

Trade Union and Labour Party Liaison Organisation

TULO HANDBOOK

a practical guide to building the link between the Labour Party and affiliated trade unions at a local level

FACTSHEET 2



The last Factsheet talked about the crucial importance of the link at a local level – CLP Trade Union Liaison Officers, and TULO Co-ordinators from the unions are those tasked with building strong relationships between the Party and the affiliated unions locally.

To begin with, it is important to set out who CLP TULO Officers and TULO Co-ordinators are, and the differences between them.

CLP TULO Officers

CLP TULO Officers (Constituency Labour Party Trade Union Liaison Officers) are activists in local Labour Parties, who are elected to the role at their CLP's Annual General Meeting. Each CLP should have a TULO Officer in place all year round, and at all points in the electoral cycle, in order to build links with local unions.

TULO Co-ordinators

TULO Co-ordinators are lay or full-time officials of the affiliated unions, who are asked by regional TULO Committees to work with CLP TULO Officers to maximise union support for the Labour Party in priority areas in the run-up to elections. The amount of time before an election that TULO Co-ordinators are appointed will vary, as will the area that they are co-ordinating (it could be one key constituency, a borough, or a larger geographical area).

It is difficult to specifically define the roles and remits of CLP TULO Officers and TULO Co-ordinators – these will vary hugely dependent on local circumstances. In some cases relationships may need to be built almost from scratch, in others they may need to be maintained and built upon – different tasks will need to be undertaken in each of these scenarios, and in those in-between.

Similarly, the way that CLP TULO Officers and TULO Co-ordinators share out tasks will vary according to their local situation. However, this Factsheet aims to set out broad job descriptions for both roles, in order to guide people working locally. These should not be seen as hard and fast lists of tasks to be undertaken, but rather a starting point for putting together a local plan of action.

The two job descriptions should be read in conjunction with one another, as the nature of the roles means that there will be a great deal of overlap, particularly with regards to organising for elections. However, CLP TULO Officers are also encouraged to work more broadly to build the link outside of election time.

Job description: **CLP TULO Officers**


Objective: To work all-year-round and throughout the electoral cycle to build strong links between their CLP and local trade unions, in order to give trade unionists an effective voice within the local Party, and to ensure the unions are in a position to provide organisational support for the Party during elections.

Activities: The activities that can be undertaken to build the link between the Party and its affiliated unions are many and varied – but doing a full audit of union involvement in the CLP, and putting together a local contacts database is an important place to start. This list of activities should provide inspiration for CLP TULO Officers looking to put together a plan of action.

- Auditing the formal and informal links that the CLP has with local trade unions, in order to highlight both gaps and existing relationships.
- Building a comprehensive database of local union contacts, including full-time officials, shop stewards and local unionised workplaces.
- Organising regular Labour Forums – an opportunity to ensure dialogue between local trade union members and officials and the Labour MP or other elected representatives.
- Working to increase union affiliations to the local CLP, and to maximise attendance of those affiliated unions.
- Ensure the CLP has a Constituency Development Plan with a trade union, and that it is fulfilling the agreement
- Organise events in order to increase the involvement of trade unionists in the CLP. There are many events that could be co-ordinated, but this list should provide some ideas:
 - » policy forums;
 - » Q and A events with Ministers, local MPs or local councillors;
 - » social nights;
 - » working with local union officials to organise a phone bank to recruit trade union members to the Party;
 - » regular campaigning evenings; or
 - » MP visits to local workplaces.

Working at election time: At election time, TULO Officers in key seats will need to work closely with the TULO Co-ordinators that have been appointed by the unions to cover the area. TULO Officers should play a leading role in organising the activities outlined in the Job Description for TULO Co-ordinators on the next page. The TULO Co-ordinators exist in order to act as a bridge between the CLPs and the trade unions – they will be able to assist you in getting the access you need to deliver maximum trade union assistance for the Labour campaign in the run-up to elections.

It is important to remember that TULO Co-ordinators are likely to be full-time officials of the trade unions – whilst they can be of support to you, their primary responsibility is to their members, so other work may well have to take priority. The more you are able to take a lead in delivering the election work, the likelier it is to be successful.



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Job description: **TULO Co-ordinators**

Objective: To maximise and co-ordinate trade union assistance for the key seat or area they cover. In practice, this means securing resources for the campaign in line with what has been decided by local Labour Parties, and what will fit inside their election expense limits.

Working together with CLP Trade Union Liaison Officers: An important part of TULO Co-ordinators' role is acting as a point of contact for TULO Officers in CLPs. Together with Co-ordinators, these local volunteers are jointly responsible for co-ordinating trade union assistance in the run-up to elections, and also take lead responsibility for building the link between their local party and the unions all year round.

The way that work is shared between the Co-ordinators from the trade unions and the TULO Officers in CLPs will vary dependent on local circumstances, but Co-ordinators should view themselves as having a facilitating role – acting as the gateway to the trade unions in the region. Many CLP TULO Officers will not have vast experience of trade unions, or will only be knowledgeable about their own union's structures.

Building a strong working relationship with TULO Officers as early as possible, and supporting them in knowing how to access local workplaces, union officers and shop stewards, will enable them to take the lead during election time.

Activities: A variety of activities are required in order to maximise and co-ordinate trade union assistance for key seats and priority areas, but the following list of activities should be viewed as the core functions required. The way that the workload is shared between TULO Co-ordinators and CLP TULO Officers will vary; however, the more support that CLP TULO Officers are given early on, the more of the work they will likely be able to take on closer to the election.

- Compiling a comprehensive contact pool of local unions, including full-time and branch officers, workplaces and shop stewards.
- Working to consolidate links that CLPs already have with local unions, and to build new relationships where they do not already exist.
- Communicating with local union branches and regional offices to mobilise officers and activists as volunteers in the campaign.
- Organising a monthly 'TULO Campaign Evening', working to maximise attendance from trade union activists and officers, and build a relationship with attendees in order to make them more active in the campaign.
- Contacting local union branches in order to maximise donations to the campaign.
- Asking unions' regional offices for other kinds of support, such as franking mailings, providing phone lines for telephone canvassing, or volunteering drivers to help with the campaign.
- Asking union full-time officers and shop stewards to put up posters and distribute postal vote application forms in local workplaces.
- Working with the campaign organiser to co-ordinate visits of the candidate to local workplaces.

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