

Em3 Cost of Living Crisis		
1	Conference notes with deep concern that families are facing a real cost of living crisis as	1
2	inflation, national insurance hikes and huge increases in energy bills far outstrip meagre	2
3	increases in pay, benefits and pensions.	3
4	Conference calls on our Governments to address the emerging crisis as a priority.	4
5	Conference notes that energy bills in Britain went up by 54% in April, leaving families	5
6	facing an average annual bill of £2,000. Conference further notes with increasing alarm	6
7	that these bills are set to rise again in October.	7
8	In contrast, wages are rising by a maximum of 5.2% this year according to the Office for	8
9	Budget Responsibility (OBR), and benefits and pensions are going up by just 3.1%.	9
10	Families are facing a huge squeeze on their incomes with those on the minimum wage	10
11	expected to be £200 a year worse off in real terms, after the 6.6% rise in the national	11
12	living wage failed to keep up with inflation and effectively squeezed incomes further.	12
13	The six million families, who use universal credit to support their incomes, face a £13	13
14	per month cut to their incomes once inflation is taken into account and this is on top of	14
15	the removal of the £20 uplift in Universal Credit last autumn.	15
16	The government's decision to break the triple lock and increase the state pension by CPI	16
17	rather than earnings will cost those on the full new state pension £487 a year and those	17
18	on the full basic state pension £373 a year.	18
19	The Governor of the Bank of England has called this a 'historic shock' to living standards	19
20	and those families who are least able to cope are at the sharp end of the consequences	20
21	whilst the Chancellor appears distracted by the intricacies of his family's tax affairs.	21
22	Conference believes that a key role of government is to help citizens collectively	22
23	manage such challenges but has been left dismayed as the Chancellor and his privileged	23
24	colleagues have repeatedly failed to understand the extent of the crisis facing the	24
25	average citizen never mind those on low incomes.	25
26	The six-month extension to the household emergency support fund delivered through	26
27	local authorities, which was set to close at the end of March, is little more than applying	27
28	a band aid to a haemorrhage.	28
29	The Chancellor is determined to reject all calls to increase benefits or pensions in any	29
30	way that would make a real difference and according to the Resolution Foundation the	30
31	Chancellors failure to support families through the cost of living crisis today, and to cut	31
32	their taxes in the future, means that absolute poverty is expected to rise by 1.3 million	32
33	people next year, including 500,000 children.	33
34	Conference notes that our union is addressing the cost of living crisis by demanding that	34
35	rail industry employers deliver pay increases at least in line with RPI and supports the EC	35
36	in any actions it determines are appropriate to deliver upon this demand. If this results	36
37	in industrial action our union will seek to coordinate this with sister unions and other	37
38	workers taking action to fight the Tories cost of living crisis.	38
39	Conference believes that it is wholly unacceptable for families to be forced to make	39
40	choices between eating and heating and demands that government steps up to the plate	40
41	and starts to serve the best interests of ordinary working families and pensioners.	41
42	Conference therefore supports the TUC campaign for the Chancellor to deliver an	42
43	emergency budget which will boost wages by increasing the minimum wage, Universal	43
44	Credit and benefits.	44

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45	Conference also supports the Labour Party’s call for a windfall tax on energy profits to	45
46	fund grants designed to specifically help with the cost of energy.	46
47	Conference further believes that serious government investment in the green energy	47
48	sector and in nationwide home refurbishments would not only help to address long term	48
49	energy costs but also help tackle the climate crisis and regenerate many communities.	49
50	We currently face the worst living standards crisis in many generations and millions of	50
51	families are at breaking point. This crisis is as much a result of political decisions as	51
52	global economic circumstances. Helping citizens and communities to collectively	52
53	manage the challenges requires Government to change direction and act to reduce	53
54	energy bills and boost pay, benefits and pensions.	54
	Executive Committee	
		Mover:
		Seconder: