

# **Autumn Conference**

**22<sup>nd</sup> November 2014**

**Vine Venue, Dunfermline**

# CONFERENCE AGENDA AT A GLANCE

Morning session is from 10.00-12.30

- Welcome address
- SC1: Respect for the labour force
- SC2: Fostering SMEs and entrepreneurship locally
- Speech by Alistair Carmichael MP, Secretary of State for Scotland
- SC3: Keeping up the momentum: engaging under-represented groups in Scottish democracy
- Pre-manifesto Q&A with Jo Swinson MP

12.30-14.00 Lunch

12.45-13.45 Fringe meetings

Afternoon session is from 14.00-17.30

- EM1: Emergency/topical motion
- Speech by Willie Rennie MSP, Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats
- SC4: Patient premium in Scotland
- SC5: Power to people across Scotland
- SC6: Standing up for the rights and safety of sex workers
- Party business

# Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> November

*The morning session runs from 10.00 to 12.30.*

## **10.00 Conference opens**

### **Welcome address from Cllr Tim Brett, Group Leader, Fife Council**

#### **SC1: Respect for the labour force**

*Policy Committee*

Mover: Jane Ann Liston

Summator: John Watson

Conference recognises that:

- We need to maintain the capacity and competitiveness of the labour force of the UK which, as a proportion of the working age population, is shrinking rapidly.
- The whole country will benefit if we can make better use of the skills and energies of those potentially in the labour force and that, because of the value of this resource, it must be treated with respect.
- Employment law has failed to keep up with the advances of those who wish to circumvent it.
- There is a need for clarity about the role of the state in the labour market.

Conference calls for acceptance that those seeking work are entitled to expect that the benefits of work will include adequate remuneration, holidays, sick pay, maternity/paternity rights and pensions as much as those who make the regulations expect these things, and calls for action to ensure that these reasonable expectations are met.

In order to modernise employment law and to treat the labour force with due respect, conference proposes the following measures:

#### **1. Tax/NI incentives**

There is currently a perverse incentive for employers to offer only part-time hours below a certain threshold before tax and NI are triggered, resulting in quantitative under-employment, and this needs to be changed. Conference recognises that quality (of employment) results in quantity (in the economy) and leads to a fairer society and calls for government to consider changing the tax and NI system in such a way that it is more attractive for employers to offer full time posts, and to reward employers for taking people on for the longer term.

#### **2. The Work Programme**

Conference supports the Campbell Commission's call for the Work Programme to be the responsibility of the Scottish Parliament, and that the UK and Scottish governments should work together to ensure that:

- Claims by Work Programme providers that they found a job for someone (rather than that person having found and sustained that job themselves) need to be tested rigorously.
- While appropriate work placements should be encouraged (paid rather than unpaid) forcing people to take any job regardless of skills, qualifications and experience is neither liberal nor acceptable.

- Those on the Work Programme should be guaranteed proper feedback from employers after unsuccessful applications. Incentives should at least be offered to any employers wholly or partly in receipt of public money if they provided meaningful and individualised feedback and advice.
- The role of the state needs to be modernised. The current process fails because it looks at everything in isolation rather than as an overall system.
- The JobCentre Plus/DWP regime has through its long standing emphasis on cuts, targets and regulation become corrupted and needs to be replaced with a system of more personalised support.

### 3. Benefits

Conference asks the UK government to bring in changes to the benefits system to avoid the three-week wait that can occur between finishing employment and receiving benefit, so that new claims for Job Seeker's Allowance are valid from the first day of unemployment.

### 4. Making Work Pay

Conference notes that half of those officially defined as poverty-stricken are in fact in work, but are so poorly paid by their employers that tax-payers have to make up their earnings, and calls for the living wage to be introduced forthwith in the case of employers who receive public funding or contracts. This measure will promote a fairer society by spreading the benefits of growth more widely.

### 5. Internships

Conference asks DWP to consider how internships could be regulated along the lines of training programmes, and that participants should retain the right to benefits, thus widening accessibility. Internships should also provide accreditation to participants and be audited to ensure they provide added value.

### 6. Zero-hours contracts

Conference calls for government regulation of zero-hours contracts to protect against exploitation, and that in cases where fewer than 16 hours of work are available, then exclusivity should not be allowed unless a suitable retainer is paid. Employees should be free to take up other work or receive benefits if no hours are available.

## **Amendments**

### 1. Amendment to SC1: Respect for the labour force

Edinburgh South local party

Mover: Mike Falchikov

Insert after Line 64:

### 7. Workplace democracy

Conference acknowledges that a committed and contented workforce is one which has a real and substantive stake in the workplace. Conference, therefore, calls on the UK and Scottish governments to require companies and organisations, wherever practicable and where such schemes do not already exist to introduce

(a) employee shareholding with full voting powers and without any loss of employment rights.

(b) where there are a minimum of 30 employees, a works council with powers to make recommendations on pay and working conditions.

### **Cards:**

Move - Jane Ann Liston - CALLED  
Amendment - Mike Falchikov, Edinburgh South - CALLED  
Sum Up - John Watson, Inverclyde - CALLED  
Tony Martin, Dunfermline & W Fife - rqst Ref Back  
Katy Gordon, Glasgow South - CALLED  
Robert Brown, Rutherglen - CALLED  
Nigel Lindsay, East Lothian - CALLED  
David Adamson, Edinburgh - CALLED  
Graeme Cowie, North Glasgow - CALLED  
George Hayton, P&K - not called  
Finlay Craig, Dumbarton - not called

### **Votes:**

To hear Ref Back: Not to be heard  
Ref Back: not taken  
Amendment: carried  
Motion as amended: Carried

### **SC2: Fostering SMEs and entrepreneurship locally**

*Edinburgh West Liberal Democrats*

Mover: Mike Crockett MP      Summator: Trevor Nicholson

#### Conference notes:

- That confidence amongst Scotland's small businesses fell in the third quarter of 2014 according to research conducted by the Federation of Small Business.
- That small business confidence was at a record high elsewhere in the UK at the same time as the fall in Scottish confidence.
- That the Federation of Small Business in Scotland has 19,000 members and that SMEs provide around half of Scotland's private sector workforce.

#### Conference welcomes:

- The Glasgow and Clyde Valley City Deal signed on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2014.
- The 39 local enterprise partnerships now established in England to bring public and private sectors together.
- The success of the 24 enterprise zones in England which have established themselves as the driving force of local economies.
- That since their start in April 2012 enterprise zones in England have attracted over 300 businesses, secured over £1.2 billion of private sector investment, and built world class business facilities and transport links creating over 9,000 jobs.
- That all business rates growth generated by enterprise zones south of the border is kept by the relevant local enterprise partnership and local authorities for 25 years to reinvest in local economic growth.
- The business benefits and reliefs which come with being part of an enterprise zone anywhere in the UK, in particular:
  - Business rate discount
  - Simplified local authority planning
  - Government support to ensure that superfast broadband is available
  - Enhanced capital allowances

#### Conference believes:

- That business and entrepreneurship have a crucial role to play in delivering a stronger economy and a fairer society.
- That business is not limited to job creation and revenue raising, but that businesses have the potential to change lives and to transform the communities of which they are a part.
- That the transfer of significant new power to the Scottish Parliament will provide real opportunities for the Scottish business community to work with policy makers to boost growth in Scotland.
- That the Scottish Government has not used enterprise areas to their full potential.

Conference calls for:

- The Scottish Government to consider expanding the four enterprise zones in Scotland which currently cover only life sciences, low carbon and renewables and general manufacturing and growth sectors.
- The Scottish Government to produce an SME action plan detailing the support available to businesses in Scotland as well as the opportunities identified for future growth and support.
- Local authorities, the Scottish Government and the UK Government to work together to scope the potential for other Scottish cities to benefit from City Deals.
- Scottish Enterprise, local authorities, colleges and the business community to form partnerships to identify local priorities, skills shortages, and new markets.

#### **Cards:**

Move - Mike Crockhart MP, Edinburgh West - CALLED

Sum Up - Alex Cole-Hamilton - CALLED

Jeremy Purvis, Tweeddale, Lauderdale & Midlothian South - CALLED

Clive Sneddon, Angus & Mearns - not called

Sheila Thomson, ACSNK - CALLED

Penny Carruthers, Edinburgh South - CALLED

Karen Freel, Paisley - CALLED

Galen Milne, Stirling & Clacks - CALLED

George Hayton, P&K - not called

Paul McGarry, Glasgow North - not called

Katy Gordon, Glasgow South - not called

Robert Brown, Rutherglen - not called

Derek Young, Edinburgh West - not called

Kate Stephen, IB&S - Card Withdrawn

Chris Young, Glasgow South - not called

#### **Votes:**

Motion: Carried overwhelmingly

Speech by Alistair Carmichael MP, Secretary of State for Scotland

### **SC3: Keeping up the momentum: engaging under-represented groups in Scottish democracy**

*Liberal Youth Scotland*

Mover: Euan Davidson

Summator: Jeremy Purvis

#### Conference notes:

- Liberal Youth Scotland and Bite the Ballot's campaign to make electoral registration easier.
- Lord Roger Roberts's amendment to the Wales bill introducing tick box registration and empowering electoral registration officers to take active steps to target under-represented groups.
- The unprecedented rates of registration achieved for Scotland's independence referendum.
- The UK government's decision to introduce individual electoral registration.
- The Liberal Youth Scotland motion passed at Spring Conference 2014 calling for compulsory and comprehensive political education.
- One of the major aims of the curriculum for excellence is to create active citizens.
- Concerns by a range of organisations that individual electoral registration will result in high numbers of registered voters from traditionally under-represented groups such as young people and ethnic minorities falling from the register.
- The high turnout of sixteen and seventeen year olds in the Scottish referendum.

#### Conference believes:

- Scottish democracy is undermined if large proportions of the electorate are excluded from the political process.
- That if we are to create a fairer society with opportunity for all then we must engage those disadvantaged groups that currently feel disengaged from our democracy.
- Individual electoral registration though welcome carries the risk of further marginalising certain sectors of Scottish society from our democracy.
- The engagement and turnout of young voters particularly sixteen and seventeen year olds in Scotland's independence referendum was an asset to our democracy.

#### Conference reaffirms that:

- Votes at sixteen to be introduced for all elections in light of the exemplary turnout achieved in Scotland's independence referendum.
- The Scottish curriculum should include a compulsory comprehensive political education.

#### Conference therefore calls for:

- The introduction of "Tick Box Registration" so that when individuals are filling in other documents such a driver's license and passport application forms they are enabled to register to vote at the same time.
- The introduction of a duty for electoral registration officers to take active steps to increase voter turnout ~~amongst young people, the disabled, those on low incomes and ethnic minorities.~~
- Local authorities to encourage voter registration drives in schools, community centres and other locations where under-represented groups traditionally gather.

#### **Cards:**

**Move - Euan Davidson, Aberdeen Central - CALLED**

Sum Up - Jeremy Purvis, TE&MS - called  
David Green, Ross Skye & Lochaber - CALLED  
Derek Young, Edinburgh West - CALLED  
Ronnie Simpson, ? - CALLED  
David May, Angus & Mearns - CALLED

**Votes:**

Sep Vote lines 36/37 (delete amongst young people, the disabled, those on low incomes and ethnic minorities): Deleted

Motion as amended: Carried

## Pre-manifesto Q&A with Jo Swinson MP, Scottish representative on the federal Manifesto Working Group

To get the most from this session, you can read the pre-manifesto document here [www.libdems.org.uk/policy\\_paper\\_121](http://www.libdems.org.uk/policy_paper_121)

The pre-manifesto was adopted at the federal conference in Glasgow, but debate and discussion continue as the full manifesto continues to be developed in advance of next year's UK General Election. This is your chance to have a say.

Some policies within it will not apply to Scotland because the particular issue is devolved, but your views are welcome and we will also discuss those policies that will apply to Scotland.

12.30-14.00	Lunch
12.45-13.45	Fringe meetings

*The afternoon session runs from 14.00 to 17.30.*

### **EM1: Supporting Children and Young People with Mental Ill Health**

*Aberdeen Central, South & North Kincardine Liberal Democrats*

Mover: Alison McInnes MSP

#### Conference notes:

- Reports which emerged on 17<sup>th</sup> November that there are only 46 dedicated Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) bed in Scotland, with only one serving the whole of the north and north east of Scotland.
- Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland figures which show that 202 young people were treated in adult wards in 2013-14, an increase from 177 in 2012-13.
- That six health boards did not meet the Scottish Government's target of 90% of patients starting CAMHS treatment within 26 weeks and that the number of young people waiting over 6 months for CAMHS services has rocketed in the past year from 4% to 16%.
- Guidelines which state that treating young people in adult psychiatric units should only occur in exceptional circumstances.

#### Conference welcomes:

- The announcement made by the Scottish Government on 20<sup>th</sup> November to establish a Mental Health Innovation Fund worth £15m over the next three years.
- The work to reduce the stigma of mental ill health.



Conference believes:

- That children and young people with mental health problems should receive care in the setting most appropriate to their needs.
- That the funding announced for the Mental Health Innovation Fund is insufficient to meet the growing demand for CAMHS services.

Conference calls on:

- The Scottish Government to do all it can to support health boards to meet the CAMHS target in place from December of treating 90% of patients within 18 weeks.
- The Scottish Government to follow the lead of the UK Government and be clear that mental health and physical health deserve equal recognition.

### **Cards:**

Move - Alison McInness MSP, Aberdeenshire - CALLED

Sheila Thomson, ACSNK - CALLED

Callum Leslie, Kirkcaldy & Cowdenbeath - CALLED

Tim Brett, NE Fife - CALLED

Jaqui Bell, East Lothian - CALLED

Gary McLelland, North Glasgow - CALLED

Chris Young, Glasgow South - CALLED

Derek Somerville, Glasgow North

Scott Brown, Aberdeenshire East

### **Votes:**

Motion: Carried, Nem. Con.

Speech by Willie Rennie MSP, Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats

### **SC4: Patient premium in Scotland**

*Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Liberal Democrats*

Mover: Kate Stephen                      Summator: Carolyn Caddick

Conference notes with concern:

- The severe health and life expectancy inequalities which exist in Scotland between the wealthy and the less wealthy.
- That life expectancy can vary by as much as 11 years in men.
- That these inequalities persist in spite of significant funding aimed at reducing them.

Conference is aware that although many of the areas of worst deprivation are in inner city areas, these problems can also occur in remote and rural areas with financial hardship and social isolation for the patients (and also problems of professional isolation of GPs and a lack of GPs).

Another serious factor noted in the Marmot report was the health inequalities noted in 5 year olds, causing him to stress the extreme importance of the early years.

Conference also notes the flat distribution of GP numbers and funding in Scotland, despite the steep slope of need across the social spectrum – the inverse care law.

Conference welcomes:

- “Time to Care - tackling Health Inequalities through Primary Care” published in Family Practice 2011 which details the recommendations of a meeting of 100 doctors from the 100 most deprived areas in Scotland.
- The conclusions of that report which finds that by increasing the volume and quality of healthcare, it is possible to improve patients’ health in severely deprived areas, thereby narrowing the gap in health inequalities.
- Proposals included in the report for longer consultations for patients in very deprived circumstances, enhancement of multi-professional practice teams, and improved joint working between general practices and other local services.

Conference believes:

- Creating a Scottish ‘patient premium’ would help to address poor health in deprived areas as well as helping to reduce health inequalities.
- The pupil premium in England where additional funding is given to schools to support disadvantaged pupils and to help to close the attainment gap has been successful with evidence of improvement due to high staffing levels and out of hours sessions.
- Adopting a similar approach to health to targeted individuals could be a valuable means to improving health and wellbeing and as a result helping in morale and satisfaction of GPs.

Conference calls for:

- The Scottish Government to introduce a ‘patient premium’ - additional support to the most deprived GP practices in Scotland through payment of an additional amount for every disadvantaged patient in the practice, eligibility to be determined by a measure identified by the Scottish Government such as level of total household income or receipt of passport benefits.
- The Scottish Government, local authorities and NHS boards to work together and with medical practices to devise and approve individual action plans for each practice benefitting from the ‘patient premium’ detailing what initiatives they will adopt to improve health outcomes for individuals from deprived backgrounds.
- Action plans to take into consideration measures including, but not to the exclusion of others, health promotion activities; longer consulting times; an increased number of home visits; specialised teams of allied health care professionals , including teams of Health Visitors concentrating on working with infants and young children - the early years.

### **Cards:**

Move - Carolyn Caddick - CALLED

Jim Hume MSP, South Scotland - CALLED

Sum Up - Kate Stephen - CALLED

Dan Farthing-Sykes, Edinburgh South - CALLED - requested a Reference Back during his speech (not according to standing orders so rejected)

Trevor Escott, Inverness - CALLED

Finlay Craig, Dumbarton - CALLED

### **Votes:**

Motion: CARRIED

## **SC5: Power to people across Scotland**

*Policy Committee*

Mover: Christine Jardine

Summator: Jeremy Purvis

Conference notes and welcomes the conclusive result of the referendum held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

Conference further welcomes the immediate steps that were taken to secure a stronger Scotland inside the UK, not least through the appointment of Lord Smith of Kelvin by the UK Government to bring together political parties, civic Scotland and the wider public to develop new powers in Scotland.

Conference believes that power is safer when it is shared and decisions are best taken at the level closest to where the decision has an impact.

Conference welcomes the moves across the whole UK to examine how power can be taken into communities and away from central government, but is concerned that this work is not taking place under the SNP in Scotland.

Conference is concerned that the Scottish Government has systematically centralised Scotland with decisions on local government financing, police, fire, enterprise, health capital funding and college mergers now taken centrally with little opportunity for local variation and serious consequences, not least on policing.

Conference believes that, as a result of action by the SNP, centralisation has taken from local areas eight police forces, eight fire boards, 21 enterprise agencies, 24 colleges, funding of 172 hospitals and meaningful control of the tax powers of 32 local authorities.

Conference further believes that the Campbell Commission report *Federalism: the best future for Scotland* contained radical and empowering plans for local communities which should now be put centre stage.

Conference calls for:

- Local government to be reinvigorated in Scotland by the implementation of the strong financial powers set out in the Campbell Commission report, with amendments agreed to the Community Empowerment Bill, currently before the Scottish Parliament, to restore local control of council tax and business rates, and the freedom of local authorities from national diktat through a power of general competence;
- Communities to have the right to establish a lower tier of democratic governance if they so choose and for national agencies and government to respect and support that role;
- All parties to work to strengthen the scrutiny role of the Scottish Parliament so that it has the power and capacity to challenge and scrutinise the governing executive effectively, especially in the light of the new financial powers coming to the Parliament.

### **Cards:**

Move - Christine Jardine, Aberdeenshire - CALLED

Sum Up - Jeremy Purvis, TE&MS - CALLED

Ross Carruthers, P&K - CALLED

Peter Barrett, P&K - CALLED

Alan Reid MP, Argyll & Bute - CALLED

Katy Gordon, Glasgow South - CALLED  
Derek Young, Edinburgh West - CALLED  
Willie Wilson, P&K - CALLED  
Kevin Lang, Edinburgh North - CALLED

**Votes:**

Motion: carried nem con

**SC6: Standing up for the rights and safety of sex workers**

*Scottish Liberal Democrat Women*

Mover: Jade O'Neil

Summator: Katy Gordon

Conference welcomes the federal party's new policy promoting the decriminalisation of sex work which was passed at this year's Autumn Conference in Glasgow (applicable only in England and Wales). Conference commends this as a step in the right direction, whilst noting that the policy needs to be adapted to the specific circumstances in Scotland.

Conference notes:

1. The Scottish Government's *Safer Lives: Changed Lives* publication which defines sex work, including pornography, stripping, erotic dancing and the sale of sex, as violence against women, "irrespective of whether individual women claim success or empowerment from the activity";
2. Evidence that neither criminalisation nor decriminalisation of sex work or sex workers' clients affects the level of demand for the services or the number of practising sex workers;
3. Evidence from Sweden, where the purchase of sex has been criminalised, that sex workers have been further marginalised and endangered as a result;
4. Evidence from New Zealand, where sex work has been decriminalised, demonstrating a much improved relationship with the police, greater protection from exploitation and abuse, and reduced cases of violence against sex workers;
5. That international agencies including the UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organisation hold up a model of full decriminalisation of sex work as best practice;
6. The report *Sex Work and the Law*, released by the UN Development Programme, UN Population Fund and UNAIDS, which examined 48 countries and found:
  - a. That the criminalisation of sex work limits access to sexual health services and condoms, and increases vulnerability to HIV by fuelling stigma and discrimination;
  - b. That removing legal penalties for sex work allows HIV prevention and treatment programmes to reach sex workers and their clients more effectively.

Conference believes:

1. Only when sex workers are able to work in a decriminalised context will they be able to claim their full human and labour rights;
2. Current law is failing in its duty to protect sex workers;
3. Sex workers are the experts on the legal frameworks that best enable them to work safely and all involved in sex work deserve the right to speak and be listened to;

4. Consensual sex work is not violence against women and should not be categorised as such. Use of that definition within the Scottish Government's *Safer Lives: Changed Lives* document to exclude sex workers from discussion and consultation about legislation and regulation of their industry is just one of the ways that sex workers are denied a voice – something that is damaging to sex workers and to society in general;
5. Indirect criminalisation is often promoted by those who present it as 'rescue' for sex workers. The UNAIDS Guidance Note highlights this, speaking of "policies...designed ignoring the voices of sex workers often result in unintended harms, including increased HIV risk". Sex workers need rights, not so-called-rescue.

Conference calls on:

1. The Scottish Liberal Democrats to reaffirm our support for the rights and safety of sex workers and to include a policy on the full decriminalisation of sex work in our manifesto for the next Scottish Parliamentary election;
2. The Scottish Parliament to reject any further attempts to criminalise sex work or sex workers' clients;
3. The Scottish Government to:
  - a. Amend the *Safer Lives: Changed Lives* document to remove sex work from the definition of violence against women; to commit to a policy of consulting sex workers and working with sex worker-led organisations on matters that will directly affect their rights or industry; and to reject any future policy that defines sex work as violence against women;
  - b. Implement full decriminalisation of sex work based on best practice identified through an investigation into international evidence, in consultation with those involved in the industry.

2. Amendment to SC6: Standing up for the rights and safety of sex workers  
 Stephen O'Neil, Jade O'Neil, Caron Lindsay, Hannah Bettsworth, Euan Davidson  
 Mover: Stephen O'Neil

In Conference Notes 1 (Line 9) insert at the end of the line:

and the Equally Safe publication which further describes sex work as "commercial sexual exploitation"

Delete Conference Calls On 3a (lines 52-56) and insert:

a. Amend the *Safer Lives: Changed Lives* and *Equally Safe* documents to remove sex work from the definitions of violence against women and commercial sexual exploitation; to commit to a policy of consulting sex workers and working with sex worker-led organisations on matters that will directly affect their rights or industry; and to reject any future policy that defines sex work as violence against women or exploitation;

In Conference Calls On 3b (line 57) after 'full decriminalisation of sex work', insert:  
 including activities associated with sex work

### Cards:

Move - Jade O'Neil - CALLED

Amd - Stephen O'Neil - CALLED

Sum Up - Katy Gordon - CALLED

Ewan Hoyle, Glasgow South - CALLED

Chris Young, Glasgow South

Callum Leslie, Kirkcaldy & Cowdenbeath - CALLED

Emma Farthing-Sykes, Edinburgh South - CALLED  
Teresa Little, Dunfermline - CALLED

**Votes:**

Amendment: carried nem con  
Motion as amended: carried

## Party Business

### **BM1: Subscription Rates for 2015**

*Finance and Membership Committee*

Mover: Caron Lindsay                      Summator: Caron Lindsay

Conference notes that:

1. The subscription rates for 2014 are
  - Minimum - £12
  - Concession - £6
  - Recommended - £67
  - Special Fresher's Fair rate - £1
2. There are elections to the Westminster and Scottish Parliaments in 2015 and 2016 which will require significant investment by the Scottish Party.
3. The Finance and Membership Committee is proposing that the recommended rate should rise from £67 to £70. This is in line with proposed changes to the English subscription level.
4. The Finance and Membership Committee is proposing that there be no change in the Minimum, Concessionary, Youth and Student or Freshers' Fair subscription rates.

Conference therefore resolves that:

The recommended subscription rate for 2015 is increased to £70 and that the remaining subscription rates remain unchanged.

**Cards:**

Move - Alistair Carmichael MP, Orkney

**Votes:**

Motion: Carried

### **BM2: Targeted campaigning and a deposit guarantee scheme**

*Glasgow South Liberal Democrats*

Mover: Chris Young                      Summator: Cllr Robert Brown

Conference reaffirms its support for targeted campaigning while standing candidates in every parliamentary seat, giving as many voters as possible the opportunity to vote Liberal Democrat while concentrating both human and financial resources on realistic prospects for returning a Scottish Liberal Democrat representative.

Conference recognises that a £500 deposit per parliamentary seat represents a

significant sum both for Local Parties and their volunteer candidates, giving them a strong financial incentive to protect their investment by campaigning outwith target areas.

Conference believes that no candidate or Local Party should be forced to choose between protecting their deposit(s) or helping a target seat.

Conference therefore instructs the Officers of the Scottish Party to create a deposit guarantee scheme covering all parliamentary seats, with such guarantee for the forthcoming general election to be in place by the end of January 2015 to ensure that a full slate of candidates can be fielded.

**Cards:**

Move - Chris Young, Glasgow South - CALLED

Alison Barrett, Galloway - CALLED

Andrew Nisbet, Dumbarton - CALLED

Galen Milne, Stirling - CALLED

Sheila Thomson, ACSNK - CALLED

Sum Up - Robert Brown, Rutherglen - CALLED

**Votes:**

Motion: Carried

**BM3: Amendments to Conference Standing Orders**

*Conference Committee*

Mover: Sheila Thomson

Summator: Jenni Lang

1. Replace the words "topical motion/motions" with "topical issue/issues" throughout.
2. Amend 2.2.3 to read "The closing date for the receipt of topical issues, which shall normally be the same deadline as that of the first emergency motion at any conference."
3. Delete 2.6 and replace with "The choice of subjects for topical issue discussions shall be made by the Conference Committee in consultation with the Policy Committee. In choosing the subjects, the Conference Committee shall have regard to the significance and topicality of the subjects proposed and whether they are likely to provoke a lively debate, No votes will be taken on topical issues and they will not be adopted as party policy."
4. Add to 6.1.1 the words "and shall set out in the agenda the time limits for speeches" so that it reads "The Conference Committee shall decide the time to be allocated for each debate. The Conference Committee shall determine the times allocated to speakers in debates and shall set out in the agenda the time limits for speeches."
5. In 6.1.2 change 4 minutes to 3 minutes so it reads "Speakers from the floor shall normally be allocated 3 minutes but this may be varied at the discretion of the chair of the debate."
6. Delete 6.1.3.

**Cards:**

Move - Sheila Thomson ACSNK - CALLED

Sum Up - Jenni Lang, Edinburgh North

John Biggam, S&C - call for separate vote on item 3 last sentence (*No votes will be taken on topical issues and they will not be adopted as party policy*) - CALLED



Katy Gordon, Glasgow South - call for separate vote on item 5 (*In 6.1.2 change 4 minutes to 3 minutes so it reads "Speakers from the floor shall normally be allocated 3 minutes but this may be varied at the discretion of the chair of the debate."*) - CALLED

Jade O'Neil, Paisley - CALLED

Kevin Lang, Edinburgh North - not called

Helen Watt - not called

**Votes:**

Item 3 last sentence: words remain

Item 5: counted - 56 to keep the words, 38 to remove, words are retained

Motion: carried

## **OTHER EVENTS AT CONFERENCE**

### **17.30 – 18.30**

A members-only update on the Smith Commission

Followed by a reception for George Lyon. Join us for a glass of wine to thank George for all his work as our MEP.

### Fringes

- Educational Institute of Scotland
- RNIB Scotland

### Exhibitions

- RNIB Scotland
- Scottish Women's Liberal Democrats
- Educational Institute of Scotland
- Liberal Youth Scotland
- Ethnic Minority Liberal Democrats



# Scottish Liberal Democrats - Standing Orders

## 1. The Conference Committee

- 1.1. The Conference Committee shall be constituted as specified in Section E10 of the Constitution. The annual election of members by the conference shall be by Single Transferable Vote in a ballot of all members of the Party registered to attend Conference ('Conference Representatives').
- 1.2. The Conference Convener shall be the Chair of the Conference Committee. At its first meeting after a new election under Section E10 of the Constitution, the Conference Committee may elect one or more Vice-Conveners.

## 2. The Timetable and Agenda - Normal Meetings

- 2.1. The Agenda for each ordinary meeting of Conference shall include time for:
  - 2.1.1. Motions;
  - 2.1.2. Emergency motions;
  - 2.1.3. Topical motions;
  - 2.1.4. A business session or sessions; and
  - 2.1.5. any other business deemed appropriate by the Conference Committee. The time to be allocated to each type of business and the order of business shall be decided by the Conference Committee.
- 2.2. The Conference Committee shall, before each meeting of the Conference, prepare a timetable which includes:
  - 2.2.1. The closing date for the receipt of motions (other than Emergency or Topical motions), which shall not normally be less than eight weeks before the start of the meeting;
  - 2.2.2. The due date for the publication of the Agenda, which shall not normally be less than six weeks before the start of the meeting;
  - 2.2.3. The closing date for the receipt of Topical Motions, which shall not normally be less than two weeks before the start of the meeting; and
  - 2.2.4. The closing date for receipt of amendments which shall not normally be less than two working days before the start of the meeting.
  - 2.2.5. The Conference Committee may, in special circumstances, specify dates later than the normal dates under this Standing Order. It shall report to the Conference its reasons for doing so.
- 2.3. Submitting organisations shall detail at the time of submission the name and contact details of a person authorised to agree any redrafting of a motion or amendment and the name of the mover and summator of the motion or amendment, should it be selected for debate at Conference.
- 2.4. The Conference Committee shall decide which of the motions duly submitted shall be included within the Agenda. The proposers of the motions selected for debate shall be informed of the Conference Committee's decision. The Agenda shall be circulated to Local Parties and other bodies entitled to submit motions and amendments under the provisions of Section E19 of the Constitution so that amendments can be tabled to these motions by such bodies. Copies of motions not selected for inclusion in the Agenda shall be available for inspection.
- 2.5. The Conference Committee shall meet the day after the deadline for submission of amendments to motions on the Agenda and shall decide which amendments should be accepted and those rejected. The proposers of the amendments selected for debate shall be informed of the Conference Committee's decision.

- 2.6.** The Conference Committee shall also meet as soon as practicable after the closing date for the receipt of topical motions and shall decide which of the topical motions duly submitted shall be debated, and the proposers of topical motions selected shall be informed of the Conference Committee's decision. The text of any topical motions selected for debate shall be circulated to Conference Representatives, Local Parties and bodies authorised to submit motions.
- 2.7.** The Conference Committee shall also prepare an agenda for the business session of each meeting of Conference. The Committee shall circulate this, with the text of proposed amendments to the Constitution in accordance with Section L of the Constitution, amendments to Standing Orders, and other party business motions, with the Agenda as per Section 2.4
- 2.8.** The Party's Principal Committees may submit holding motions, which shall identify the issues to be dealt with within the motion but which may be amended and expanded upon later. Standing Orders 2 and 3 shall apply to holding motions as they would apply to ordinary motions, except that:
- 2.8.1.** the final version of the motion shall be submitted not less than two weeks before the start of the meeting of Conference;
- 2.8.2.** The text of the final version shall be circulated to Conference Representatives, Local Parties and other bodies authorised to submit motions under the provisions of Section E19 of the Constitution, who may submit amendments no later than two working days before the start of the meeting of Conference; and
- 2.8.3.** The Committee shall make available to Conference Representatives the text of the final version and any amendments chosen for debate, either by their publication in the Conference Daily Bulletin or by any other means the Committee considers most appropriate
- 2.9.** The Conference Committee may, if the circumstances require, propose to Conference a variation in the order of business as set out in the Agenda. Such variation shall be put to the vote and shall take effect if approved by a majority of those voting.

### **3. Submission of Motions and Amendments**

- 3.1.** The Conference Committee may refuse to select a motion for the amendment of the Constitution or Standing Orders if, in the opinion of the Committee, it is similar in effect to another motion which has been selected for debate at the same meeting of Conference. All other motions in these categories shall be circulated with the Agenda.
- 3.2.** No amendment shall be selected if, in the opinion of the Conference Committee, it is insubstantial, outside the legitimate scope of the motion or tantamount to a direct negative of the motion.
- 3.3.** The movers of any motion or amendment that has not been selected shall be notified as soon as is practicable and may appeal to the Conference Committee in accordance with directions given by the Committee. If an appeal is allowed, the motion or amendment shall be treated as an emergency motion or amendment notwithstanding that it does not comply with Standing Order 5.
- 3.4.** This Standing Order and Standing Order 2 do not apply to procedural motions under Standing Order 8.
- 3.5.** No Topical Motion may be selected for debate at Conference unless the Conference Committee is satisfied that the content of the motion is such that it could not have been submitted in time for the deadline as set out in Section 2.2 for ordinary motions. No Topical Motion can be a holding motion from a Party Committee.

### **4. The Agenda - Special Conferences**

- 4.1.** Special Conferences shall deal only with the business stated in the notice of requisition, save that the Conference Committee may allow time for emergency motions and for business which is formal or, in the opinion of the Committee, uncontentious.
- 4.2.** The Conference Committee shall draw up an Agenda and circulate in line with Section 2.4. If the

Committee deems it necessary the Agenda can be circulated with amendments to be submitted as Emergency Amendments.

- 4.3. The provisions of Standing Orders 2 and 3 shall, so far as they are not inconsistent with Standing Orders 4.1 and 4.2, apply to special meetings of the Conference.

## **5. Emergency Motions**

- 5.1. An emergency motion or amendment must relate to significant developments which have occurred since the relevant closing date or so shortly before that date as to make it impracticable to submit a motion, Topical Motion or amendment in due time. It must be brief and specific.
- 5.2. An emergency motion or amendment may be submitted by five Conference Representatives or by any persons or bodies authorised to submit motions under the provisions of Section E9 of the Constitution.
- 5.3. The Conference Committee may, for each day of the meeting of Conference, set aside time convenient for the debate of Emergency Motions. In such an event, proposed Emergency Motions must be submitted to the Conference Committee, duly signed, by 5pm the day before they are to be debated. Emergency Amendments to motions already on the Agenda for that meeting of Conference must be submitted by 5pm the day before the motion is to be debated.
- 5.4. The Conference Committee may refuse to select an emergency motion or amendment if, in the opinion of the Committee, it is similar in effect to another motion which has been selected for debate at the relevant meeting of Conference.
- 5.5. The Conference Committee will choose the emergency motions or amendments which, in the opinion of the Committee, are most relevant to the concerns of the Conference and can be debated within the time available. The Committee shall make available the text of all emergency motions and amendments chosen for debate either by publication in the Conference Daily Bulletin or any other means the Committee finds most appropriate.
- 5.6. Amendments shall not normally be taken to the text of an Emergency Motion. However Conference Committee may consider amendments duly signed by 5 Conference Representatives or by any body authorised to submit motions under the provisions of Section E9 of the Constitution. These amendments must be brief, suitable for debate and of a similar emergency nature. The deadline for submitting amendments to an Emergency Motion will be listed in the Conference Daily Bulletin alongside the text of the Emergency Motion. The movers of the Emergency Motion must be given the opportunity to agree that the text of the amendment be accepted without debate or vote, and the text must be circulated to voting representatives before the start of the debate.

## **6. Conduct of Debate**

### **6.1. Length of Speeches**

- 6.1.1. The Conference Committee shall decide the time to be allocated for each debate. The Conference Committee shall determine the times allocated to speakers in debates.
- 6.1.2. Movers of motions shall normally be allocated not more than 12 minutes to move and summate on a motion. Movers of amendments shall normally be allocated not more than 8 minutes to move and summate on a motion. Movers of emergency and topical motions shall normally be allocated 5 minutes to move the motion. Speakers from the floor shall normally be allocated 4 minutes but this may be varied at the discretion of the chair of the debate.
- 6.1.3. The allocation of the time between moving and summing shall be at the discretion of the mover subject only to notification of the Chair of the debate before the start of the debate. In the absence of such notification the Chair shall be entitled to limit speeches to three quarters of the time allocation for moving and one quarter for summation.

### **6.2. Order of Debate**

- 6.2.1. The Conference Committee shall direct the order of debate. Generally, however, a motion will be moved and immediately thereafter the amendments will be moved in the order directed by the Committee. There will then be a general debate. The movers of amendments (or their nominees) shall have the right to summate in the same order, after which the mover of the motion (or their nominee) shall have the right to summate.
- 6.2.2. Votes will be taken on amendments in the order in which they have been moved and finally, a vote shall be taken on the substantive motion.
- 6.3. The Conference Committee may direct that parts of any motion or amendment or group of amendments may be the subject of a separate debate the Conference Committee may also direct that a debate may comprise of more than one substantive motion. In this case it shall be up to the discretion of the Chair as to the allotment of speakers, save that the rights of movers of motions or amendments shall not be infringed.
- 6.4. The Committee may authorise members of other State or Regional Parties to speak. The Committee may also, with the approval of conference, invite any person to address a Conference as a guest.
- 6.5. On any topical motion, policy motion or emergency motion not moved on behalf of the Policy Committee, the Policy Committee shall have the right to nominate one of its members to report to the Conference its views on the motions and/or amendments under debate. Such persons shall be called to speak at any time up to the conclusion of the debate and before any replies and shall be entitled to speak for the same length of time as the mover of the motion. The Executive Committee shall have similar rights on business motions or motions to amend the constitution and the Conference Committee shall have similar rights in relation to motions to amend Standing Orders or motions otherwise relating to the proceedings of the Conference.
- 6.6. Save as provided in Standing Orders, no person may speak more than once in any debate.
- 6.7. All members wishing to speak in any debate, including the movers and summators of motions and amendments, must submit a speaker's card and indicate whether they wish to speak in favour or against a motion or amendment. The Chair of the session shall be responsible for providing a balanced debate between the different viewpoints in the Conference. In circumstances where there is a preponderance of members wishing to speak on the same side in any debate, the Chair may announce a departure from this rule.

## **7. Voting**

- 7.1. Voting cards shall be issued to all Conference Representatives and shall be shown in respect of all votes taken. A count of voting cards will be taken when either:
  - 7.1.1. This is felt necessary by the Chair of the session to resolve uncertainty as to the outcome, or
  - 7.1.2. A request for a count has been made by 12 Conference Representatives standing in their places and showing their voting cards.
- 7.2. In the event of a count of voting cards being required, the Chair of the session shall appoint tellers for the purpose. A recount will be held only if the Chair of the session is not satisfied that the first count was accurate.

## **8. Points of Order and Procedural Motions**

- 8.1. Any voting member may rise on a point of order. A point of order shall be taken immediately, except that, during a vote no point of order shall be taken that does not refer to the vote itself. The decision of the Chair of the session on all points of order shall be final.
- 8.2. References Back
  - 8.2.1. A voting member may, at any time before the end of speeches in reply to the debate, submit in writing a motion to refer back the motion under debate. Such a submission shall state to whom the motion is to be referred and shall include a short statement of the reasons.

- 8.2.2.** The Chair may decide either to take the motion to refer back immediately or defer it until the end of debate. If more than one request for a reference back is received, the Chair shall have the discretion as to which to take but shall give consideration to the appropriateness of the bodies to which the motion is being referred, the degree to which the stated reasons for reference back reflect views expressed in the debate and the order in which the requests were submitted, before exercising the rights of discretion. No more than one reference back shall be taken to any motion.
- 8.2.3.** The Chair shall, upon taking the motion to refer back, read it and the statement of reasons and ask conference whether it wishes to debate the motion. If the conference decides not to debate the reference back, the reference back automatically falls. If the conference decides, by a majority of those voting to debate the reference back the mover of that motion may speak and the mover of the substantive motion or their nominee may reply. The Chair shall have discretion whether to allow other speakers on the motion.
- 8.2.4.** The reference back shall require a simple majority of those voting to be passed. If the substantive motion is referred to the Executive, Policy Committee or Conference Committee that body shall report to the next meeting of conference stating the action it has taken on the reference back.
- 8.3.** Suspension of Standing Orders
- 8.3.1.** A voting member may, during any session of a conference, move for the suspension of Standing Orders. The mover shall submit the motion together with a written statement of its purpose, not exceeding 100 words, to the Chair who shall read them to the Conference.
- 8.3.2.** No motion to suspend Standing Orders may suspend any requirement of the Constitution, not Standing Orders 2 and 3.
- 8.3.3.** No motion to suspend Standing Orders to introduce a motion or amendment onto the Agenda can be taken unless the motion or amendment has been submitted to the Conference Committee in accordance with the published timetable and any right of appeal has been exercised.
- 8.3.4.** The Chair shall read the statement of purpose and if the suspension is allowable, ask Conference whether it wishes to debate the request to suspend Standing Orders. If the Conference decides not to debate the request, it falls. If the Conference decides to hear the request the mover may speak and a representative of the Conference may reply. The Chair has the discretion to call other speakers and all speeches will be limited to two minutes.
- 8.3.5.** A motion to suspend Standing Orders shall only be carried if supported by at least two thirds of voting Representatives present and voting. If the procedural motion is carried all Standing Orders shall remain in force except only for the purposes set out in the motion.
- 8.4.** Separate Votes
- 8.4.1.** A Separate Vote shall be taken on a part of a motion or amendment.
- 8.4.2.** At the direction of the Conference Committee; or
- 8.4.3.** At the discretion of the Chair, when requested to do so by a voting representative. Any voting representative may submit a request for a separate vote to the Chair of a debate. Such a request must be in writing and received before the commencement of the speeches in reply to the debate. The Chair has complete discretion in such a case on whether to take a separate vote.
- 8.5.** These Standing Orders may be amended by a two-thirds majority of Conference Representatives present and voting on a motion duly submitted under the terms of Standing Order 3. Subject to any amendment they shall remain in force from Conference to Conference.