

Motions accepted for Wrexham Autumn Conference 2016.

The following motions have been accepted for debate by the Welsh Liberal Democrats Conference Committee

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2016 Conference Registration Fees for Members – Business Motion

Conference Committee

Conference notes:

1. That it was agreed by Conference in 2010 that the proposed rates for the following years member registration to the Welsh Liberal Democrats Conference would be brought annually to the Autumn Conference for approval.
2. In 2013 the rates were increased in line with inflation for 2014 and have been frozen ever since.
3. That the current maximum Standard Rate for attending Conference is currently £52 and is available for a period of two weeks prior to and at the Conference.
4. That the reduced rate of 15% off the Maximum Standard Rate is available between six and two weeks before the Conference.
5. That a further reduced rate of 30% off the Maximum Standard Rate is available up to six weeks before the Conference.
6. That the Concessionary Member Rate for attending conference is set at 50% of the relevant Maximum Standard Rate in place at the time of registration.
7. That in addition to the above rates, there is a further discount of 50% for members attending their first Welsh Liberal Democrat Conference.
8. The changes to the financial position of the party as a result of the 2016 elections.

Conference resolves:

EITHER

That for 2017 the Standard Member Rate for those attending Conference shall increase to £60 and the discounted rates and periods of those discounts being available remain unchanged.

OR

That for 2017 the standard member rate for those attending conference shall remain unchanged at £52 and the discounted rates and periods of those discounts being available remain unchanged.

Enhancing Diversity in the Welsh Liberal Democrats – Business Motion

South Wales East Valleys Liberal Democrats; RCT Welsh Liberal Democrats; and 10 members.

Conference notes:

1. The Liberal Democrats' commitment to eliminating all prejudice and discrimination based upon race, colour, religion, age, disability, sex or sexual orientation, and opposition to all forms of entrenched privilege and inequality.
2. The need for the United Kingdom's elected bodies and party structures to reflect the diversity of the society in which we live, including in Wales.
3. The efforts made to date to increase diversity amongst the party's Westminster and Welsh

Assembly candidates, including the Campaign for Gender Balance and the Leadership Programme, from which some Wales based candidates have benefited.

4. The definition of under-represented groups in guidance to political parties in the Equality Act 2010 as inclusive of women, BAME, LGBT+ and disability.
5. The success of the Welsh Liberal Democrats to date in selecting women to stand in target Westminster and Welsh Assembly seats without the need for restricted candidate shortlists.
6. That selection of candidates is a matter devolved to the state parties and that it is for the Welsh Liberal Democrats to decide upon measures to improve diversity amongst their party officials, candidates and elected representatives.
7. The Liberal Democrats now have Federal policy that recommends the use of All Women Shortlists and suggests that similar measures be adopted by the Welsh Liberal Democrats.
8. The Scottish Liberal Democrats do not allow seat selections to proceed unless 40% of the shortlist is female and that seats have been asked to re-advertise where their efforts to increase diversity were not deemed sufficient.
9. Proposals will be coming forward on wider party diversity, including in party structures and local government, as part of the Federal Executive-led Governance Review to the Autumn Federal Conference.

Conference acknowledges that:

1. The Welsh Liberal Democrats' list of candidates standing in parliamentary and local government elections does not fully reflect the communities that we aim to serve.
2. To have a more diverse set of parliamentarians and council representatives the Welsh Party should enhance its efforts to increase the diversity of candidates standing in those seats deemed most winnable which should include local government, Westminster and Assembly seats at both constituency and regional level.
3. Welsh Party membership and their engagement with the party is not inclusive for all under-represented groups and more needs to be done at a national and local party level to widen the appeal of the Liberal Democrats within those groups.
4. The current selection rules for Westminster and Assembly candidates acknowledges that there should be a certain degree of gender balance when drawing up shortlists but fails to recognise any other under-represented groups or characteristics.

Conference recognises that:

1. The party may consider the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, including Section 104, which permits political parties to take proportionate positive action to reduce inequality in the party's representation in Westminster and the Welsh Assembly, but does not allow shortlists for candidate selections to be restricted to individuals with protected characteristics other than by gender and disability.
2. In Wales we currently only have one male MP and one female AM demonstrating the enormity of the challenge faced in getting any parliamentary candidate elected, regardless of the diversity of their background, given the notable absence of what may be termed as 'safe seats'.
3. The diversity of candidates at local government level is as important as it is at parliamentary level

and the Welsh Party has been fully supportive of measures to encourage and mentor diverse candidates through the Welsh Government's Diversity in Democracy programme.

4. Local parties should always have a say in the candidates put forward for election within their area, but expresses concern that local party selection panels may not always have been appropriately constituted and/or trained to mitigate the effects of unconscious bias.

Conference resolves that:

1. The Welsh Liberal Democrats reject the use of restricted shortlists at this point in time recognising their potentially divisive nature and the detrimental impact on local party cohesion, particularly where previous candidates have made a significant contribution but are then not allowed to participate in selection processes.
2. Local parties should be able to provide full justification to the Campaigns and Candidates Committee (CCC) for their decisions if/when shortlisting takes place. Selection panels, as stated in the selection rules, "shall reflect and represent the membership at large" and should where possible include at least one male, one female, one member from a recognised under-represented group (BAME, LGBT+, disability) and an external member from another local party.
3. Training for selection panels set up for the selection of Westminster / Assembly candidates should include unconscious bias training. Party trainers should be consulted in the delivery of this and it should not be the role of Returning Officers alone. This training should also be offered to local parties.
4. The benefit of having role models, committee members and candidates drawn from all diversity strands representing the Welsh Liberal Democrats is promoted to all members through an awareness raising programme which is supported by local party membership development and training.

The selection rules should be adjusted as necessary to reflect the above.

Preparation for Special Conference following a Welsh General Election – Amendment to Standing Orders

Conference Committee

Insert a new bullet at the end of section A3 of standing orders

3.3 In advance of a Welsh General Election Conference Committee shall prepare contingency plans for a Special Conference on the second or third Saturday after the Election to facilitate a debate on any proposals for the Party to enter into a non-majority Liberal Democrat government or any other inter party arrangement.

Safe Space in the NHS

Cardiff and the Vale Liberal Democrats.

Conference believes:

1. Whilst waiting rooms are not everyone's favourite place, the stress of being unwell combined with large numbers of people can cause severe psychological distress to those with mental ill health or social disorders, even if the room is not that busy.
2. That currently, patients attending A&E for a physical illness/injury who have a social disorder or mental ill health, are often left unsupported in distressing situations such as sitting in a waiting room, which those without these conditions may not be aware of the impact on an individual's mental health which can result.

Conference notes:

1. The requirement under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people to use services, which applies to all NHS services.
2. The requirement for all policies and procedures within the NHS to have undergone an equality impact assessment to improve services for service users of diverse backgrounds and remove barriers to service delivery. This includes looking at facilities as well.
3. That many people working in the NHS can be very accommodating and often include a reasonable adjustments question on forms where those with the conditions mentioned previously can let their surgery know about them and any requested adjustments that they need.
4. However, not all services are able to or may have limited awareness of these conditions to make these adjustments and understanding of the need for this remains patchy.

Conference calls for:

1. All A&E departments to provide a 'safe space' for those experiencing distress due to mental ill health or a social disorder. A 'safe space' is defined as somewhere apart from other patients where the person is enabled to feel calmer.
2. Where this is not possible due to space, if a patient reports distress to a receptionist they should ensure that they monitor the patient with a sympathetic reassuring attitude.
3. For those already doing so to continue good practice regarding reasonable adjustments and where the facility is currently not available, look into ways to introduce adjustments. They should also continually look at how to improve access facilities for those with mental ill health or a social disorder.
4. For local health boards to ensure equality impact assessments are undertaken on waiting areas to examine how services for disabled people (and other protected characteristics) can be improved.

Social Media at Conference – Amendment to Standing Orders

Conference Committee

Insert new standing order H7.6

Use of Social media

During sessions of Conference where the press and public are excluded Members may not engage in the use of social media to share information about what is happening within the session. Any individual found so doing will be removed from the Conference Hall for the remainder of the session.

Nor may any member either during or after the session, record or share comments taken from speeches by individuals other than themselves. Any individual found so doing will be considered to be in breach of section C/1.2 of the constitution and subjected to disciplinary action.

Wales in the European Union

National Policy Committee

Conference:

1. Notes with regret but respects the outcome of the referendum on membership of the EU, at which the majority in Wales and in the UK as a whole voted to leave.
2. Condemns the 'leave' campaign for basing its appeal on lies and xenophobia and for failing to possess any coherent plan for the UK's relationship with the EU after Brexit.
3. Recognises that the appeal of such populist campaigns, offering superficial 'solutions' to complex problems, has grown throughout Europe and the US since the financial crisis severely damaged the global economy and that most display a common thread of insularity and xenophobia.
4. Is appalled by the upsurge in verbal and physical abuse of immigrants, members of ethnic minorities and anyone who does not appear British during and after the referendum, and calls for decisive action to protect such people and crack down on the perpetrators of hate crimes.
5. Recognises the real concerns of many of those who voted 'leave', often stemming from a sense of neglect of traditional industrial regions, a lack of jobs and insecurity in the labour market, pressure on public services and housing, the perceived impact of immigration on jobs and services, and the seeming unresponsiveness of the political class.
6. Understands the genuine sense of frustration and powerlessness, which found a vehicle for its expression in the referendum and must be addressed by policies of government at all levels, and calls for these needs to be key drivers in the development of Liberal Democrat policies.
7. Regrets that the net flow of money to Wales from the EU, such as in regional aid, support for our farmers and crucial research funding for our universities, has been jeopardised and expresses its

determination to seek an early commitment by the UK government to full replacement.

8. Calls on the Welsh Government to publish in detail its calculations of the potential losses of funding related to EU exit, to press for additional Barnett-block grant or direct UK funding to ensure no net loss and to submit to the Assembly a Brexit Plan for Wales to maximise all future economic opportunities.
9. Is deeply concerned that the economic and political impacts of Brexit could worsen the very problems of hardship that motivated many voters and unravel hard-fought devolution settlements in Scotland and Northern Ireland, both of those consequences adversely affecting Wales.
10. Believes that the UK's membership of the EU is essential to the long-term prosperity of Wales and all the nations of the UK, and to enable the UK to play a leading role in meeting global challenges including maintaining peace and security, countering terrorism and tackling climate change.
11. Calls upon the UK government and parliament to allow people a vote on two clear alternatives (Leave or Remain) when the terms of Brexit and Britain's future relationship with the EU are known, the referendum of June 2016 having lacked any such clarity and facilitated multiple unrealistic 'dream scenarios' to be put forward to voters by 'leave' campaigners.
12. Commits the Welsh Liberal Democrats at the next general election to seek a renewed democratic mandate to re-establish the UK in the European Union, with economic benefits and influence on the whole range of EU policies, and to make the case for an optimistic, tolerant, diverse and outward-looking Britain.

Welsh Liberal Democrat Safeguarding Policy – Business Motion Constitutional Review Panel

Conference notes that:

1. The Welsh Liberal Democrats does not currently have a formal Safeguarding Policy.
2. The Federal Pastoral Care Officer maintains the official Federal Safeguarding Policy and associated documents.

Conference believes that:

1. Preparing a separate Welsh policy would not serve to improve the safeguarding process.

Conference calls for:

1. The Welsh Party to formally adopt the Federal Safeguarding Policy.