



# Workers Voice Union – Rule Book

## Rule 1 – Name

The organisation shall be known as **Workers Voice Union** and shall be an independent trade union within the meaning of Section 5 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (TULRCA 1992).

## Rule 2 – Objectives

The objectives of the Union are to:

1. **Protect and Support Members** – Promote and protect the employment interests, rights, and welfare of members, providing advice, guidance to members and prospective workplace representatives.
2. **Recognition and Representation** – Seek recognition from employers and, once recognition is secured, represent members through elected workplace representatives in individual and collective employment matters, including consultation, negotiation, and collective bargaining.
3. **Equality and Fair Treatment** – Promote equality of opportunity, fairness, and respect at work, and eliminate discrimination on any grounds protected by the Equality Act 2010.
4. **Democratic and Lawful Governance** – Administer the Union's affairs in a lawful, democratic, and transparent manner, ensuring accountability to its members and proper financial management.
5. **Growth and Participation** – Encourage membership, engagement, and active participation to strengthen the Union's collective voice and effectiveness.

## Rule 3 – Membership

### 1. Single Class

All members shall belong to a single class of membership and shall have equal rights and obligations under these Rules.

### 2. Eligibility

Membership is open to any worker in the United Kingdom. For the purposes of these Rules, "worker" includes employees, agency workers, homeworkers, contractors, apprentices, trainees, and any other persons engaged in gainful work.

### **3. Initial Industrial Base and Expansion**

The Union was founded by workers drawn from the waste and recycling industry, parcel and logistics sectors, and general office and administrative occupations. These sectors shall form the Union's initial industrial base. The Executive Committee shall actively promote recruitment and seek to extend membership and representation into other sectors as the Union develops.

### **4. Application for Membership**

- a. Applications for membership shall be made in the form prescribed by the Executive Committee and shall include a declaration that the applicant is a worker eligible under these Rules and agrees to be bound by the Union's Rules.
- b. Membership shall take effect on receipt of a completed application and the first payment required by these Rules, and on registration in the Union's membership register maintained by the General Secretary.

### **5. Subscriptions and Joining Fee**

Members shall pay a joining fee and subscription as determined in these Rules. Until the Union gains recognition with a member's employer, the joining fee or subscription shall be £2 per month. Upon the Union gaining recognition with the member's employer, subscriptions shall be £5 per month. The Executive Committee may, from time to time, vary these amounts by resolution to reflect inflation, the financial needs of the Union, or other legitimate purposes, provided that any change is reported to the next Annual General Meeting and notified to all members at least 28 days in advance of taking effect.

### **6. Paid-Up Membership and Loss of Rights**

Only members who are fully paid up in their subscriptions shall be entitled to exercise the full rights of membership, including the right to vote and to stand for election, except where the Executive Committee otherwise decides. A member whose subscriptions are in arrears for more than three months may be debarred from membership rights until the arrears are cleared.

### **7. Voting Rights**

- a. All paid-up members shall have equal voting rights within the structures of the Union, including the right to vote in workplace or regional ballots, delegate elections, and other democratic processes established under these Rules.
- b. Decisions at General Meetings of the Union shall be made by the accredited delegates and members of the Executive Committee in accordance with Rule 7 (Annual General Meeting) and any standing orders approved by the Executive Committee.
- c. Every member shall have the right to receive reports of all General Meetings and decisions made on behalf of the membership.

### **8. Rights and Obligations**

Members shall comply with these Rules and any lawful decision of the Union's bodies. Members shall be entitled to the services and representation provided by the Union in accordance with these Rules and any policies determined by the Executive Committee.

### **9. Resignation, Cessation and Expulsion**

- a. A member may resign by giving notice in writing to the General Secretary.
- b. Membership shall cease on resignation, death, or where a member is expelled in accordance with the disciplinary provisions of these Rules (see Rule 13).

c. Any sum owing by a member at cessation of membership shall remain payable.

#### **10. Membership Register and Data**

The Union shall maintain a membership register containing each member's name, contact details, employer and workplace (where provided), and subscription status. The General Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining the register and for ensuring compliance with data protection law. The register shall be made available for inspection in accordance with these Rules and lawful requests.

### **Rule 4 – Representatives**

1. The Union shall appoint or elect workplace representatives to deal with representation and collective bargaining once recognition is secured.
2. Until such recognition, the Union shall focus on recruitment and providing advice and information to prospective representatives.
3. Until the Union has sufficient funds to release or remunerate Officers for representational duties, members may receive advice and guidance from the founding or regional Officers. Formal representation in grievance, disciplinary, or similar proceedings shall only be undertaken when authorised by the Executive Committee and when resources reasonably allow.
4. The Union shall provide only limited services and support until recognition, funding, and membership levels allow further development. Any future expansion of services, including the paid employment of officers, training of representatives, or other member benefits, shall be decided by the Executive Committee and, where appropriate, approved by a General Meeting.

### **Rule 5 – Officers**

#### **1. Officers**

The Union shall have a General Secretary, a President, and a Treasurer, together with such other Officers, including full-time Regional Officers or Organisers, as may be determined by the Executive Committee or a General Meeting.

##### **1A. Creation of New Officer Posts**

The Executive Committee may, from time to time, create additional officer or staff positions as may be required for the effective administration, organisation, or representation of the Union and its members.

The Executive Committee shall determine the title, duties, and method of appointment for any such position, subject to these Rules and to ratification at the next General Meeting.

#### **2. Election at the Founding Meeting**

At the Founding Meeting held on 9 November 2025, the following members were duly elected as Officers of the Union:

- **General Secretary:** James Pollock
- **President:** Callum Weaver
- **Treasurer:** James O'Brien
- **Regional Officer:** Ryan Price
- **Regional Officer:** Norman McGuire
- **Regional Officer:** Kenneth Mitchell

- **Regional Officer:** Paul Slevin
- **Regional Officer:** Craig Pearce

3. These Officers shall hold office in accordance with these Rules. The General Secretary, President and Treasurer shall be subject to the election provisions of this Rule; Regional Officers shall be appointed on a continuing basis as set out below.

**4. Principal Officer Elections**

- The General Secretary, President and Treasurer were elected at the Founding Meeting and shall serve until the first Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- At the first AGM, those positions shall be subject to re-election by the membership.
- From the first AGM onwards, each shall serve a renewable term of five years and shall be eligible for re-election without limit on the number of terms.
- The General Secretary shall normally be elected by secret postal ballot of all members for a five-year term, in accordance with the *Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992*.
- Where the Union qualifies for the **Small-Union Exemption**, the General Secretary may be appointed or elected by an alternative lawful method permitted by that Act and these Rules, without requiring a postal ballot of all members.

**5. Small-Union Exemption**

Where, at the time of appointment or election, the Union has fewer than 5,000 members and its gross annual income does not exceed £1,000,000 (or such higher sum as may be prescribed by law), the General Secretary may be appointed or elected by an alternative lawful method permitted by the *Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992* and these Rules — for example, by vote of members at a General Meeting or by ballot of the Executive Committee — without requiring a postal ballot of all members.

**6. Election Procedures (for elected Officers only)**

- Notice of any election, the offices to be filled, and the nomination procedure shall be published to members not less than 28 days before nominations close.
- Nominations shall be permitted from any member entitled to vote and shall be submitted in the manner prescribed by the Executive Committee.
- Elections shall be by secret ballot of eligible members (postal or other method providing equivalent secrecy and integrity) conducted by a Returning Officer or independent scrutineer appointed by the Executive Committee or a General Meeting.
- The Executive Committee shall set reasonable rules to ensure fairness, equal voting rights, and transparent administration of the ballot.
- Casual vacancies in any elected office may be filled by the Executive Committee until the next AGM, when the vacancy shall be filled by election.

**7. Duties of Principal Officers**

**General Secretary** – The principal administrative officer of the Union. Duties include:

- Administering the day-to-day affairs of the Union.
- Maintaining membership records and official documents.
- Conducting correspondence on behalf of the Union.
- Acting as the main point of contact with the Certification Officer and external

bodies.

- Implementing decisions of the Executive Committee and General Meetings.

**President** – The presiding officer of the Union. Duties include:

- Chairing Annual and Special General Meetings and meetings of the Executive Committee.
- Ensuring meetings are conducted in accordance with these Rules.
- Representing the Union at formal or ceremonial occasions as required.
- Acting as guardian of the Rules and assisting in resolving internal disputes.

**Treasurer** – The principal financial officer of the Union. Duties include:

- Receiving all monies due to the Union and ensuring they are deposited in the Union's bank account.
- Keeping proper books of account.
- Preparing and presenting financial statements to the Executive Committee quarterly and to the AGM.
- Ensuring payments are authorised in accordance with these Rules.
- Liaising with any auditor or independent examiner appointed by the Union.

## **8. Remuneration — Transition from Voluntary to Paid Status**

- a. All Officers elected at the Founding Meeting shall initially serve on an unpaid or voluntary basis until such time as the Union's finances allow the payment of wages.
- b. When the Union becomes financially able to provide remuneration, the General Secretary, President, Treasurer and Regional Officers shall continue in their existing posts and shall become paid employees of the Union.
- c. Any paid Officer shall enter into a written contract of employment and shall be subject to all statutory employer obligations, including PAYE, National Insurance and pension requirements where applicable.
- d. The introduction of pay shall not in itself require any Officer to be re-appointed, re-selected or re-elected.

## **9. Regional Officers**

- a. Regional Officers are appointed positions responsible for coordinating the Union's organisation, recruitment and strategic representation within their allocated geographical areas or sectors. Their principal role is to support and guide workplace representatives and delegates, rather than to act as individual case representatives except where necessary.
- b. All Regional Officers were elected at the Founding Meeting and shall hold office at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- c. Regional Officers shall initially serve on an unpaid or voluntary basis until such time as the Union's finances allow payment of wages.
- d. Once financially feasible, Regional Officers may become full-time paid employees of the Union. Any paid Regional Officer shall hold a written contract of employment and shall be subject to all statutory employer obligations.
- e. The Executive Committee may assign or vary regional responsibilities as required by the Union's growth and structure, ensuring that each recognised employer or region has appropriate support.

## **10. General Duties of All Officers**

All Officers shall act in accordance with these Rules and any lawful decisions of the Executive Committee or General Meeting, and shall discharge their duties honestly, diligently and in the best interests of the Union and its members.

## 11. **Resignation and Removal**

Any Officer may resign by notice in writing. An Officer may be removed from office for cause by resolution of the Executive Committee or by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting at a General Meeting, in accordance with the disciplinary and appeal provisions of these Rules.

## 12. The General Secretary may, on behalf of the Union, employ or appoint such officers, organisers, or other staff as are necessary for the proper administration and functioning of the Union, including positions at regional, national, or other levels, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee where required. Any such employment or appointment shall be made in the best interests of the Union and its members and in accordance with any conditions, remuneration, or terms approved by the Executive Committee. Nothing in this paragraph shall prevent the Union from electing officers where required by law, the Union's Rules, or membership mandate.

# Rule 6 – Executive Committee & Representative Structure

## 1. **Purpose and overview**

This Rule sets out the composition, powers and procedures for the Executive Committee and the Union's representative structure, including workplace, regional and national representation and the transition from a one-recognition = one-delegate model to a committee-based delegation model as the Union grows.

## 2. **Composition**

- a. The Executive Committee shall consist of:
  - i. The General Secretary, President and Treasurer;
  - ii. All appointed Regional Officers; and
  - iii. Delegates drawn from recognised workplaces, bargaining units, regional committees or the National Committee in accordance with this Rule.
- b. **Founding / initial arrangement.** While the Union is in its formative stage and recognitions are limited in number, each recognised employer, workplace or bargaining unit shall be entitled to elect one delegate to the Executive Committee.

## 3. **Transition to a committee-based model (scalable apportionment)**

- a. **When to transition.** As the Union expands, the Executive Committee may, by resolution, adopt a revised representative model in which workplace representation is channelled through workplace and/or regional committees and a National Committee. Under such a model, only a specified number of delegates from the National Committee (or from regional committees) shall sit on the Executive Committee — thereby keeping the Executive Committee workable.
- b. **How the change is made.** Any resolution to change the representative model must:
  - i. Be prepared and published to the membership at least 28 days before it takes effect; and
  - ii. Be submitted for ratification at the next General Meeting (AGM or SGM). The change shall not take effect unless ratified.
- c. **Principles for any apportionment.** Any revised apportionment must adhere to principles of fairness, proportionality (larger workplaces/regions receive proportionate representation), practicability (avoid an unmanageable number of delegates), and transparency. The Executive Committee shall publish the detailed apportionment formula or rules whenever it adopts a change.

**4. Election and appointment of delegates**

- a. Delegates to the Executive Committee, National Committee or regional/ workplace committees shall be elected by the members they represent by democratic means in accordance with standing instructions issued by the Executive Committee.
- b. For small workplaces, the Executive Committee may approve grouping arrangements (two or more small workplaces grouped for delegate purposes) to secure practical representation; any grouping proposal must be published to members at least 28 days before implementation and is subject to ratification at the next General Meeting.
- c. Delegates shall normally serve for two years and may be re-elected unless the Executive Committee determines a different term and that is subsequently ratified by a General Meeting.

**5. Continuity and protection of sitting delegates**

- a. Sitting delegates shall continue in office until the end of their term or until replaced in accordance with these Rules.
- b. No change in apportionment or representative model shall remove a sitting delegate without providing an election or an agreed transitional arrangement in accordance with this Rule.

**6. Powers and duties of the Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall:

- a. Manage the affairs, property and funds of the Union between General Meetings;
- b. Implement policy decisions of the AGM and General Meetings;
- c. Oversee recognition campaigns, collective bargaining and representation work;
- d. Establish and dissolve workplace, regional or national committees and any sub-committees necessary for the Union's work; and
- e. Publish annually (to the AGM) a report on the representative structure, delegate apportionment and any changes made.

**7. Meetings, quorum and decision-making**

- a. The Executive Committee shall meet at least quarterly or as required by the General Secretary or President.
- b. A quorum shall be one half of the Committee's membership (rounded up).
- c. Decisions shall be taken by simple majority vote; in the event of a tie the Chair (or President) shall have a casting vote.
- d. The Executive Committee may invite observers, technical advisers or staff to attend meetings without voting rights.

**8. Filling casual vacancies**

Casual vacancies among delegates or committee members may be filled temporarily by the relevant workplace, branch or regional committee until the next scheduled election or until the next General Meeting, as appropriate.

**9. Accountability and review**

- a. The Executive Committee shall be accountable to the membership through the AGM and any Special General Meetings. Its decisions on representative arrangements may be reviewed or overturned by resolution of a General Meeting.
- b. Any change to representative apportionment or the committee model shall be subject to publication (28 days) and ratification at the next General Meeting, except where an emergency requires immediate interim measures; in such a case the

Executive Committee shall publish the interim measure immediately and submit it for ratification at the next General Meeting.

#### **10. Delegation policy and standing instructions**

The Executive Committee shall publish standing instructions and a delegation policy describing election procedures, grouping rules for small workplaces, eligibility criteria, and detailed apportionment formulas. These documents shall be published to members and updated whenever there is a change in the representative model.

### **Rule 7 – Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

#### **1. Supreme Authority**

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is the supreme decision-making body of the Union. It shall determine Union policy, receive reports from the Officers and the Executive Committee, approve the accounts, and consider motions or rule amendments duly submitted in accordance with these Rules.

#### **2. Composition**

The AGM shall consist of:

- a. The Officers of the Union;
- b. The members of the Executive Committee; and
- c. Accredited delegates elected from recognised employers, workplaces or regional committees in accordance with Rule 6.

Only delegates and members of the Executive Committee shall have the right to vote.

The AGM shall not be open to all members to attend in person, but all members shall have the right to view proceedings by appropriate means (for example, online streaming or recorded publication) and shall receive the official report of the meeting.

#### **3. Notice and Frequency**

The AGM shall be held once in each calendar year at a time and place (or online platform) determined by the Executive Committee.

At least 28 days' notice shall be given to all members, specifying the business to be conducted and detailing the arrangements for motions, nominations and viewing access.

#### **4. Business of the AGM**

The business shall include:

- a. Receipt of the Annual Report of the Executive Committee;
- b. Receipt and approval of the audited or examined financial statements;
- c. Election or re-election of Officers and delegates as required;
- d. Consideration of motions submitted by the Executive Committee, regional or workplace committees, or delegates; and
- e. Any other competent business notified in advance.

#### **5. Quorum and Voting**

a. The quorum for the AGM shall be one-half of the accredited delegates entitled to vote.

b. Decisions shall be made by simple majority unless otherwise specified in these Rules.

c. Voting shall be by show of hands, card vote or secure electronic method as determined by the Chair, except that elections shall be by secret ballot.

#### **6. Reporting and Transparency**

- a. The General Secretary shall prepare a full written report of the AGM including all resolutions and elections.
- b. The report and the Union's annual accounts shall be distributed or made available to all members within 30 days of the meeting.
- c. The Executive Committee shall ensure that decisions made at the AGM are implemented and communicated to members.

### **Rule 8 – Special General Meetings (SGMs)**

#### **1. Purpose**

Special General Meetings (SGMs) may be convened to consider urgent or exceptional matters which cannot reasonably be delayed until the next AGM.

#### **2. Calling an SGM**

- a. An SGM may be called at any time by resolution of the Executive Committee.
- b. An SGM must also be called within 28 days of receipt of a written request signed by not less than 10 per cent of the membership or such lower number as the Executive Committee may determine.
- c. The request must state the specific business to be discussed.

#### **3. Notice**

Not less than 14 days' notice of an SGM shall be given to all members, stating the date, venue (or online arrangements) and the exact business to be transacted. No other business shall be discussed or voted upon.

#### **4. Composition and Voting**

The SGM shall be composed of the same voting delegates and Executive Committee members as for the AGM. Only accredited delegates and Executive Committee members may vote.

#### **5. Procedure**

SGMs shall be conducted in accordance with the same rules and standing orders as the AGM so far as they apply.

#### **6. Reporting**

The General Secretary shall prepare a written report of each SGM within 14 days of its conclusion, which shall be circulated to all members together with any decisions or resolutions passed.

### **Rule 8A – Decision-Making Powers and Interpretation of Policy**

#### **1. Hierarchy of Authority**

- a. The supreme authority of the Union rests with the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- b. Between General Meetings, the Executive Committee shall act on behalf of the Union and its decisions shall be binding unless and until overturned by a General Meeting.

c. Regional, workplace or industry committees shall act within the policy framework set by the Executive Committee and General Meetings.

**2. Emergency Decisions**

Where an urgent decision is required and it is not practicable to convene an SGM, the Executive Committee may act in the best interests of the Union. Any such decision shall be reported to members within 14 days and submitted for ratification at the next General Meeting.

**3. Implementation of Decisions**

All decisions of the AGM and SGMs shall be implemented by the Executive Committee and Officers. Reports on implementation shall be presented to the next AGM.

**4. Interpretation of Rules**

Any question on the meaning or application of these Rules arising between General Meetings shall be determined in the first instance by the Executive Committee, subject to appeal to the next AGM or SGM.

**5. Publication of Decisions**

All decisions of the Executive Committee, AGM and SGMs affecting members shall be published or reported to members as soon as reasonably practicable.

## **Rule 9 – Finance**

**1. Control of Funds**

All funds of the Union shall be under the control of the Executive Committee, which shall ensure that income and expenditure are properly authorised and recorded.

**2. Banking Arrangements**

The Union shall maintain one or more bank accounts in its own name. All payments shall be made through such accounts and shall require the authorisation of at least two officers, one of whom must be the Treasurer or General Secretary.

**3. Accounting Records**

The Treasurer shall keep proper books of account showing all income, expenditure, assets and liabilities. Financial records shall be retained for at least six years.

**4. Annual Statement and Audit**

At the end of each financial year the Treasurer shall prepare an annual statement of accounts. The accounts shall be independently examined or audited in accordance with any legal requirement and presented to the Annual General Meeting.

**5. Reporting and Inspection**

The annual accounts and financial report shall be circulated to all members or made available on request. Copies shall be supplied to the Certification Officer as required by law.

**6. Financial Policies**

The Executive Committee may adopt financial procedures or policies (for example on expenses, petty cash or procurement) consistent with these Rules.

## 7. Use of Funds

Union funds shall be applied only to further the lawful objects of the Union and to meet its proper administrative and organisational expenses.

## Rule 10 – Conduct of Meetings

Meetings of the Union shall be conducted in accordance with these Rules and any standing orders approved by the Executive Committee. Decisions at meetings shall be taken by simple majority unless otherwise provided in these Rules.

## Rule 11 – Trustees

The Union does not currently appoint Trustees. If the Union acquires property or assets requiring trusteeship, Trustees shall be appointed by a General Meeting in accordance with the law.

## Rule 12 – Discipline

1. The Executive Committee may take disciplinary action, including warning, suspension or expulsion, against any member whose conduct is seriously damaging to the Union or its members.
2. Examples of conduct that may lead to disciplinary action include:
  - a. Breaking these Rules or ignoring lawful Union decisions;
  - b. Misusing Union funds or property;
  - c. Acting dishonestly or bringing the Union into disrepute;
  - d. Harassing, bullying or discriminating against another member, officer or staff;
  - e. Disrupting Union meetings or elections;
  - f. Giving false information to the Union.
3. No member shall be disciplined without first being told what the complaint is and being given a fair chance to respond. The member may attend a hearing and may be accompanied by another member for support.
4. The decision and reasons shall be given in writing.
5. A member who is disciplined has the right to appeal to the Executive Committee. The appeal must be made in writing within 28 days of receiving the decision. The Executive Committee shall review the case fairly and its decision shall be final

## Rule 13 – Founding Meeting

The Union was formally established at a Founding Meeting held on 9 November 2025, at which these Rules were adopted and the first officers were appointed.

## Rule 14 – Alteration of Rules

These Rules may be altered at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting, provided that notice of the proposed change has been given to members in advance with the meeting notice. Any alteration must be approved by at least two-thirds of the members present and eligible to vote.

