



**Welsh Liberal Democrats
Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru**

Motions to Spring Conference Cardiff, 19-21 April 2013

AMENDMENTS:

All the motions contained in this document may be amended in the form of a motion submitted in the same way as a motion. The deadline for amendments to these motions is noon, on Wednesday 10 April 2013. Amendments should be submitted to Ben Lloyd, Policy Officer, via ben.lloyd@welshlibdems.org.uk.

TOPICAL MOTIONS:

A Topical Motion is one which would otherwise qualify as a policy or a business motion but is about an event which has occurred after the deadline for motions (27 February 2013). The deadline for Topical Motions is noon, on Wednesday 10 April 2013 and should be submitted to Ben Lloyd, Policy Officer, via ben.lloyd@welshlibdems.org.uk.

EMERGENCY MOTIONS:

An Emergency Motion is a proposal which relates to a specific recent development which has occurred after the Topical Motion Deadline. Emergency Motions should be brief. The deadline for the submission of Emergency Motions is the opening of Conference and should be submitted to the Policy Officer.

If you have any questions about submitting Amendments, Topical or Emergency Motions, you can contact the Policy Officer via the above email address or on 029 2031 3649.

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Putting Pupils First: Improving School Standards in Wales (National Policy Committee)

Conference Notes that the Welsh Liberal Democrat Education Forum, chaired by Aled Roberts AM, issued a consultation paper and hosted a policy development day in October 2012 which examines education policy.

Conference Further Notes that the Forum will lead to the production of papers on Further Education (including qualifications) and Higher Education in due course.

Conference Believes that future support for school standards in Wales must focus on allowing every pupil to reach their potential and to give schools the power to drive standards up.

Conference Resolves to endorse the policy paper *Putting pupils first – improving school standards in Wales* and its proposals to:

- I. Support the development of an individual pupil monitoring programme to measure pupils' progress, allowing schools to target efforts at those pupils who are not meeting their potential. This should be rolled out gradually, starting with the schools who demonstrate the least "value-added."
- II. Continue to expand the pupil premium until we reach our target of £2,500. In addition we will ensure that schools are provided with comprehensive guidance on how they can best use the pupil premium money and that they are accountable for their spending.
- III. Deliver a Middle Phase Strategy focused on ensuring that pupils are supported through this important stage, including a better balance of pastoral and academic support.
- IV. Establish a nationwide high attainment programme, funded nationally, which will develop and co-ordinate access to programmes for high achievers.
- V. Engage constructively with the Government's Curriculum Review and not prejudge its outcome, but will argue for improvements to the 'application of knowledge' section of the curriculum and seek to ensure that schools and teachers have sufficient freedom to excel.
- VI. Reform the role of governors to ensure that they focus more on strategic oversight. We will also trial catchment area-wide governing bodies to evaluate whether these provide a better model for oversight and scrutiny.
- VII. Ensure that any new model for delivery of education services (whether regional consortia or local education authorities) will be accountable to local authorities.
- VIII. Retain the current Estyn assessment regime, but reform the school banding system to ensure that it measures schools' performance in regards to pupil performance, including re-structuring the system to demonstrate how well schools are achieving in supporting pupils to meet their own potential, in line with our recommendations on individual pupil monitoring.
- IX. Overhaul the quality of teaching by setting up a new scheme to deliver cutting-edge training on a national basis, making the completion of initial teacher training contingent on a year teaching in schools and examining making teachers' terms and conditions more flexible to encourage the best teachers to work in the most demanding schools and to tackle poor performance.

Permission to Plan: Reforming the Planning process in Wales (National Policy Committee)

Conference notes the significant role that the planning process plays in both community development and in spurring economic growth.

Conference re-iterates its belief that planning should seek to strike a balance between people's freedom to develop and the democratic wishes of communities to co-ordinate development democratically.

Conference therefore endorses the Policy Paper *Permission to Plan – Reforming the Planning Process in Wales*.

Conference calls for the promotion of development in preferred areas by:

- a) Allowing councils to designate Presumed Development Areas.
- b) Allowing councils to develop a pre-consent for some development so that planning permission is easier to obtain for desired projects.

Conference calls for increased expertise in the planning system by:

- a) Creating a National Planning Agency to co-ordinate expertise throughout the system.
- b) Trialling an accreditation system for planning agents.
- c) Improving the speed and accuracy of decisions undertaken by National Park Authorities.

Conference calls for empowerment of communities in the planning process by:

- a) Allowing local authorities to vary the planning framework.
- b) Allowing and encourage councils to provide the opportunity to encourage innovation in development.
- c) Making town and community councils statutory consultees on planning applications and encouraging the delegation of minor planning decisions to town and community councils.

Conference calls for nationally-significant projects to be supported by:

- a) Continuing to have nationally-significant projects determined by Welsh Ministers.
- b) Supporting and continuing the implementation of City Regions.

Public Transport for Students and Young People

(IR Cymru)

Conference Notes:

1. That due to the current economic climate bus companies need to make some spending cuts to their services, and companies are restructuring their local transport networks in order to ensure the remaining services are financially viable.
2. That some local bus services are not always financially viable and some services need to either be altered or have rises in ticket prices.
3. That whilst most 16-18 year olds are either in full time education or training they are still expected to pay the full adult fare.

Conference Believes:

1. That 16-18 year olds and students are disproportionately hit by raises in public transport fares as they are highly reliant on low cost public transport.
2. That whilst high raises in fares are unfair to 16-24 year olds, that the most important fact is the need for reliable and accessible public transport services.

Conference Calls Upon:

1. The Welsh Assembly to develop a national scheme to enable the creation of a young persons' travel rate for 16-18 year olds and full time students to assist with studies, employment, and training.
2. Local Authorities to ensure that where private companies are used as a replacement for public services communication between private and public provision is maintained to ensure the retention of reliable transport provision.
3. The Welsh Policy Committee to prepare a proposal that would enable those pensioners for whom a free bus pass is not essential to opt out of the scheme with the money saved being used to give 16-18 year old cheaper bus travel with the ultimate aim of Free Bus travel for this age range.

Importance of Political Education Within the Curriculum (IR Cymru)

Conference Notes:

1. That the current levels of political education within the curriculum is insufficient and that the current citizenship modules available to pupils do not go far enough to teach pupils sufficiently.
2. That progress has been made in recent years, but more needs to be done to ensure that pupils, being the next generation, fully understand their rights and responsibilities as voters.
3. Turnout is disproportionately lower in the 18-25 age group.
4. The longstanding Liberal Democrat commitment to extend the voting age to 16.

Conference Believes:

1. That there is a need, where political studies are introduced into curricula, for the development of non-partisan resources which promote a discussion and analysis of the historic development of British political parties, the differences in voting systems, and the current variations in the political spectrum.
2. That by providing an increased understanding of politics voter turnout amongst young people could be bolstered and the government legitimacy be enhanced.
3. That by increasing political education for school pupils, the argument that 16 and 17 year olds do not understand the workings of British politics, and therefore should not be able to vote, can be disregarded when discussing extending the election franchise.

Conference Calls for:

1. The Liberal Democrats to campaign for increased political education within the school curriculum in order to legitimise discussions of extending the political franchise.
2. The development of a new curriculum for political education within Wales that is non-partisan and attempts to promote debate into, and a broader understanding of voting methods, policies, and general UK political history.

Constitutional Amendment: Welsh Party Returning Officer & Internal Election Rules (Constitutional Review Panel)

Conference Notes:

1. That the Welsh Liberal Democrats currently elects a Returning Officer on a two yearly basis and the post is ordinarily up for re-election at the 2013 Spring Conference.
2. That the custom and practice of the Federal Party and other constituent parts of the Liberal Democrats is that the post of Returning Officer is held by the Chair of the relevant Appeals Panel and that members of staff undertake Acting and Deputy Acting Returning Officer roles as required.
3. That the Federal Party amended its election rules in 2012 to allow members to campaign for election to Federal Committees.

Conference Believes:

1. That the Welsh Liberal Democrats have the staff capacity to follow the 'Federal Model' and having the Chair of the Welsh Appeals Panel as the Returning Officer allows for clear lines of appeal in internal Welsh Liberal Democrats.
2. That members should be allowed to campaign for election to Welsh Party Committees to ensure that the electorate know who they are actually voting for.

Conference Resolves to:

1. Delete Section D.2 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution and replace with "For the purposes of internal elections provided for under this section of the Constitution the Chair of the Welsh Appeals Panel shall be the Returning Officer and the Chief Executive shall be the Acting Returning Officer. The Acting Returning Officer shall be responsible for the administration of any such election(s) and may appoint one or more Deputy Acting Returning Officers to assist them in their work."
2. Insert new Section D.3 to the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution and re-number accordingly: "The Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitutional Review Panel shall be responsible for keeping the Party's Election Rules under review and submit any proposals for amendment to the Conference for approval."
3. In Section E.1 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, delete "The Returning Officer".
4. In Section E.13 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, insert "and" between "Leader," and "Deputy Leaders" and delete ", and the Returning Officer".
5. In Section M.4 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, delete clause e "The Party's Returning Officer"
6. In Appendix 1, A.1 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, insert "and" between "Assembly," and "Leader of the Parliamentary Party" and delete ", and Returning Officer".
7. Delete Appendix 1, A.3 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution.
8. Delete Appendix 1, B.1 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution and replace with "The Acting Returning Officer shall be responsible for ensuring that any timetable for the relevant elections takes into account the requirements outlined in clause B.2, below."
9. In Appendix 1, C.3 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, insert "Acting" before "Returning Officer"

10. In Appendix 1, C.5 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, insert “Acting” before “Returning Officer”
11. In Appendix 1, C.6 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, insert “Acting” before “Returning Officer”
12. Delete Appendix 1, D.1 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution and replace with “The Acting Returning Officer shall be responsible for sending out a statement (as defined above) from each candidate for election. Candidates shall be permitted to campaign for election. Such campaigning shall be limited to spoken communication, either via telephony or face to face contact, or via electronic communication including the use of social media, email and the internet”.
13. Delete Appendix 1, D.2 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution and replace with “The Acting Returning Officer shall, where available, publish and circulate with the ballot papers and candidate statements, a list of the possible versus actual attendance for meetings of the Welsh Party Committees for which elections are being held”
14. In Appendix 1, E.1 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, insert “Acting” before “Returning Officer”.
15. In Appendix 1, F.1 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, insert “Acting” before “Returning Officer”.
16. In Appendix 1, F.2 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, insert “Acting” before “Returning Officer”.
17. In Appendix 1, F.3 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, insert “Acting” before “Returning Officer”.
18. In Appendix 1, G.1 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, insert “Acting” before “Returning Officer” and delete “and the Party’s Chief Executive”.
19. In Appendix 1, F.2 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, insert “Acting” before “Returning Officer”.
20. In Appendix 1, F.3 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, delete “with the next mailing” and replace with “electronically”.
21. Delete Appendix 1, H.1 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution and replace with “Any Candidate who has concerns about the conduct of the election or the count may appeal in the first instance to the Acting Returning Officer who shall investigate the allegation(s) and rule accordingly. Any ruling of the Acting Returning Officer may, if a satisfactory outcome is not achieved, be appealed to the Returning Officer save that the accidental failure to deliver any invitation for nomination or ballot papers to any member eligible to vote in the election(s) shall not invalidate the outcome of the election(s) unless the Returning Officer considers the scale of such a failure is capable of materially affecting the declared result.”
22. In Appendix 3, B.1 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, delete “Party’s Returning Officer” and replace with “Chief Executive”.
23. In Appendix 3, C.3 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, delete “Party’s” and replace with “Acting”.
24. In Appendix 3, D,1 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, delete “Party’s” and replace with “Acting”.
25. Delete Appendix 3, D.5 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution and replace with “Each Candidate may use campaign materials in electronic or paper form provided that in doing so they do not exceed the campaign expenditure limits outlined above.”

26. In Appendix 3, D.7 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, delete “Welsh Party’s” and replace with “Acting”.
27. In Appendix 3, E.1 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, delete “Party’s” and replace with “Acting” and delete “Chief Executive” and replace with “Officers of the Party”.
28. In Appendix 3, E.2 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, delete “Party’s” and replace with “Acting”.
29. In Appendix 3, E.4 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, delete “Party’s” and replace with “Acting”.
30. Delete Appendix 3, E.5 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, and renumber accordingly.
31. In Appendix 3, E.6 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution, delete “Party’s” and replace with “Acting”.
32. Delete Appendix 3, E.7 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution and replace with “In the case of a presidential election the Acting Returning Officer shall declare the result immediately after the completion of the count of ballot papers and inform the relevant Party Officers accordingly. For Leadership Elections arrangements shall be made for the Returning Officer, or their nominee, to make a public announcement as to the result at an appropriate venue as soon as practicable following the completion of the count of ballot papers.”
33. Delete Appendix 3, F.1 of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution and replace with “Any Candidate who has concerns about the conduct of the election or the count may appeal in the first instance to the Acting Returning Officer who shall investigate the allegation(s) and rule accordingly. Any ruling of the Acting Returning Officer may, if a satisfactory outcome is not achieved, be appealed to the Returning Officer save that the accidental failure to deliver any invitation for nomination or ballot papers to any member eligible to vote in the election(s) shall not invalidate the outcome of the election(s) unless the Returning Officer considers the scale of such a failure is capable of materially affecting the declared result.”

