

What TUSC stands for

The core policy positions of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition

THE WORKING class and peoples of Britain are facing a ruling class offensive against public services, incomes, living standards and trade union rights. Not content with the banks receiving the biggest bail-out in the history of British capitalism, big business aims to make workers and their families pay to serve the interests, first and foremost, of the City of London's financial institutions.

It is also an offensive which has support across all the establishment par-

ties. That is why the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition will contest elections, to show that there is a clear left-wing alternative to policies of public sector cuts, privatisation, militarism and environmental degradation.

We recognise that there will be Labour and non-Labour candidates who agree with our policies, who share our socialist aspirations, and who will be supported by left and labour movement organisations participating

in our coalition.

We also recognise that there are different strategic views about the way forward for the left in Britain, whether the Labour Party can be reclaimed by the labour movement, or whether a new workers' party needs to be established.

But our coalition is united on the need for mass resistance to the ruling class offensive, and for an alternative programme of left-wing policies to help inspire and direct such resistance:

Public ownership, not private profit

- Stop all privatisation, including the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). Bring privatised public services and utilities back into public ownership under democratic control.
- Keep Royal Mail as a publicly-owned service, not a privatised cash cow.

No cuts – for quality public services

- Take rail back into public ownership and build an integrated, low-pollution public transport system.
- For a high-quality, free National Health Service under democratic public ownership and control.
- Stop council estate sell-offs and build eco-friendly, affordable public housing.
- Good, free education for all, under democratic local authority control; student grants not fees.

Jobs, not handouts to the bankers and billionaires

- Bring banks and finance institutions into genuine public ownership under democratic control, instead of giving huge handouts to the very capitalists who caused the crisis.
- Tax the rich. For progressive tax on rich corporations and individuals, with a crackdown on tax avoidance.
- For massive investment in environmental projects.

Employment and trade union rights

- Repeal the anti-trade union laws.
- A minimum wage set at half average adult male earnings, with no exemptions.
- Invest to create and protect jobs, including for young people.
- Solidarity with workers taking action to defend jobs, conditions, pensions, public services and trade unions. Re-instate full trade union rights to prison officers.

Protect our environment – stop global warming

- Deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions - otherwise climate change, caused by capitalism, will destroy us.
- Invest in publicly-owned and controlled renewable energy.
- Move to sustainable, low-pollution industry and farming - stop the pollution that is destroying our environment.
- Recognise that many of our planet's resources are limited and that capitalism fritters them away for profit.
- Produce for need, not profit, and design goods for reuse and recycling.

Decent pensions and benefits

- Restore the pre-Thatcher real value of pensions. Reinstating the link with average earnings.
- Protect entitlement to benefits; for living benefits; end child poverty.

Democracy, diversity and justice

- Welcome diversity and oppose racism, fascism and discrimination. Defend the right to asylum.
- Ensure women have genuinely equal rights and pay.
- Defend our liberties and make police and security democratically accountable.

Solidarity not war

- Bring home all British troops from Afghanistan immediately - no more wars for resources.
- No more spending on a new generation of nuclear weapons, huge aircraft carriers or irrelevant eurofighters - convert arms spending into socially useful products and services.
- An independent foreign policy, based on international solidarity – no more being a US poodle, no moves towards a capitalist, militarist United States of Europe, no to the Lisbon Treaty.

Socialism

- For a democratic socialist society run in the interests of people not millionaires. For bringing into democratic public ownership the major companies and banks that dominate the economy, so that production and services can be planned to meet the needs of all and to protect the environment.



An appeal to anti-austerity campaigners

We need council candidates to stand up to the Con-Dems!

WHY NOT YOU?

THE Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) is making an appeal to trade union members, anti-cuts campaigners, socialists, young people – everyone in fact who opposes the Con-Dems' austerity agenda. Are you prepared to support local councillors who will refuse to vote for the cuts? Or even be a council candidate yourself?

Con-Dem austerity is effecting every part of our lives. From pensions to tuition fees; jobs cut and wages frozen; the NHS and libraries. People are fighting back – but not local councillors!

Every local authority in England responsible for social care, for example, has reduced the amount it spends on elderly people since 2010. That's Tory, Lib Dem and Labour councillors alike. Nearly 200 Sure Start children's centres have closed. Four out of five councils have cut library services. Funding for domestic violence services has been cut by a third. Twenty councils are breaking the law by housing homeless families in 'bed and breakfast' accommodation for six weeks or more. Not a single council has said no to the Con-Dems cuts.

It doesn't have to be like this. The money is there – just half of the £13 billion the Office for National Statistics officially recorded as being paid out in city bonuses in 2011-12, for example, would have been more than enough to avoid all the council cuts made that year. If just a handful of councils defied the Con-Dems and refused to implement the cuts – and linked with the growing opposition of trade unions, young people, and community campaigners – the government could be made to back down and fund council services properly.

But it needs people to come forward as council candidates to put that case. That's why TUSC is making this appeal.

Next May there will be elections in England for councils covering a population of 24 million people, with combined budgets of £43 billion and employing around three-quarters of a million workers. Are you prepared to be a candidate in these elections? Or at least build support in your trade union or your local community for candidates who will fight back?

Inside is the ten-point election platform that TUSC candidates will be standing on next May and a brief introduction to what TUSC is. Why not come on board? If we don't fight to change things, nothing will change.



www.tusc.org.uk

TUSC, 17 Colebert House, Colebert Avenue, London E1 4JP

TUSC
AGAINST
CUTS

Standing up to the Con-Dems

For councillors who refuse to implement the cuts

LOCAL COUNCIL services, and the workers who provide them, are at the sharp end of the Con-Dems' systematic dismantling of the welfare state.

On the one hand councils have experienced one of the biggest 'departmental cuts' of any area of government spending which will see, by 2014-15, a 27% fall in funding compared to 2009-10. On the other hand, under the Con-Dems hypocritical banner of 'localism', councils are being given new responsibilities, for example, for health and well-being boards, social fund 'crisis payments', and council tax benefit levels – all with reduced funding – coming into effect in April 2013.

These are the first steps of a return to Victorian-style 'Poor Law' inequalities, which will also inevitably have the effect – deliberately done – of increasing divisions amongst the working class and poor. For that reason alone it is vital that there are Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) candidates, all of whom stand against racism, discrimina-



tion, sexism and any form of inequality, contesting local council elections against the pro-austerity parties.

It is not true that councils have 'no option' but to implement the Con-Dems' cuts. Councillors have a choice. The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition has

agreed a policy platform, outlined below, to contest the local council elections that will take place in May 2013 which, if adopted by councillors, could make a difference. Even one councillor in each local authority taking a stand, if they used their position in the council chamber to appeal to those outside, could give confidence to trade unionists and community campaigners to fight.

This platform is the basis on which any prospective council candidate can stand under the TUSC name in local council elections. We encourage every trade unionist, anti-cuts campaigner, community activist and all those who want to see an alternative to the establishment parties to become a TUSC candidate.

The local election platform is a supplement to the core policy statement (see back page) that TUSC candidates endorsed when they stood in the general election in May 2010, which still stands as the basic national policy position of the TUSC coalition.

What is the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition?



The RMT's 2012 Annual General Meeting agreed that the union should be officially represented on the TUSC steering committee.

THE TRADE Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) was set-up in 2010 to enable trade unionists, community campaigners and socialists to stand candidates against the pro-austerity establishment parties.

Under Britain's election laws candidates can only appear on the ballot paper as an 'Independent' if they are not endorsed by a registered political party. That doesn't allow trade unionists or local anti-cuts campaigners to distinguish themselves as standing for something different to the mainstream. But using the TUSC name does.

Since 2010 over 400 candidates have stood under the TUSC umbrella. A couple have won council seats – while the TUSC candidate for Liverpool mayor polled 4,792 votes, ahead of the Tories and double the UKIP vote. TUSC candidates' average vote in the 2012 council elections was 6.2%, despite a media blackout. Now we are appealing for enough candidates to stand in 2013 to guarantee TV coverage.

Local community groups, trade unionists and anti-cuts candidates who want to stand under the TUSC banner have autonomy to run their own campaigns. The only provision is that candidates are expected to endorse the local elections policy platform (see opposite).

TUSC is a coalition with a national steering committee which includes leading trade unionists from the RMT transport workers' union, the PCS civil servants union, the National Union of Teachers, the Fire Brigade Union, and the Prison Officers Association (see right). The RMT's 2012 annual general meeting agreed that the union should be officially represented. The Socialist Party, the Socialist Workers Party and the Independent Socialist Network also have committee places.

This structure is only an interim arrangement and discussions will continue to take place on the best way to organise the TUSC coalition as it develops in the future. But by providing a means for fighting trade unionists, com-

munity campaigners and socialists to work together in an electoral coalition, TUSC is already playing an important part in building an alternative to the pro-market, pro-cuts establishment parties.

The TUSC national steering committee (October 2012):

Bob Crow, RMT transport workers' union General Secretary; Steve Gillan, Prison Officers Association (POA) General Secretary; Chris Baugh, PCS civil servants union Assistant General Secretary; Joe Simpson, POA Assistant General Secretary; Nina Franklin, National Union of Teachers ex-President; John McInally, PCS Vice-President; Ian Leahair, Fire Brigades Union National Executive; Owen Herbert, RMT National Executive; Craig Johnston, RMT Northern Regional Organiser; Brian Caton, ex-POA General Secretary; Councillor Michael Lavalette; Nick Wrack. Plus representatives from each of the Socialist Party, the SWP and the Independent Socialist Network. All trade unionists in a personal capacity.

All TUSC councillors will

- Oppose all cuts to council jobs, services, pay and conditions – we reject the claim that 'some cuts' are necessary to our services.
- Support all workers' struggles against the cuts, privatisation and the government's policy of making ordinary people pay for the crisis caused by the bankers and the bosses.
- Reject increases in council tax, rent and service charges to compensate for government cuts.
- Defend the national collective bargaining arrangements for council workers.
- Vote against the privatisation of council jobs and services, or the transfer of council services to 'social enterprises' or 'arms-length' management organisations, which are first steps to privatisation.
- Oppose racism and fascism and stand up for equality for all.
- Use all the legal powers available to councils, including powers to refer local NHS decisions, initiate referenda and organise public commissions and consultations, to oppose both the cuts and government policies which centrally impose the transfer of public services to private bodies.
- Campaign for the introduction of a Living Wage above and beyond the minimum wage for all council employees and those working for council contractors.
- When faced with government cuts to council funding, councils should refuse to implement the cuts. We will support councils which in the first instance use their reserves and prudential borrowing powers to avoid passing them on – while arguing that the best way to mobilise the mass campaign that is necessary to defeat the cuts is to set a budget that meets the needs of the local community and demands that the government makes up the shortfall.
- Support action against climate change and for a future where sustainability comes before profit.

We won't pay for their crisis!