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# Young members speaking up for equalities

By Vijay Menezes-Jackson, DWP Edinburgh, Lothian and Border.

Young members were right at the heart of the inaugural PCS Scotland devolved policy conference, which was held in Glasgow on 2 November. Although not many motions had been submitted, the main discussion was around the new democratic structures that were being put in place, chiefly the Scottish executive committee (SEC) which will be elected early next year, and making sure members' voices would be heard in all their diversity. The conference voted resoundingly to include a reserved SEC place for self-defined disabled/neurodivergent members.

Chris Goulart Mc Nerney, PCS Ofgem branch chair said "I was one of Ofgem's delegates to the conference - a historic moment for our union, which will ensure that members in Scotland have a say over devolved decisions that affect their lives and livelihoods. It was great to see such a strong focus on equalities, with motions ensuring representation for disabled and/or neurodivergent members on the new Scottish executive committee, and giving the new executive a mandate to set up equality networks in Scotland. I was delighted to speak in support of those motions, and I'm excited to see the new equality networks up and running."

Ruth Cunningham, SG Grampian and Tayside equalities officer, who proposed the motions on behalf of their branch, added: "Our SEC needs to be representative of our membership in Scotland. Equality issues aren't an added extra for when we have time and aren't in an active dispute. Equality has to be at the heart of every decision we make and every new structure we build like the SEC. We have to get voices in the room that perhaps haven't always been there in the past, including young, disabled, LGBT+, and neurodivergent members. Most of us have come of age at a time of eroding employment rights and crisis after crisis. Yet we're still prepared to stand with our union. Our union must stand with us and evolve in return."

After the conference, a lively young members' social was held at the Griffin and I enjoyed getting to meet so many engaged young activists. As convenor of the

Scottish young members' network, I would invite any interested young member to join us; we'd welcome whoever wants to get more involved or just wants to know more. We meet online monthly and are hoping to hold some further, regional socials for young members across Scotland, so watch this space!