobs otherwise you will get sanctioned. LGB people do not feel they can apply for certain jobs due to their sexuality.
- 8.13 Life on social security can make you go back into the closet if you have to go back to your parental home or different setting. It is a struggle if you are a trans person to get gender affirming care and support due to the costs but also in terms of being able to express your identity.

- 8.14 In general the findings show there is negative experiences based on income and the way in which the system works. The positive is the way in which LGBT people are treated by staff but the system itself carries a number of flaws which hit harder in terms of expressing identity.
- 8.15 **Harun Tulunay** was born in Turkey. Harun worked as an events manager for over 10 years. He moved to the UK in 2015 to escape anti-LGBT+ hostility and discrimination. When Harun was diagnosed with HIV in 2016, he chose to use the experience to become an ambassador for good sexual and mental health. In 2020 he decided to devote himself fully to HIV support work and left events and digital marketing. He joined Positively UK, where he currently works as Training and Volunteer Coordinator.
- 8.16 In June 2022 he contracted Monkeypox and was hospitalised for 10 days. Harun is committed to speaking publicly and sharing his life experiences to tackle stigma and raise awareness of HIV, Monkey Pox and mental health, as well as the stigma he faced as a gay man in Turkey.
- 8.17 Harun Tulunay is a mental health and sexual health advocate and wants to use his own life experiences to support other people going through similar experience. He struggled a lot in accessing health care even in UK.
- 8.18 Harun was born in Turkey into a religious family and unfortunately a very abusive environment. In Turkey his family disowned him and suffered sexual abuse but there was no one to turn to, as in Turkey being gay is considered a sin.
- 8.19 Harun therefore chose to run away to UK not releasing that the government and the policies were so hostile to migration. UK deems LGBT people cannot claim asylum if they come from Turkey, as it not illegal to be LGBT in Turkey but in reality it is not possible to live as a LGBT person in Turkey.
- 8.20 Harun therefore used a different visa status to stay in UK and although could not access many services, it was better than going back to Turkey which would have meant death to him.
- 8.21 The hostile environment for LGBT+ people in UK is not getting better. When he was diagnosed with HIV, he had a lot of challenges in accessing health care especially mental health care.
- 8.22 Harun had to go through conversion therapy in Turkey which was a demeaning experience and yet the UK government wants to introduce conversion therapy.
- 8.23 Many LGBT+ immigrants are unaware of how to access health care and did not realise that the monkey pox vaccine was free.
- 8.24 Access to health is not working for immigrants or LGBT+ community in UK. This government has cut funding for sexual health and HIV treatment.
- 8.25 LGBT+ is a small community and speaking out for its needs which is important.

9 Q&A session

- 9.1 Q. What is the correlation between LGBT+ and HE? The stats are showing more LGBT+ people in HE.
- 9.2 Q. Will a change of government led to change in LGBT+ wider policy and its implementation, benefits, sexual health policy and the inequalities within the LGBT+ community? Is it time to be hopeful?
- 9.3 A. Regarding HE it is LGB, as there is not enough data on T at present. Data available on trans students, show they do not have a good time in HE or likely to drop out. The higher proportion of LGB people in HE can be seen in the context of escaping from a parental home or home town where you would not be able to express your identity due to homophobia, whereas HE would allow you to express your identity and be yourself.
- 9.4 A. Change of government will not necessarily lead to much change in social policy. Although there is hope that it will lead to wider social policy change there is no guarantee that this will happen. UCU members can try to influence the Labour Party so that the changes which LGBT+ community would like implemented are adopted by the Labour Party. Trade unions also need to be made aware of the trans rights issues as not all unions are on board regarding trans rights.
- 9.5 Q. There are higher number of LGBT+ people in prisons but no one is doing anything to change the criminal justice system. LGBT+ community are looked upon as a suspect community.
- 9.6 Q. There is not enough good practice around caring responsibility in workplaces. In LGBT+ community there is a different caring relationship – would like clarification about how UCU’s policies are being put into action.
- 9.7 A. The guidance UCU has produced is around supporting the policy around trans and non-binary inclusion and about having difficult conversations in workplaces. LGBT+ communities’ family structures and caring responsibilities can be very different or can be the same. The equality team want to take the family and caring responsibility work forward and want it to be inclusive. This work will be included in UCU’s policies and policy work.
- 9.8 A. The criminal justice needs to be considered but even the evolution of the welfare state with its narrative around citizenship which is CIS, white, able bodied and hetero normative is problematic in how society thinks about welfare provision and who is supported as a citizen. One of the projects Lee Gregory has been working on, explores how the hetero normative assumptions in the design of benefits impact on LGBT+ lives. The evolution of the welfare state was alongside criminalisation and decriminalisation of gay men in particular but of same sex relationships, so there is a complex interweaving history of suspect community narrative and so the two are linked but a lot more research needs to be done to explore the intersection between poverty, social security and criminal justice.
- 9.9 Quinn Roache, Lee Gregory and Harun Tulunay were thanked for speaking at the

conference.

10 Motions

10.1 Mark Pendleton moved the motion.

Motion 1 **MPX, Sexual Health and the post-16 sector**

Proposer **University of Leeds**

Word count **374**

Conference notes:

- the 2022 removal of 'sexual and reproductive health rights' and 'bodily autonomy' from the UK Government's Statement on Freedom of Religion or Belief and Gender Equality
- severe cuts to sexual health services across the UK and the consistent failure to implement a government strategy on reproductive and sexual health
- the disproportionate impact of these cuts on availability based on youth, geography and various protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010
- the MPX breakout in 2022 had a disproportionate impact on LGBT+ communities (specifically men, trans women and non-binary people who have sex with men) in the UK as well as certain Black communities in the UK and internationally
- that already stretched and underfunded sexual health clinics were forced to choose between emergency MPX response and routine services, like long-acting contraception
- decisions on vaccine prioritisation were based on limited data and assumptions about sexual behaviours of men who have sex with men, often based in major cities, with the resulting vaccine rollout also relying on these assumptions
- the Health Secretary's refusal to procure further MPX vaccine doses in September out of concerns that they did not provide 'value for money'.

Conference believes that:

- it is essential that all communities have access to adequately funded, free and accessible sexual health services, regardless of where they live
- cuts to these services, while part of the wider austerity and privatisation agenda, have specific and serious impacts on already marginalised communities, including LGBT+ staff and students in our institutions.

Conference resolves to:

- join organisations like the British Association for Sexual Health and HIV in calling for a coordinated strategy on reproductive and sexual health and an immediate increase in funds for these services

- join sexual health organisations and activists such as Prepster and Love Tank in demanding that the government reverse course and urgently seek sufficient MPX vaccine doses to address the current outbreak and prepare against future ones
- call for better funding and institutional support for research in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, particularly into regional and other variations in sexual practices, sexual risk, and access to and engagement with appropriate services
- call on universities and colleges to develop sexual health introductory modules that address the needs of all students, and particularly LGBT+ students.

10.2 Stephen Desmond seconded the motion.

10.3 An amendment was suggested for the last resolve to clarify the groups of people the modules would be targeting. It was NOTED that as the motion is advisory, the amendment would be discussed at the next LGBT+MSC meeting.

10.4 The motion was carried unanimously.

10.5 There were 5 vacancies for a term of two year seats. There were three nominations. Nominations were received from Anthony Drummond, Philip Inglesant and Carol White who were elected unopposed to the 2 year seats.

10.6 Members present were encouraged to be co-opted to LGBT+MSC as there were still 2 vacancies.

11 AOB

11.1 There was a suggestion of putting forward a motion around the passing of a very draconian law in Russia in relation to the rights of LGBT+ people.

11.2 Also the British government which is a very far right government is seeking to send its asylum seekers to Rwanda for processing including its trans asylum seekers to a country where changing one's gender is expressly illegal. Labour seems incapable of directly criticising the Conservative Party's approach.

11.3 There was a suggestion of having the conference being live streamed so that more LGBT+ members can join the meeting. UCU is looking into ways of holding future meetings in a hybrid manner.

12 Close of conference

12.1 Bee Hughes closed the conference by thanking the panel speakers, the delegates, LGBT+ Members standing committee members, staff members and staff at Aston University.

The conference closed at 1.00pm.