

## **Motions for Autumn Conference**

### **SC1. Home rule and community rule**

Conference reaffirms that the Scottish Liberal Democrats believe in federalism and that a federal political structure for the United Kingdom, including home rule for Scotland, offers the best way for people in all nations and regions to achieve their potential.

Conference further affirms that more can be done to equip communities and individuals with the levers of power that will allow them to shape their local areas and have more control over their own lives. Conference welcomes the Scotland Bill, progressing through Westminster, which transfers radical new powers to the Scottish Parliament and considers it a political priority to secure the Bill onto the statute book.

Conference notes that the Scotland Bill was introduced at Westminster at an accelerated pace after May 2010 because of the influence of Liberal Democrats, who had shaped the proposals through active participation in the Calman Commission.

Conference further recalls that the 1998 Scotland Act and the establishment of the Scottish Parliament came after substantial work by Scottish Liberal Democrats, in partnership with many others, achieving consensus and agreement.

Conference welcomes the initiative of Scottish Liberal Democrat Leader Willie Rennie to establish a Home Rule Community Rule Commission to design and promote a precise federal approach to the future of Scotland within the United Kingdom; looks forward to receiving proposals from the Commission in the early part of 2012; and believes that this blueprint can build on the principles developed by the Steel Commission, will map the next constitutional steps after the Scotland Bill and provide an inspiring and positive vision for the future of our country.

Conference welcomes the further task of the Commission to examine how power can be transferred to local communities, to start to reverse the centralising tendencies of Scottish Government. Conference encourages all interested people and civic bodies to engage with the Home Rule Community Rule Commission.

#### **Cards:**

Move – John Edwards, Edinburgh North East & Leith - called  
John Barnett, North East Fife - called  
Cllr Gerry McMullan, West Fife - called  
Cllr Eileen McCartin, Paisley & Renfrewshire - called  
Allan Heron, Paisley - called  
Alex Cole-Hamilton, Edinburgh North & Leith - called  
Robert Brown, Rutherglen - called  
David Fleming, Angus & Mearns - called  
Graeme Cowie, North Glasgow - called  
Sum Up – David Hannay, Galloway – called

#### **Votes:**

Motion - carried

### **SC2. Minimum energy efficiency standards for rental accommodation**

Conference notes that:

- a) fuel poverty is four times higher in the private rented sector than in social housing
- b) private rented dwellings are three time more likely to have 'poor' energy efficiency than owner-occupied housing
- c) one quarter of Scotland's entire energy consumption is used for domestic heating

Conference further notes:

- 1) rented homes are currently required to have an up to date Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
- 2) tax deductions are already available to landlords installing insulation in their properties
- 3) landlords have no incentive to improve efficiency as they do not pay the energy bills; tenants cannot justify significant investment when they do not own the property

Conference believes that decisive action must be taken to improve the energy efficiency of rented housing, reducing the unacceptable levels of fuel poverty and lowering energy consumption.

Conference calls for the Scottish Government to:

- a) introduce a mandatory minimum energy efficiency standard for rented housing not lower than band D on the EPC scale.
- b) prohibit the letting of properties failing to meet this standard until improvement works are completed.

**Drafting change to SC2: Minimum energy efficiency standards for rental accommodation**

**Accepted by Liberal Youth Scotland**

***Submitted by Aberdeen Central Local Party***

Delete lines 22 and 23 and replace with: 'b) Prohibit new lets on properties failing to meet this standard until improvement works are completed and setting a realistic date for bring up to standard properties already let.'

**Cards:**

Move – Robbie Simpson, North Glasgow - called

Denis Mollison, East Lothian - called

Sum Up - Sophie Bridger, Glasgow North - called

Jim Tolson, Dunfermline – called – asked for sep move on ll 22&23

Jim Burke, Dunfermline - called

**Votes:**

Line 22/23 – to a count. For:61, Against:52

Motion - carried

**SC3. More Power to Scotland's Communities**

1. Conference is concerned that, despite the promises made at the time of the Concordat between Scottish Ministers and Scotland's local authorities, the SNP government continues to centralise power and to restrict the freedom of Scotland's local authorities to invest in and deliver services for the communities they represent.
2. Conference notes that, as a result of the Council Tax Freeze, Scotland's local authorities are almost entirely reliant on central government grants or transfers from the Non Domestic Rates pool.

3. Conference notes that of all Scotland's political parties the Scottish Liberal Democrats have maintained an absolute commitment to increasing the proportion of their income that local authorities directly collect in order to allow local solutions for local problems.
4. Conference notes that Liberal Democrat led City of Edinburgh Council is set to be the first local authority in the UK to use Tax Increment Finance to fund investment in the Edinburgh Waterfront which will be repaid from the increased income from Non Domestic Rates that will follow the growth supported by that investment.
5. Conference welcomes the announcement in June by the Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg that the Coalition Government will allow local authorities in England to retain the business rates they collect and:
  - a) As a result English local authorities will collect 80 per cent or more of their income from local taxes and charges.
  - b) The Coalition Government has guaranteed that from the start no authority will receive less funding when the new arrangements are introduced than they would have done previously.
  - c) The Coalition Government will introduce Tax Increment Financing, which will give English local authorities the freedom to borrow against business rate income in order to invest in local infrastructure and services.
6. Conference is concerned that whilst Scottish Local Authorities are required to pool their revenue from Non Domestic Rates the use of Tax Increment Finance in Scotland will be limited to major projects specially approved by Scottish Ministers.
7. Conference calls on the Scottish Government to devolve greater control of financial matters by allowing local authorities in Scotland to retain business rates whilst guaranteeing from the start that no authority will receive less funding when the new arrangements are introduced than they would have done previously

**Cards:**

Move – Fred Mackintosh, Edinburgh South - called  
Paul Coleshill, Glasgow South - called  
Joan Mitchell, Galloway - called  
Derek Young, Edinburgh North & Leith - called  
Duncan Crowe, Rutherglen - NOT  
Gordon Anderson, Inverclyde - NOT

**Votes:**

Motion - carried

**EM1. Human Rights Act**

This Conference reaffirms its support for the Human Rights Act 1998 and rejects calls for its repeal or amendment.

**Cards:**

Move – Alistair Carmichael MP, Orkney & Shetland - called  
Alexandra White, Galloway - called  
Fred Mackintosh, South Edinburgh - called  
Euan Campbell, Paisley & Renfrewshire - called  
Derek Young, Edinburgh North East & Leith - called

**Votes:**

Motion - carried

#### **SC4. Scotland's Ethical Trade**

Conference deplores the use of child labour, poor working conditions and other unethical practices in the manufacture of goods around the world.

Conference notes that an estimated 158 million children are engaged in child labour and in specifically some 2,000 to 5,000 children are employed in the manufacturing of surgical instruments. In addition, there are other ethical concerns, with reports of unhealthy, unsafe and unfair working conditions including exposure to hazardous conditions and unfair contractual obligations.

Conference further notes that unlike the NHS in England the NHS in Scotland has not agreed to adopt guidance being developed for ethical procurement.

Conference calls on the Scottish Government to adopt an ethical trading policy across all its departments and agencies which should:

1. Ensure that public funds are not used to acquire goods that have been manufactured using child labour
2. Ensure that workers in developing countries should be paid a living wage
3. Ensure that suppliers must provide a report of where products are made and the steps they have taken to ensure they are made ethically
4. Include guidelines, templates, and tools to help public bodies improve their processes

#### **Cards:**

Move – Trevor Escott, Inverness - called  
Sum Up – Hamish Wood, Highland - called  
Chris Young, Glasgow South – called

#### **Votes:**

Motion - carried

#### **SC5. A minimum price for alcohol**

Conference:

Notes the substantial harm done to individuals and communities across Scotland by alcohol;

Believes that alcohol abuse, and the ready availability of low cost alcohol stops people from reaching their potential and blights the lives of those around them;

Recognises the substantial reforms to alcohol policy already enacted by the last two sessions of the Scottish Parliament.

Notes that the Competition Commission has found that alcohol is one of the main product groups that is sold below cost price by leading retailers;

Further notes that the United Kingdom Government has adopted a policy to prohibit below-cost selling of alcohol, but that it does not apply in Scotland;

Notes that research conducted by the Home Office concluded that it is not possible at this time to judge which form of alcohol pricing policy may be the most effective.

Conference therefore:

Calls for existing alcohol legislation to be fully enforced;

Supports further measures, including proposals for a minimum unit price for alcohol in Scotland.

Calls on the UK and Scottish governments to keep their policies and the outcomes achieved under review in order to help determine the most effective solutions.

**Amendment to SC5: A minimum price for alcohol**  
***Submitted by Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath Local Party***

Mover: Keith Legg Summator: Callum Leslie

Delete point 6: 'Notes that research conducted by the Home Office concluded that it is not possible at this time to judge which form of alcohol pricing policy may be the most effective.'  
Insert new point 6: 'Notes that while minimum pricing is an acceptable short term measure to tackle problem drinking, the fairest and most equitable way to achieve effective alcohol pricing would be through raising alcohol duty.'

Delete lines 19 and 20, point 2 –'Supports further measures....' and replace this with 'Agrees that, in principle, further measures to relieve the problems caused by alcohol misuse may be required including proposals for a minimum unit price for alcohol in Scotland.'

Insert new point 4: 'Calls on Liberal Democrat colleagues in Westminster to move towards a system of achieving the same result through minimum alcohol taxation instead of price increases, to allow the increased revenue to come to the Treasury to be spent on further alcohol prevention, and not into the pockets of supermarkets.'

**Cards:**

Move - Gavin Steel, Ross, Skye & Lochaber – called  
Amendment – Keith Legg, Liberal Youth - called  
Tim Wight, Edinburgh North & Leith - called  
Duncan Crowe, Rutherglen - called  
Sum Up Amd - Callum Leslie, Kirkcaldy & Cowdenbeath - called  
Cllr Gerry McMullan, West Fife - NOT  
Sanjay Samani, Angus - called  
Cllr John Biggam, Stirling & Clackmannanshire - called  
Jim Tolson, Dunfermline - NOT  
Alex Paul, South Edinburgh - NOT  
George Boyd, TE&L - NOT  
Cllr Marjorie Thomas, Edinburgh NE&L - called  
Paul McGarry, Glasgow North - called  
Ewan Hoyle, Glasgow South - NOT  
Dr Trevor Escott, Inverness - NOT  
Can't remember, Stirling - NOT  
Gordon Anderson, Inverclyde - NOT  
Sum Up – Willie Rennie MSP, Dunfermline – called

9 not called

**Votes:**

Amendment – defeated  
Motion - carried

**Business Motions**

## **BM1. Subscription motion**

Conference notes that:

1. The subscription rates for 2011 are
  - Minimum - £12
  - Concession - £6
  - Recommended - £60
  - Special Fresher's Fair rate - £1
2. There are elections for all councils in May 2012 which will require significant investment by the Scottish Party.
3. The Scottish Executive is proposing that the recommended rate should rise from £60 to £62. This is in line with proposed changes to the English subscription level.
4. The Scottish Executive is proposing that there be no change in the Minimum, Concessionary, Youth and Student or Freshers Fair subscription rates.

Conference resolves that:

The recommended subscription rate for 2012 is increased to £62 and that the remaining subscription rates remain unchanged.

### **Cards:**

Move – Brian Logan

### **Votes:**

Motion - carried

## **BM2. Improving Diversity within the Scottish Party**

Conference views with concern the fact that women form a very small proportion of the representation of Scottish Liberal Democrats at Parliamentary level & within the structures of the Scottish Party. Conference also views with concern the understanding by members of the public that current economic policies bear most heavily upon women, resulting in their consequent impression that the Party is insensitive to the circumstances and needs of this part of the population.

Conference notes:

- the continuing under-representation of women, black, asian and other minority ethnic (BAME) people at parliamentary level in Scotland and in the higher echelons of employment in both the public and private sectors
- the miniscule increase in women MSPs in the 2011 Scottish elections and the concurrent drop in the number of Liberal Democrat women MSPs
- the moves by CBI & CBI Scotland towards voluntary quotas for female representation at boardroom level in major companies

Conference welcomes:

- the increase in BAME MSPs & MSPs with disabilities in the 2011 Scottish elections
- the principled commitment of the Party to equality and diversity as expressed in its constitution
- the recent introduction of the Leadership Programme by the Federal Party to address the diversity of Liberal Democrat candidates for election

Conference believes that much more needs to be done to make the Party a centre of excellence for diversity and that it is the responsibility of all members of the Party to promote this at every level.

Conference therefore calls:

1. For the Scottish Party to approve the extension of the Federal Leadership Programme to apply to selection for all Scottish Parliament key seats and in the longer term consider the development of a specifically Scottish programme
2. For the Scottish Party actively to promote participation in the Leadership Programme and to make sure that the Party's rules for the selection of candidates are adapted to its requirements
3. For the Scottish Party to introduce diversity monitoring for all aspects of membership and selection
4. The Scottish Party Executive to bring forward an amendment to the Constitution at its next conference requiring each Committee at national level (Executive, Policy, Conference, Campaigns & Candidates, Finance & Membership) to have a representation of no less than one third of either gender
5. The Scottish Party to seek actively to improve the diversity of its national committees, with responsibility for diversity of committee membership becoming part of the role of each national Committee Convenor & reported on annually to Scottish Conference
6. For the Scottish Party to engage actively through its Policy Committee & elected members with organisations acting on behalf of under-represented sectors of the population, particularly women, black & minority ethnic groups, LGBT groups, people with disabilities to identify what steps the Party can take to better represent such groups with a view to bringing forward concrete policy proposals to the 2011 Scottish spring conference
7. The Policy Committee to ensure that the principles of gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting are adhered to in all its activities, particularly in the preparation of policy motions and Party manifestos

### **Amendment to BM2: Improving diversity within the Scottish party**

***Submitted by Liberal Youth Scotland***

Mover: Sophie Bridger Summator: tbc

Remove lines 14, 15

Remove lines 21, 22

Remove lines 27-29

From Line 31, remove text from 'and to make sure that the Party's rules' to end

Remove lines 35-38

In line 49, after 'The Policy Committee', insert 'and elected representatives'.

In line 50, change 'in all its activities' to 'in all their activities'

Add to end of motion

'8. The Party to ensure that selection committees are properly trained in issues relating to diversity.

9. The Party to ensure that local parties are advised on making contact with underrepresented groups, to ensure their representation, as well as encouraging local parties to take up diversity training'

**Cards:**

Move – Katy Gordon - called  
Sum Up – Alex Cole-Hamilton - called  
Move Amd –Kavya Kaushik, Aberdeen Central - called  
Sum Up Amd- Callum Leslie, Kirkcaldy & Cowdenbeath  
Alexandra Whyte, Galloway - NOT  
Duncan Crowe, Rutherglen - withdrawn  
Sophie Bridger, Glasgow North - called  
Ashay Ghai, East Dunbartonshire - called  
Kevin Lang, Edinburgh North East & Leith - called  
Elspeth Attwooll, SWLD - called  
Trevor Nicholson, South Edinburgh - NOT  
Alistair Carmichael, Orkney & Shetland - withdrawn  
Sheila Thomson, Aberdeen South & North Kincardine - called  
Tim Farran, Westmorland & Lonsdale - called  
Caron Lindsay, Dunfermline - NOT  
Paul McGarry, Glasgow North - NOT  
Ewan Hoyle, Glasgow South - NOT  
Alison Barrett, Galloway - NOT  
Paul Coleshill, Glasgow South - NOT  
Rosemary Bruce, Aberdeen West - called

**Votes:**

Separate Votes  
Changes to 1) in main motion – see above

Amendment line 2: count for: 29 against:52 lines are retained in the motion  
Amendment line 3: count for: 42 against: 37 lines are deleted from the motion  
Amendment line 5: Lines are deleted from the motion  
Amendment lines 1, 4 and 6-13: carried  
Motion as amended: carried