**National Assembly of Women**

**Motions carried at the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 15 June 2024**

**Motion 1**

**Women’s Liberation Alliance –** The NAW should support the Women’s Liberation Alliance.

**Founding Principle:** The abolition of class exploitation, sex based oppression and racism is the pre-condition for women’s liberation.

**Founding Statement: Women’s Liberation Alliance** is a progressive coalition of women & women’s organisations focused on rebuilding and sustaining a women’s movement

**Objectives:**

* Campaigning in line with (but not limited to) The Charter for Women
* Challenging patriarchy & sexist & racist policy and practice
* Ensuring women’s demands for fair and equal treatment and participation in work and the labour movement
* Developing responses and materials and working in solidarity with women’s struggles for rights locally and globally

**Proposed by** NAW Executive Committee. **Seconded by** Bernadette Keaveney.

**Carried unanimously** with the proviso that retention of abortion rights must be included.

**Motion 2**

**Child poverty and the two child benefit cap**

On the 21st of March 2024 the Department for Work and Pensions published its report on UK living standards based on household income for the financial year ending 2023 – commonly referred to as the poverty statistics.

The report shows that in a single year an additional 600,000 people fell into absolute poverty affecting 300,000 more children. 4.3 million children now live in poverty. With soaring household costs and rising food prices this outcome was inevitable, given the Government’s determination to keep wages down and continue with its draconian benefit system. Even the Financial Times acknowledged that the share of children living in absolute poverty has risen by its highest rate for 30 years.

More than 69% of UK children in poverty live in families where at least one parent works, while 44% of children in lone-parent families with three or more children were in poverty. An estimated 2.9 million children were in deep poverty, meaning family income was at least 50% below the poverty line. Nearly half (46%) of all families with three or more children were in poverty.

This level of extreme hardship means that many families cannot afford basic living essentials like food, warmth, and shelter. Otherwise known as a state of destitution. The figures show that four million people experienced destitution in 2022. Child poverty charities and campaigners have called for an urgent increase in benefits to reflect the real cost of basics and scrapping of the two-child benefit limit, which they see as a driver of family hardship.

Introduced by the then Chancellor George Osborne in April 2017, the two-child benefit limit means that parents cannot claim child tax-credit or universal credit for any third or subsequent child born after that date. In 2023 this affected about three million children with families losing out on up to £3,235 a year.

The Labour Party was horrified by the figures in the report and Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, Alison McGovan said that a Labour Government would “fix this Tory failure with a new cross-government child poverty strategy”. It is therefore alarming that scrapping this cruel two-child benefit limit has been ruled out by Keir Starmer and Rachel Reeves on the ground of economic pressures.

But Imran Hussain, from Action for Children points out that “any government serious about strengthening our society and economy knows child poverty is hugely damaging to public services and public finances”. He argues that the two-child benefit limit “drives huge costs in schools and the NHS and damages our nations’ skills base, which weakens our economy by many more times than the money saved by this policy”.

This AGM concurs with this position and asks:

* The incoming NAW Executive to support those organisations campaigning to scrap the two-child benefit cap as part of the wider strategy to tackle child poverty.
* NAW members and affiliates to write to prospective candidates in the forthcoming general election asking them to support scrapping the two-child benefit cap as part of a wider government policy to tackle child poverty.

**Proposed by** NAW Executive Committee. **Seconded by** Megan Dobney. Carried unanimously

**Motion 3**

**Defence**

In Keir Starmer’s recent speech in Barrow, he said that if Labour won the next election he would increase defence spending to 2.5% of GDP and boost the nuclear deterrent, ie. the Trident nuclear armed submarine fleet.

We believe in NAW that neither of these policies would bring peace and security to the people of the UK or across the globe.

Expanding the military, in particular replacing Trident, will bring about a new arms race.  At the same time, the money expended – £205 billion for Trident replacement alone – will have to be taken from our already starved public services – the NHS, education, social care,  local authorities, combatting climate change.

NAW therefore resolves to write to

1. The leader of the Labour Party along the above lines

2. At the same time ask that the Party establish a Defence Diversification Agency which will support a transition from the manufacture of armaments to socially useful production with highly skilled jobs

3. Publicise our views on social media and in the print press.

**Proposed by** Rae Street **Seconded by** Pam Flynn. Carried – 11 in favour, 1 against and 8 abstentions

**Motion 4**

**Climate Crisis and the role of  Health and Safety officers**

There is a growing  realisation that extreme temperatures and flooding are becoming normal and are linked directly to human-generated carbon emissions.

This has a direct impact on the workplace and the home. Women workers are often elected as Health and Safety Representatives in their workplaces. There are now additional climate hazards which they have to predict and negotiate mitigation and prevention with employers.

The NAW proposes that we follow the lead of the FBU, UNISON, UCU and NEU in beginning the process of aligning the role of Green Reps and Health and Safety Reps in all unionised workplaces in order to try to safeguard workers from increased risks at work and to identify aspects of the work processes and work places which are actively contributing to Carbon Pollution and growing the problem of Climate Heating globally

**Proposed by** Lydia Meryll  UCU North West **Seconded by** Pam Flynn. Carried unanimously