

## **A Delegate's Guide to Labour Party Annual Conference 2019**

### **Introduction**

Many thanks for downloading Labour First's Delegate's Guide to Conference. This document is intended as an aid for moderate delegates attending Labour Party Conference 2019. Please think of these pages as a rough guide, not a roadmap. Therefore, as we will reaffirm throughout this document, it is very important that delegates attend the Labour First briefing sessions and webinars; read and share our daily briefings; and sign up for email updates to stay informed during conference week.

### **The Conference Agenda**

The Conference timetable will include the following:

- The National Executive Committee (NEC) Report and any late NEC statements that can be issued to delegates during conference
- The Conference NPF Report, including reports from the eight policy commissions of the National Policy Forum.
- General Policy Motions - on ten topics chosen in the Priority Ballot by the CLP delegates and ten topics chosen by Affiliates; Emergency Motions
- Proposed rule changes from the NEC and from CLPs – rule change proposals from CLPs are those submitted in the previous year and those submitted this year as the old 'one year rule' delaying debate on CLP proposed rule changes has been abolished
- The election of three CLP reps to the National Constitutional Committee (NCC)
- The election of a Disabled Members' Rep on the Conference Arrangements Committee (CAC) - elected by the whole of Conference

### **Reports from the eight Policy Commissions**

There are now eight policy commissions, which draw up policy reports for discussion by the NPF.

The eight policy commissions (each made up of 16-20 members representing the shadow cabinet, the NEC and the NPF) are: Economy, Business and Trade; International; Housing, Local Government and Transport; Health and Social Care; Early Years, Education and Skills; Work, Pensions and Equality; Justice and Home Affairs and Environment, Energy and Culture.

Reports from each of these Policy Commissions need to be approved by conference and the relevant sessions are usually held on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday.

### **Policy Motions from CLPs/affiliated organisations**

Previously this CLPS/affiliates could submit “contemporary” motions (i.e. areas of policy not covered in the NPF report). At last years conference a rule change was passed which dropped the ‘contemporary’ requirement, meaning motions can now cover any area of policy. The closing date for submission of a motion was 12 noon on 12th September 2019. Each CLP can send one motion provided that they have not already submitted a rule amendment. The motion must be no more than 250 words, cover one topic and not propose a rule change.

Topics for debate will be selected at the ‘priorities ballot’ on the Saturday afternoon of Conference, from 1.30pm to 4.00pm. The entire vote for a CLP is given to cast to the first delegate from that CLP to arrive at the Ballot Area and ask for the ballot.

The Conference Arrangements Committee (CAC) meets on Monday 16th September to rule on which of the motions selected are valid and can go forward to the priorities ballot. Appeals will be heard on Wednesday 18th September.

### **Emergency Motions**

Emergency resolutions may be submitted on matters that arise after the final date for submitting Contemporary Motions. To be valid, the CAC must determine whether Emergency Motion:

- Could not reasonably have been the subject of a motion
- Has arisen after the submission deadline for motions (12th September)
- Or be an issue of urgent and immediate importance to the discussions of the whole party at Annual Conference

It is up to the CAC to rule whether or not Emergency Motions are in order. The Left tend to lobby heavily for as many Emergency Motions as possible in an attempt to push their own agenda and disrupt the business of conference.

### **Rule changes from the NEC**

Advice in relation to these rule changes will be given to delegates in Labour First's Daily Briefing as well as by email. The NEC only decides what rule changes to include in the democracy review on Tuesday 17th September, sometimes even on Saturday 21 September, so there may be some nasty surprises.

### **Voting for the National Constitutional Committee (NCC) and Conference Arrangements Committee (CAC)**

The NCC is the committee which deals with serious compliance cases and disciplinary procedures within the Labour Party. Sadly, this has become an increasingly important body in recent years.

Labour First are supporting **Gillian Troughton, Joanne Harding** and **Dora Dixon-Fyle** for NCC.

Please let us know if you can help distribute campaign literature at the Regional receptions, briefings or outside the conference hall.

The ballot takes place on Tuesday.

The CAC is the steering committee for Conference. There is a ballot for the new role of Disabled Members' Representative.

Labour First is supporting **Katrina Murray**.

The ballot takes place on Monday.

In both cases the entire vote for a CLP is given to cast to the first delegate from that CLP to arrive at the Ballot Area and ask for the ballot.

Before conference starts, please remember...

### **Pre-Conference Regional Briefings**

Before conference delegates are usually called to at least one briefing meeting in their region. In the last few years the practice has developed of handing delegates who attend these meetings their conference credentials and other conference material (rail tickets through the pooled fare scheme, will be sent to home addresses). Any delegates unable to attend these briefings must contact their regional office to make alternative arrangements for obtaining their credentials – any delegate without a credential is denied entry to conference. Every CLP delegate (including women and youth delegates) should have their own card vote booklet. But when voting for the NCC and in the priorities ballot only one delegate votes on behalf of the whole delegation, and who this is should be agreed collectively. Card vote booklets are given to delegates by regional officials before conference starts on Sunday. Otherwise they can be collected from the Ballot Area, probably from 12 noon.

There have been reports in recent years of Left Wing activists using the regional briefings to manipulate first-time delegates by pushing CLPD campaign material (The Yellow Pages) as if it is the official Labour Party line. They have also been known to use these meetings to push the fallacy that most delegates are 'mandated' by their CLPs. **THERE IS NO SUCH THING IN THE PARTY RULES AS 'MANDATING' OF DELEGATES.** There is no need to argue this case directly with those pushing this line, just be confident in the knowledge that you are there to represent your CLP as you see fit and there is nothing in the rulebook about mandating. Please pass this information on to other delegates who are unsure on the issue of mandating.

The reason that the Hard Left get so exercised over this issue is that they know the only sanction against a delegate who does not abide by a so-called 'mandate' is that they will not elect them as a conference delegate again. Which – seeing as they don't vote for moderate delegates anyway – isn't really much of a threat.

Please use the regional briefings and receptions to get to know your fellow delegates. Conference votes will be incredibly close this year, so any bonds you can form or swing delegates you can win over to your side could be the difference between winning and losing crucial votes.

### **Labour First Rally**

The Labour First Rally will be held at 12.45pm on Sunday the 22nd of September at **The Queens Hotel, 1-3 King's Road, Brighton, BN1 1NS.**

This is always one of the highlights of Labour Party Conference. It is a great opportunity for moderates to meet like-minded members and hear from prominent Labour voices on the current state of the Labour Party. In the past this event has received coverage in the national media.

Speakers will include Margaret Hodge MP, Ruth Smeeth MP, Angela Eagle MP, James Asser (NEC) and Darren Jones MP.

### **Volunteering**

Labour First publishes a daily briefing sheet on behalf of all the moderate organisations. Labour First relies almost exclusively on volunteers (we have only one paid member of staff). We are always on the lookout for people to distribute our daily briefings, sign up new subscribers and communicate our recommendations on conference floor. If you can volunteer at any point over conference weekend, please let Matt Pound from Labour First know (07727 606999).

### **Conference Times**

Conference starts at 2.30pm on Saturday; 9.45am on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday; and 9.00am on Wednesday.

Delegates should arrive early each day as the security arrangements involve long delays and on the Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday there is almost invariably an attempt by the Hard Left to move “reference back” on the CAC report i.e. to challenge the agenda or the way votes are being taken. Please look after your documentation carefully, as any delegate who misplaces documentation will need to report to the CAC for replacements (before conference opens, the Secretary of the CAC can be contacted at the NEC hotel). Delegates need to be in the conference hall from the start of each session since this is when the CAC gives its very important reports.

Make sure you take the time to plan where you’re going to be and what time you have to be there every day. Particularly if you are a first-time delegate, aim to arrive at everything 20-30mins early. You will never be penalised for being early.

### **Speaking in the debates**

During the debates there will be a platform introductory speech and a platform reply. During policy debates members of Policy Commissions will move reports. Ordinary delegates are invited to speak but usually limited to two minutes on the platform. We will need moderate delegates to put themselves forward to speak out in favour of our position.

If you are planning on speaking in a debate, please let someone at Labour First know (contact details on the final page). We can provide you with top tips on how to get noticed by the Chair and hopefully increase the likelihood of getting picked.

As always, our position on various votes will be laid out in our daily conference briefing. When speaking on the platform, please remember to keep it concise, making one or two clear points. Please try to stick to the allotted time and bear in mind you will be trying to win over swing delegations, not rile Momentum up or preach to the converted.

### **Voting at Conference**

Voting takes place at the end of a conference session and is normally by show of hands **unless a card vote is requested by a delegate** or by the chair (voting on rule changes is always by card). A card vote means that each CLP or affiliate casts one vote, equal in value to its membership size, these are then counted in two sections, 50% of the vote is allocated to CLPs and 50% to affiliates.

### **Important Debates, Reports, Votes**

#### **Saturday Afternoon – CAC Report 1**

CAC Report No 1 (and the Delegates Report) is moved by the Chair of the CAC. CAC Report 1 gives details of the definitively agreed timetable for the week. Now that the CAC is dominated by the Left, they will often leave off crucial motions and information from the report in an attempt to push their factional agenda. We will need delegates in the conference hall at the beginning of each day's first session, when the report is given, to challenge these decisions and if necessary move 'reference back'.

### **Saturday Afternoon - The Priorities Ballot**

Motions ruled in order by the CAC will be grouped into subjects and published in CAC Report 1 available on Saturday afternoon at delegation meetings, from the Party stand and when delegates enter the Conference Hall. These subject headings then go into the Priorities Ballot, which will be held on Saturday, between 1.30pm and 4pm. Our Priorities Ballot recommendations on which topics to vote for will be widely available in advance through social media and our daily briefings.

Due to the way the Priorities Ballot is conducted – through a '10 and 10' formula – it is guaranteed that the top ten motion subjects voted on by the unions and the top ten subjects voted on by the CLPs, will be debated. **It is very important that moderate delegates look out for our recommendations and vote accordingly.** The unions use a block vote format to ensure their topics get on to the conference agenda. Therefore, a vote for the topics that the unions are already choosing is a wasted vote.

### **Saturday and Sunday evenings – compositing meetings**

The delegates involved with the successful motion topics emerging from the Priority Ballot (announced at the end of the Saturday afternoon session) will be requested to attend compositing meetings, on Saturday or Sunday evening. Every delegate must attend, unless they are given permission by the CAC to be absent and in this case the words of their motion can be used. If you don't do this your text disappears and can't be used. At these meetings delegates will meet the relevant NEC Policy Commission co-convenor and shadow ministers to discuss how the subject could be taken forward. If there are multiple motions on the same topic the text is composited (merged) into one motion if everyone agrees, or more than one if there is text that is taking opposing political positions. Speakers to propose and second the subject on the Conference floor will also be chosen.

If you are invited to the compositing meeting please immediately let us know by calling either Matt Pound or Luke Akehurst.

### **Sunday Afternoon – Rule Changes**

Whilst we are still waiting for the full list of rule changes to be debated at conference, but we do have the full list of rule changes submitted by CLPs, of which the key changes are outlined below (bear in mind many of these will be remitted to the NEC):

- The establishment of a Cornish Labour Party, with its own national structure and Cornish General Secretary
- Reverting to the pre-1994 Clause IV (the Party's stated aims and values, the current version can be found on the back of your membership card)
- Lifting the requirement of being a British or Irish citizen or resident for membership of the party
- Various proposals to get around the "three year rule" that prevents conference from revisiting a rule change for at least three years after it's made a decision
- Proposal for the direct election of the General Secretary
- Changing the voting system for national committees like the NEC and CAC to STV instead of first past the post
- Proposal to stop the overrepresentation of some regions on national committees.
- A formal code of conduct for members in public office
- Various attempts to reform the disciplinary process, varying from a fully independent appeals process to removing a complainant's right to anonymity
- Abolishing Local Campaign Forums (LCFs) and reverting to the previous Local Government Committee structure (LGCs) for managing local election selection processes
- Attempts to limit affiliate's rights to submit motions
- Introducing "BAME priority areas" for Parliamentary selections
- Reducing the length of the freeze date for participation in local government selections
- Direct election of council group leaders and group officers by the membership

Please, look out for our daily briefing for our recommended position on these issues and any other rule changes put forward by the NEC.

### **Sunday/Monday/Tuesday - Reports from the eight Policy Commissions**

There are now eight policy commissions, which draw up policy reports for discussion by the NPF.

The eight policy commissions (each made up of 16-20 members representing the shadow cabinet, the NEC and the NPF) are: Economy, Business and Trade; International; Housing, Local Government and Transport; Health and Social Care; Early Years, Education and Skills; Work, Pensions and Equality; Justice and Home Affairs and Environment, Energy and Culture.

Reports from each of these Policy Commissions need to be approved by conference and the relevant sessions are usually held on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday.

### **Morning Sessions - Referring back sections of the CAC reports and NEC reports**

As already mentioned, we will need people in the hall first thing on most days to prevent attempts by the hard left to 'reference back' the daily CAC report if the CAC has taken decisions they disagree with.

### **Monday - CAC Ballot**

As already mentioned we are supporting **Katrina Murray** for CAC. Remember, the vote on this ballot cannot be split between delegates. Voting will open early on Monday morning and close at 4pm the same day.

### **Tuesday – NCC Ballot**

As already mentioned we are supporting **Gillian Troughton, Joanne Harding** and **Dora Dixon-Fyle** for NCC. Remember, the vote on this ballot cannot be split between delegates. Voting will open early on Tuesday morning and close at 4pm the same day.

### **Key Contacts/Information**

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This guide can be downloaded at [www.labourfirst.org/conference\\_guide](http://www.labourfirst.org/conference_guide)