**LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 2017**

**Twickenham CLP delegates:** Aislinn Macklin- Doherty\*, Loraine Monk, Philip Moshi, David Brodin, Cathy Driscoll

**Introduction and background:**

Conference was the biggest for many years. 1,200 CLP delegates were in conference (last year there were 800). There were 7,000 visitors to conference over the period of time. They were energised, enthusiastic, unified and on an election footing. They had a huge enthusiasm to discuss ideas and how to win the election, on the conference floor and at the huge number of other political meeting throughout Brighton last week.

While the conference was celebratory, it was in no way complacent and speaker after speaker on the conference floor and on the platform, directed people back to their communities, and CLPs to mobilise for the election whenever it comes and prepare for the campaign and for being in government.

This was also the the most democratic conference there has been for some years. Rule changes from last year, including the right to refer back parts of the National Policy Forum report meant that the conference had more say in the policy decisions of the Party.( Party members participate in the shaping of Labour’s policy throughout the year by feeding in ideas to the National Policy Forum.  Every year the NPF presents policy documents to Conference which shapes the debate all week.  )

The conference also happens in the backdrop of a National Executive Committee decision just before conference to launch a review on party democracy. Conference was assured that this review body would look at all aspects of how to make the party a democratic body and most CLPs agreed to remit the rule changes they had submitted to conference to be discussed and acted upon by that review.

This meant that there were many more delegates who wished to speak, engage and debate and this needed to be enabled by the reducing the number of speakers on the platform. While the move towards more involvement of members was very much welcomed by delegates, it was challenging for conference chairs to manage, and better systems will need to be developed.

**Organisation of conference**

As in other years conference was organised into a series of debates around issues of policy as detailed in the National Policy Forum report. This was the first year, however, where delegates were able to refer back parts of the report to the Forum, allowing a debate on the policy put forward in a part of the report. Previously conference has been asked just to accept or reject the report. The introduction of the ability to refer parts of the report back mean that important issues (eg. Brexit) can not only be discussed through the report but delegates can vote on their agreement or not of an issue.

In addition composited contemporary motions from CLPs and Unions were debated. The priorities for his type of debate was decided by separate ballots of unions and CLPs (one vote for each CLP delegation). Unions decided on 4 priorities and CLPs on 4.

\*Unfortunately, due to administrative issues regarding the cut off date for party membership in the central Labour Party, Aislinn’s delegate status was only confirmed immediately before conference and she was not able to attend the entire conference.

**Day 1 Sunday September 24th**

Initial debates about the arrangements for conference included whether the conference venue was accessible enough for all delegates - issues around this became a part of each day's arrangements with adjustments having to be made throughout the conference.

There was also debate about whether The Mayor of London should give the mayoral address at conference when it could now be given by a mayor from another part of the country. The Conference Arrangements Committee accepted the arguments for not being London centric around the addresses and said they would discuss rotating the mayor giving this speech in future years. This was accepted as the way forward by conference delegates and Sadiq was given a warm welcome by delegates and a standing ovation for a very positive speech on Monday.

**Protecting Our Communities** debate.

(includes Justice, Housing, Transport, Local Government, Environment, Energy)

This was opened by a speech from Diane Abbott

She spoke about Grenfell:

“Is it only me that is wondering why the commissioners aren't going in to the Failing Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea?’

Expressed full support for the FBU in their fight against cuts.

Diane received great support for the Promise of a full enquiryies into Orgreave, the Shrewbury 24 and 37 Cammell Laird workers.

Other highlights:

End to indefinite immigration detention.

Labour under JC, will never scapegoat immigrants

Without immigrants and the children of immigrants would not have the NHS we have today.

Theresa May using EU nationals living here as bargaining chips, Labour will guarantee their rights.

Message of hope will allow us to win the next General Election

Diane Abbott’s full speech is available here

<https://youtu.be/WwzfUwe_1J0>

**Protecting Our Communities** **Delegates Debate**

Some highlights:

Education - good support from conference floor  taking all schools back into local authorities and against academies.

Housing -

Cllr. Katherine Dunne, Twickenham’s candidate during the General Election, gave an excellent speech on behalf of Labour Housing. She said we must demand that it is not tenants who pay for fire safety improvements. Money spent on this  mustn't be at expense of social housing etc. We must to account those who did not listen to the concerns of tenants.

Michelle Dorrell (question time fame) spoke about the absurdities of the housing crisis

A young woman, Lauren Stocks, got a standing ovation for her impassioned speech denouncing the mental health crisis affecting Britains young people.

Andrew Gwynne summed up

Promised a renaissance of local services. Councils will be given powers to run local services,

Extensions of transparency and freedom of information.

Fair wage clause

Biggest sets of reforms in a long time.

We need to stand up for our neighbourhoods, protecting our communities, for the many, not the few - lets get to it.

Link to Andrew Gwynne's full speech

<https://youtu.be/8ziCZksA41I>

**All of National Policy Report on Protecting Our Communities was passed by delegates voting.**

**General Election Report**

Ian McNicol. gave the General Election report

Highlights:

He described us as a united party on the path to victory

With 570,000 members we are the largest socialist democratic party in Western Europe.

Ian offered no apologies for all women shortlist

The party is mortgage free, debt free and loan free.

Link to Ian McNicol’s full speech

<https://youtu.be/tLFByXxdMfs>

**Ian Lavery Speech**

Special thanks to those who came to rallies in election campaign

We made politics exciting again and people contributed to an atmosphere  and expectation of change.

Huge increase in social media reach.

The Labour Party and JC each have over 1 million likes on Facebook.

Our Party political broadcasts had 2nmillion more viewers than the great British Bake Off!

All paid for by clean money.

Positive campaign fought by and for the many not the few.

Link to Ian Lavery’s speech

<https://youtu.be/FIp_1XSwATU>

Contemporary motions ballot

CLPs chose:

NHS, Housing, Social care, Rail

Unions chose: Grenfell, Workers Rights, Public Sector Pay, Growth and Investment

**Day 2. Monday September 25th**

**Brexit and Internationalism**.

Debate introduced by a speech from. Glenys Wilmott. Leader Labour MEPS. She spoke mainly on Brexit.

Highlights:

Brexit - the threat to jobs, the economy and our services

Let's begin the next campaign

Labour MEPs looking ahead to their final vote.

No backing for a deal that undermines the peace process in Northern Ireland,no backing for the undermining  of the rights of EU nationals and no  backing for a deal that attacks workers rights and safety standards.

'Try to privatise our NHS and you will be met by the full political and industrial muscle...'

Link to Glenys Wilmotts speech

<https://youtu.be/_npioR8ax2s>

Delegate debate and vote on the National Policy Report for Brexit and Internationalism

A delegate referred back a part of the report which would put a pause on Brexit with a speech which said it must be stopped.

Delegates spoke on both sides of the debate with delegates given speeches which included:

Parliament must vote on final arrangement.

Defend right of free movement - taking stand against racism and in favour of internationalism. “Europeans no longer feel welcome here’

‘71% of young people voted remain. We must accept the vote on referendum but put jobs and rights first’.

Jean Butcher from Unison said the Leadership is steering the right path – the balancing being democratic with economic situation. walking a tightrope -  Need for pragmatic solution to do the best for the country.

The vote on this referral back was defeated, meaning that the conference upheld the National Policy Forum recommendations on policy. At the end of the day the conference issued a statement on Brexit which is attached to this report. (Appendix 2)

Other debates on international affairs covered Palestine (Unite speaker said that when we gain power the Labour Government needs to act firmly to support the rights of the Palestinian people.) and a

Condemnation of Turkish government and support for Kurds.

**Emily Thornberry.**

The Shadow Foreign Secretary gave a funny and very well received speech declaring: there is No seat that we can't win, no Tory that we can't bin.

Priorities:

Jobs, jobs and jobs.

Full speech here:

<https://youtu.be/2xM-FlEA3_E>

**Keir Starmer. Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union**

**Full speech here**

https://youtu.be/dLGPfpkX2nI

Reference back on NPF section on Work and Disability. Won even though many Unions didn’t support

**Shadow Chancellors Speech.** John McDonnell

Tribute to Ken Loach for making Daniel Blake.

Karen his new PPS, who was a nurse and went back to the ward when she was needed, after her election as an MP…

Talked of Labour History fulfilling its promise in 1945

White heat of Technology 1960s… New Educational opportunities Automation… theme in conference- it can be hell for the many and profit for the few unless we can get into government.

poverty/ food banks..

* Promise to restore free collective bargaining for Unions
* Capp interest on Credit Card loans as we have with pay day loans.

Education a gift

Will Scrap Student loans. Three quarters wont pay back… predicted Tories will reduce the interest rates or increase the threshold…

If scrapped in the next few years will cost twenty Billion- that cost will triple in a few years..

PFI costs Public sector 200 billion

… would take 830 million from NHS in 8 years . profits made by companies in off shore tax havens

* Would end PFI
* All contracts back in Public Control.

Link to Shadow Chancellors Speech

<https://youtu.be/RaoThMbgrhA>

**Living Standards and Strong Economy**

Debate about this on conference floor, alongside a debate on a composite motion on workers Rights.

Labour needs to protect the NI peace process during Brexit.

Rebecca Boot: we don't need supported workplace we need supportive workplaces forced to comply with disability legislation. Vote against this part of composite 3.

Wheelchair funding - postcode lottery. A comfortable, effective wheelchair is a right.Tory failure to properly fund wheelchairs.

Push for complete reform of benefit system including universal credit

There was an important referral back to page 75 of The National Policy Report proposed because we should be committing to changing Tory cuts, not just opposing them.This referral back carried. **Twickenham delegates welcomed this, believing it had been missing from the manifesto.**

**Speech by Debbie Abrahams. Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions** called on government to stop rollout of universal credit. She promised Waspi women two years money.

Link to speech

<https://youtu.be/yltG_6ho__>g

**CITY MAYORS SPEECH**

Strong feeling before conference about Sadiq speaking – resentment that it's always London speakers invited. Sadiq was welcomed by the conference when he spoke and his speech was received warmly.

**Sadiq Khan’s speech.**

Great to see LP fired up under JC.Theresa May failed to wipe us out!

Credit must go to one person the leader of our LP - JC.

JC mobilised and motivated people - Became King of Grime and of Glastonbury 🙂

4 new London MPs. Tribute to Emma Dent Coad for supporting the people of Grenfell.

We are fired up and energetic and have momentum on our side.

Terrorist Tragedies inflicted on London. Standing ovation for the emergency services.

Full speech:

<https://youtu.be/Hz-BrNODVoc>

Scottish report. Tribute to Keiza Dugdale.

4pm **Policy Plenaries**

**Jobs and Industry Seminar**

Loraine in the seminar talked about Hidden unemployed figures. Zero hours contracts/internships/part time work and Waspi women. Suggested Labour needed the figures for these hidden people and needed to consider reintroducing job creation schemes..

**Day 3. Tuesday September 26th**

**Party Financial Reports-**Diane Holland- Labour’s Finances very Healthy

**Financial and NEC and CLP Constitutional amendments**.

Problems with these is take 18 months before they can be debated after being tabled

**NEC Rules Changes** The NEC recommended accepting the proposed NEC Rule Changes

1. Composition of the NEC. (Increase in membership)

2. Nomination of Leader and Deputy Leader – ( change from 15%-10% of PLP)

3. Conduct prejudicial to the party

**All of the NEC rule changes were carried by conference**

**CLP Rule Changes**

Rule changes had been received for CLPs on the following areas:

4.Conditions of membership

5. Hatred and prejudicial language

6. Allocation of membership fees

7. Conference Delegates

8. Contemporary Motions -Lost

For 33.60%....Against 66.40%

9. Constitutional Amendments

10. Nomination of Leader and Deputy Leader - 5%

11.Young Labour

12. Local Government Committees

13. Accountability of Labour Groups

All of these rule changes – except number 8 - were remitted to be discussed in the NECs review on party democracy. Some delegates were reluctant to do this but were assured that the review would take seriously their ideas and concerns.

**Investing in our Future**

**Rebecca Long Bailey**

**Shadow sec of State for Business,Energy and industrial strategy**

Link to speech

<https://youtu.be/PKS6LXWFdBc>

TUC Speaker- Mary Bousted of the ATL

**Early years, Education and Skills**

**Shadow Secretary of State for Education. Angela Raynor**

She spoke of her life, she had a baby at 16, Sure start Centre helped her and her baby…

* Will give 500 million to surestart
* Free high quality education for every 2-4 year old..
* Teachers at the heard of the service
* National standards
* 10 million given to end Period poverty
* 8 billion pounds for new school buildings
* Billion pounds into Further Education
* Lifelong learning

Link to Angela's speech

<https://youtu.be/7FXusvs0Lfs>

The debate on the conference floor included a referral back on part of the National Policy Report because conference wanted it to reflect a reversal on free schools and academies under a labour government. This was carried unanimously

**International Guest Speaker . Naomi Klein**

* “Neo Liberalism wages war on the collective imagination”
* proposed to save the planet, all pension funds should be forced to disinvest in Fossil fuels.
* Reinvest in low energy housing
* Caribbean disaster… the Caribbean was ravaged by the wealth made from bonded wealth

Link to Naomi Kleins speech

https://youtu.be/jj1nuw38DqY

**Health and Social Care**

Health and Social Care Jonathan Ashworth, Secretary of State for Health

Jonathan Ashworths speech:

<https://youtu.be/0RbgV5h-vnY>

Debate

Following conference debate on Health, there was a referral back of part of the report to be looked at again. The ammendment delegates wanted was one in which the NHS was made the only provider of health care instead of the preferred provider as it was billed and to change the wording that companies should not make excessive profits to the fact that they should not make any profits. This referral back was overwhelmingly carried.

**Barbara Keeley, Shadow Minister for Mental Health and Social Care**

Link to speech

<https://youtu.be/k43t8RGL6Ks>

**COMPOSITE MOTION 6.**

**GRENFELL TOWER.**

Twickenham submitted to conference a Motion on Social Housing and Grenfell. Conference Arrangements committee placed the motion under the Grenfell section of of motions.

At Conference delegates have to vote, in a priorities Ballot, on which of the many motions that are submitted should be debated.

Grenfell came top of the list. The CLP was invited to send a delegate to a compositing meeting of 9 organisations, including CLPs, FBU and the Association of Labour Councillors. Loraine went to the meeting. **The Final Composite motion contained the following lines from the motion that was submitted from the Twickenham CLP. (Full text of Composite 6. Appendix 1)**

“Conference will champion residents of the Grenfell Tragedy in their fight for justice, and to be rehoused in social housing of their choice.”

and

“reverse marketization and reinstate social housing.”

**Composite motions:**

The following motions were composited from contemporary motions submitted by unions and CLPs

All of the motions were carried, with the majority being carried unanimously.

Composite 1- Growth and Investment

Publically owned post office.Super fact broadband,Overhaul of postal industry. Renationalisation

New deal for industry..Support for postal workers.

Composite 2-Public Sector Pay

Composite 3 Public Sector Pay

Composite 8 NHS

Composite 9 Social Care

Composite 5 Housing

Composite 6 Grenfell

Composite 7 Rail

**Emergency motions on:**

**Assaults on Health care workers**

**Bombardier**

**were also carried unanimously.**

**Deputy Leader’s Speech**

Tom Watsons speech link:

<https://youtu.be/040ZzZ-s_F8>

**Day 4. Wednesday Sept 27th**

**Leader’s Speech**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-politics-41415568/labour-conference-jeremy-corbyn-s-2017-speech-in-full>

**The conference ended on a high point with delegates ready going back to the constituencies, energised and enthusiastic, preparing to campaign and preparing to win!!**

Appendix 1.

Composite 6: Grenfell Tower

Moved by FBU

Seconded by the Association of Labour Councillors

Twickenham’s original motion’s wording in Yellow

Conference notes the publication of the terms of reference for the Grenfell Tower public inquiry, announced by the Prime Minister on 15 August 2017.  Conference stands in solidarity with the victims and will fight for justice for all those affected.  Conference will champion residents of the Grenfell Tragedy in their fight for justice, and to be rehoused in social housing of their choice.

Conference applauds the response of firefighters, ambulance, local government and other workers to the immediate fire and its aftermath.

As a society, we must make every effort to ensure that a similar tragedy never happens again.

Conference welcomes the support provided by Labour's leadership, Labour Councils, Labour MPs and Labour Party members for those involved and the commitment to ensure that those responsible are held to account.

Conference is disappointed with the public inquiry's narrow terms of reference, which have been widely criticised by survivors and others affected.

Conference notes the Conservative government failed to review & implement the fire-safety regulations recommended by the Lakanal inquest.

The Government’s continuing failure to rehouse residents locally in permanent accommodation has further undermined those affected.

Conference is disappointed with the public inquiry's narrow terms of reference, which have been widely criticised by survivors and others affected.

Conference notes that the inquiry does not intend to investigate social housing policy, deregulation, the scale of cuts to the fire and rescue service, local government and other sectors, as well as other attacks on public safety which contributed to this fire.

Failures in social housing provision exist, not just in relation to cladding and insulation, but also in relation to wider issues of stigmatisation, under investment, lack of quality control and technical checks, failures of regulation, accountability and oversight and cuts to technical expertise within social housing organisations.

What is also critical for the survivors of the fire, the community and indeed for the future of public housing is a much wider investigation into the wider housing, economic and social issues that lie behind the fire.

Conference demands that the public inquiry:

* Takes a wider remit and considers the broad range of issues requested by residents, trade unions and other interested parties.
* Examines the whole deregulatory agenda of past governments since the 1980s and underlines the irreplaceable role of regulation in keeping communities safe.

Conference calls on a future Labour Government to:

* Ensure there is fair funding for local government and devolved nations to ensure that councils have the capacity to make the full safety checks needed to safeguard their communities.
* Recognise the dedication of public servants like those who were there in the hour of need at Grenfell by removing the public sector pay cap.
* Review all appropriate building regulations to make sure no housing or public building is put at risk by the use of inappropriate materials.
* Ensure accountability is in place with a requirement that the controlling body (LA or HA) has the technical expertise in place to ensure quality control
* Ensure social housing is seen as an asset not a burden.
* Lift the cap on HRA to empower local councils to play their part in ensuring  safe, affordable, energy efficient housing sufficient to meet demand. Conference resolves that the Labour Party should:

continue to make the case for the vital importance of social housing in tackling the housing crisis and reverse marketization and reinstate social housing.

pledge to build at least 100,000 genuinely affordable homes a year including a new generation of council housing to help tackle the housing crisis including in rural areas.

Appendix 2

**Statement from the NEC on Brexit** Published Monday 25th

|  |
| --- |
| Conference believes Brexit is a crucially important issue facing our country, and has grave concerns about the impact a reckless Tory Brexit, which opens the way for a race to the bottom in standards and corporate taxes, will have on our economy and society.  Labour campaigned to remain in a reformed European Union, but as democratic socialists we accept and respect the referendum result.  Conference is deeply concerned that 15 months on from the referendum, and six months on from the triggering of Article 50, the Conservative government has agreed nothing of substance and has made almost no progress in negotiations with the EU. |
| Therefore, Labour calls on the Government to spend less time fighting internal battles and negotiating with itself and more time engaging in the most important and complex set of international negotiations the country has ever faced.  Unlike the Conservatives, Labour will fight for a Brexit deal that prioritises jobs and the economy and protects rights. We will seek a strong, progressive new relationship with the EU – not as members but as EU partners.  Labour will work with sister parties and allies across Europe to improve workers’ rights, boost trade union membership and put an end to the exploitation of workers – as well as changing UK law to improve the security, pay and skills of all workers in Britain.  Labour is clear that we need a tariff and impediment- free trading relationship with the European Union. Labour’s priority is an outcome that puts jobs, living standards and the economy first. The precise institutional form of the new trading and customs relationship needs to be determined by negotiation. Labour will not support any future arrangement that sees the introduction of a hard border, or which restricts freedom of movement between Ireland and the UK.  In order to avoid a cliff-edge as we leave the EU and allow time to negotiate this new relationship, Labour would seek a time-limited transitional deal on the same basic terms we currently enjoy. During this transitional period Labour would seek to remain in a customs union with the EU and within the Single Market and would abide by the |
| common rules of both.  Conference condemns the Conservatives for whipping up division over immigration and for the dishonesty of their bogus targets. Labour recognises that migrant workers make a huge contribution to our economy and society and that it is necessary for migration to continue to maintain our industry and public services. |

Labour’s future immigration policy will be shaped by enduring Labour values of solidarity and respect, and will never scapegoat migrants and their families. We will not allow migrant or other workers to be subject to exploitation as a consequence.

Labour also calls on the Government to provide greater certainty on citizens’ rights and deplores the government’s inaction in failing to guarantee these rights in the weeks and months after the referendum. Labour demands the Government immediately guarantee existing rights for all EU nationals living in Britain, as it seeks to obtain reciprocal rights for British citizens living in the EU. This is vital for our economy and the right and progressive thing to do.