



Spring Conference 2017

Conference Announcements

11th and 12th March 2017

Bishop Gore High School, De-La-Beche Road, Sketty, Swansea



Welcome to Conference

Welcome to Swansea and welcome to Bishop Gore High School. For our Spring Conference in Local Government Elections year we have decided to keep it local.

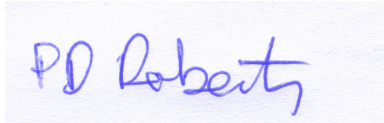
Our venue is a local High School, lunch is being provided by a local deli using locally baked bread and the conference dinner is in a local hotel not a large chain.

This major change reflects our desire to keep costs down but also to highlight some of the quality venues that can be found across Wales if you are prepared to look for them.

So if you have the hotel/B+B space why not have a look in your own area for a different venue for our Autumn and Spring Conferences

As always, the Conference Committee welcomes your feedback and suggestions about our Conferences. Please email any comments or suggestions you may have to me at welshconferencechair@gmail.com .

I hope you have a very productive and most of all enjoyable Conference.



Pete Roberts

Chair, Welsh Liberal Democrat Conference Committee

PS If you are quick there are still a couple of seats available at the dinner this evening. Tickets are available from the Registration Desk.

Topical and Emergency Motions

Conference Committee have received the two topical motions and one emergency motion. Unless other motions are received they will be debated as follows.

Saturday 10:00 TOPICAL MOTION – Local Government Voting Reform Submitted by: Cardiff and the Vale

1. Conference notes the 'Reforming local government: Resilient and renewed' white paper recently published by the Welsh Government.
2. Conference regrets that an opportunity has been missed for a wider reform of local government in Wales.
3. Conference reaffirms its long-standing commitment to securing a proportional voting system for local government elections, and extending the franchise in these elections to those aged 16 and 17.
4. Conference welcomes the opportunity presented by this white paper to put those ideas into practice.
5. Conference resolves that our 2017 Welsh Local Government manifesto should include a commitment to implement both policies.
6. Conference calls on all Welsh Liberal Democrat local parties to commit to implementing both policies in their council election campaigns.

Sunday 11:00 TOPICAL MOTION – Deposit Return System (DRS)

Proposed: Carmarthenshire & Pembrokeshire Liberal Democrats.

Conference Notes:

1. The latest set of recycling figures for Wales released on 28th February
2. Wales led the way with the minimum 5p charge on all single use carrier bags from 1st October 2011. Scotland followed in 2014 and England in 2015. The charge was introduced to dramatically reduce the number of such plastic bags being issued and resulted in a 71% drop.
3. Single use drinks containers made up over 10% of litter on beaches in the 2015 Marine Conservation Society Great British Beach Clean.
4. DRS are already in operation in over 40 countries around the world (including Australia, Germany and the US) and have been proven to reduce litter, increase recycling by creating a more certain supply of affordable, high quality materials, reduce costs for Local Authorities and create jobs.
5. Drinks containers are a blight on our beaches - MCS surveys show plastic drinks bottles are frequently among the top four litter items found on UK beaches and our surveys indicate that they have increased by over 43%, and metal drinks cans by almost 29%, since 2014. After a scheme was introduced in the US, the number of drinks containers found on beaches there went down by over 70%.
6. It works! The container return rates in European deposit systems are generally very high and collection rates of up to 90-95% of containers can be achieved. It also gives a value to an item often regarded as having no value and is often disposed of, irresponsibly. Changing such behaviour is a major step towards increased recycling and a circular economy.
7. A DRS would help to incentivise groups such as teens and young adults that are known to be reluctant recyclers that there would be a financial incentive involved, making it more beneficial to do the right thing.
8. Coca-Cola in the UK says it now supports the introduction of a DRS in Scotland. If they are prepared to support its implementation in Scotland, they can do likewise in Wales.
9. The Welsh Liberal Democrats' commitment to introducing a DRS in our 2016 Manifesto for the National Assembly for Wales.

Conference Believes:

10. Such a system can reduce littering, increase recycling, and change behaviour. Like the carrier bag charge, it's a simple idea that can have an immediate effect.
11. The Well Being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.
12. Support to be given to the Marine Conservation Society's petition to honour this legislation and to build on the excellent results achieved by the carrier bag charge by implementing 2 further actions that would help Wales to achieve a zero waste, circular economy.

Conference Calls For:

1. The Welsh Government to introduce a Deposit Return System (DRS) for all single use beverage containers such as glass and plastic bottles and cans.
2. "The Welsh Government to legislate for a charge on all drinks and fast food containers and utensils that are not fully compostable, unless they are reusable, refillable, part of a return scheme or collected in store for recycling."
3. Welsh Government support to call on the UK Government to take urgent measures to reduce the amount of plastic that finds its way into our oceans. Life on earth depends on our oceans, but the amount of plastic that is entering the oceans is causing significant harm to wildlife as plastics enter the food chain.

Saturday 15:20 EMERGENCY MOTION : Ford Plant Bridgend

Conference notes with concern:

1. In early March this year a report was leaked to the press by trade unions, revealing that up to 1160 jobs could be lost at Bridgend Ford plant.
2. That the loss of 1160 jobs equates to a reduction of two thirds of the work force at the plant by 2021.
3. That the likelihood of maintaining Bridgend Plant in operation after 2021 seems unlikely if the projected job losses becomes a reality.
4. That Bridgend MP Madeleine Moon (Labour) stated she was 'blind-sided' and 'stunned' by this announcement.
5. That First Minister Carwyn Jones AM (Labour) also constituency AM for Bridgend states that this is a 'worst case scenario'.
6. Plans to take Wales and Britain out of the single market.

Conference notes that:

1. Bridgend Ford is the third largest manufacturing plant in Wales.
2. Bridgend Ford is part of a wider network of businesses and providers, and is supported by smaller firms in the area that are reliant on Bridgend Ford staying open.
3. The likely impact of Brexit on the Welsh economy and industries in the UK which will further affect the security and stability of Welsh and British jobs.

Conference calls for:

1. A reassurance from Welsh Government and the UK Government to protect jobs at Bridgend Ford plant.
2. The Welsh Government to support areas that suffer sudden economic shocks including by enabling the creation of Development Companies and developing crisis management approaches with local leaders.
3. The Welsh Government to work proactively with the UK Government to secure Wales' future in the Single Market.

Amendments to Conference

Students and the Local Community

Amendment 1 Proposed by; National Policy Committee

Reword conference calls for b

Run community building projects such as Cardiff Digs, established by Lib Dem-led Cardiff Council, and Love Bangor.

Add Conference calls for 8

National Policy Committee to consider the issues outlined in this motion as part of future housing policy development.

Amendment 2 Proposed by Rhondda Cynon Taff Welsh Liberal Democrats

In 'Conference believes' 4

replace "groups" with all relevant stakeholders.

In 'Conference believes' 5

after landlords insert "other residents"

In 'Conference calls for' 7 d

delete all after "work with" and replace with community councils, local voluntary groups, charities, statutory bodies, residents associations . landlords groups, PACT and other groups as appropriate.

Under 'Conference calls for' add a new point 8:

Local Authorities to make more effort to address the problem of long term empty and derelict properties that can be prevalent in University areas and which spoil the local environment for all.

Amendment 3 Proposed by IR Cymru

Delete Conference calls for 7d and replace with

“Promote and work with Communities First, its successor schemes, and similar groups”

Standing up for our local communities [Manifesto Motion]

Amendment 1 Proposed by National Policy Committee

Remove Conference calls for 4 and renumber

Add and renumber Conference calls for 1

Exploring initiatives such as the Housing First model and Nests to tackle rough sleeping, among other measures.

Amendment 2 Proposed by National Policy Committee

Add in Conference calls for and renumber

Reiterate calls for a National Empty Homes Strategy to bring the more than 25,000 empty homes in Wales back into use.

Right to Buy

Amendment 1 Proposed by National Policy Committee

Replace Conference believes 8 and move to Conference notes with

8. The Welsh Liberal Democrat commitment to build 20,000 new affordable homes over the duration of the current Assembly term

Amendment 2 Proposed by IR Cymru

Add new Conference calls for and renumber

“Local authority councillors to identify an alternative area to build new homes when opposing a new development

Community Banking in Wales

Amendment 1 Proposed by National Policy Committee

Reword conference calls for 10

Councils to provide secure banking facilities through libraries so as to help reduce digital exclusion from banking.

Delete Conference calls for 12 and replace with

The Welsh Government to review the range of business rates exemptions to include social enterprises and commercial facilities that exist as a lifeline for their community.

Delete Conference calls for 13 and replace with

Reiterates the Welsh Liberal Democrats' calls for the introduction of a Community Right to Bid to enable communities to protect assets of community value such as post offices.

Add Conference calls for

Develop the Community Budgets model in Wales to combine services, encouraging the breaking down of boundaries between different services to help keep services such as post offices and libraries open by enabling them to co-operate, share costs and co-locate in shared facilities.