

# Autumn Conference Online

25–28 September 2020

## Conference Motions on The UK Government's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and The UK and Europe

*To ensure timely and relevant debates on the subjects of COVID-19 and UK's future relationship with the European Union, the Federal Conference Committee reserved space on the agenda under Items F12 and F23 respectively for motions to be submitted by the Emergency Motions deadline on 14 September. The Committee has now selected the following motions for debate.*

### F12 The Government's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

*Federal Policy Committee*

Mover: Munira Wilson MP (Spokesperson for Health and Social Care).

Summation: to be announced.

- 1 Conference records its deep sorrow at the suffering and loss of life caused by the COVID-19
- 2 pandemic, both at home and abroad, which has resulted in 41,504 confirmed deaths in the
- 3 UK by 1 September 2020 and a much higher number of total excess deaths; the toll has been
- 4 disproportionately high on the most deprived communities, members of Black, Asian and
- 5 Minority Ethnic communities and residents in care homes.
  
- 6 Conference regrets the enormous economic damage caused by the virus and the hardship
- 7 many people are facing, with the most vulnerable the worst affected.
  
- 8 Conference pays tribute to the extraordinary efforts and sacrifices made by NHS and care
- 9 workers and many others during this crisis.
  
- 10 Conference believes that it is becoming increasingly clear that the UK Government failed to
- 11 prepare properly for a pandemic and has been slow to act; in particular conference believes
- 12 that:
  - 13 A. The level of testing was initially far too low and took too long to ramp up.
  - 14 B. There was a failure to ensure adequate supplies of protective equipment reaching the
  - 15 frontline workers.
  - 16 C. A shocking tragedy has unfolded in our care homes and Government claims to have put a
  - 17 'protective ring' around the care sector ring hollow.
  - 18 D. The much-vaunted 'world-beating' contact tracing app originally promised for mid-April
  - 19 will now not be ready until sometime 'during the winter'.
  - 20 E. The Prime Minister has failed to communicate competently and created more confusion
  - 21 with his own behaviour, that of his advisors, and the lack of Government's plans.
  - 22 F. Ministers failed to work hard enough to get four-nation agreement on many action
  - 23 points, which hampered communications, despite similar and shared problems on
  - 24 protective equipment, testing, care homes in all four nations.
  - 25 G. There has also been a failure to take full advantage of the strengths of local government.



26 Conference condemns the decision of the Government to axe Public Health England in  
27 the middle of a pandemic with no clear plan on how to manage key health improvement  
28 functions. Conference deplores the top-down centralised testing system imposed by  
29 Whitehall, rather than harnessing existing expertise in local health teams and regional testing.

30 Conference resolves that there must be a statutory independent inquiry with the strongest  
31 possible powers to review the Government's actions, so we can learn lessons to avoid this  
32 chaos again.

33 Conference calls on the Conservative Government to:

- 34 1. Support those working on the frontline, in the NHS and social care, and emergency  
35 services by:
  - 36 a) Ensuring they have the protective equipment they need, now.
  - 37 b) Providing the mental health support they need.
  - 38 c) Giving them a pay award that properly recognises their service.
  - 39 d) Granting all foreign nationals working in the NHS and social care indefinite leave to  
40 remain.
- 41 2. Deliver a competent strategy to test, trace and isolate needed to prevent a new surge as  
42 lockdown restrictions are eased.
- 43 3. Launch an independent inquiry now so that lessons can be learnt as to how to handle  
44 this crisis and prepare for the winter period and future outbreaks and/or pandemics; the  
45 inquiry should work alongside those in other nations of the UK to share knowledge and  
46 experience and examine the different policy choices made.
- 47 4. Introduce a new Safe Trace Law to provide a clear legal framework for the collection,  
48 storage and use of people's personal data for tracing purposes, whether through an app  
49 or by human tracers.
- 50 5. Improve mental health support during the crisis by:
  - 51 a) Properly signposting the mental health support available during the coronavirus  
52 crisis.
  - 53 b) Sending public health leaflets, including advice on looking after mental health and  
54 details of organisations offering mental health support during the crisis, to all homes.
  - 55 c) Increasing the level of funding for mental health charities offering support during the  
56 coronavirus crisis, to reduce pressure on the NHS.
  - 57 d) Providing additional investment in mental health services.
- 58 6. Work to deliver the ambition for a healthier nation, during and beyond COVID-19, by  
59 supporting people to lead more active and healthy lives through investment in public  
60 health and putting health and wellbeing for all at the heart of government, and without  
61 using regressive language that seeks to blame or shame people.
- 62 7. Develop a rehabilitation strategy for investing in and increasing services to help people  
63 recover from COVID-19 including:
  - 64 a) Provision to ensure enough staff capacity to meet rising needs.

- 65 b) Expanding the multi-disciplinary rehabilitation workforce to deliver ongoing  
66 rehabilitation.
- 67 c) Guarantees that people being discharged from hospitals will have timely access to  
68 rehabilitation services and that these services will be personalised to meet people's  
69 individual needs.
- 70 d) The needs of those suffering from non-COVID-related conditions not to be  
71 compromised as a result of the increase in COVID-19 rehabilitation needs.
- 72 e) Action to support the 1.5 million people shielding and self-isolating who were unable  
73 to access rehabilitation in a conventional way and may need new support.
- 74 f) Retaining the flexibility that community rehabilitation teams have developed to  
75 address local population need once normal services are resumed and is not lost.
- 76 8. Recognise the existence of 'Long Covid' where patients experience debilitating symptoms  
77 for many weeks or even months after infection, and take appropriate steps to respond  
78 including:
- 79 a) The commissioning of urgent research into long-term COVID-19 disease in order to  
80 investigate its causes and identify a range of interventions to treat patients.
- 81 b) The development of protocols and care pathways to ensure that all practitioners are  
82 empowered to treat long-term COVID-19 patients appropriately.
- 83 c) The creation of multi-disciplinary clinics for the assessment, testing, diagnosis and  
84 care of long-term COVID-19 patients.
- 85 9. Tackle the disproportionate impact of coronavirus on black, Asian and minority ethnic  
86 communities, including by implementing a cross-government Race Equality Strategy.
- 87 10. Improve how the Government works and communicates with local government and local  
88 public health teams who have the greatest understanding of their communities and are  
89 best placed to engage with people effectively.
- 90 11. Respect and engage with devolved governments to improve all four administrations  
91 response to COVID-19.
- 92 12. Improve and maintain public awareness of the virus and how to minimise risk of  
93 transmission by:
- 94 a) Maintaining a clear, unambiguous, and simple messaging campaign on advice to  
95 the public that is as specific as possible and considers the different rules in different  
96 parts of the nation.
- 97 b) Reinstating the daily coronavirus briefings.
- 98 c) Requesting national and regional broadcasters to report on the local level of  
99 infection present in England, across all news platforms including broadcast, radio  
100 and online.

*Applicability: England only; except 1. d) (lines 39–40), 3. (lines 43–46) and 11. (lines 90–91), which are Federal; and 4. (lines 47–49) which is England and Wales.*

*Mover: 7 minutes; summation of motion and movers and summation of any amendments: 4 minutes; all other speakers: 3 minutes.*

*The deadline for amendments to this motion is 17.00, Wednesday 23 September. Amendments selected for debate will be printed in Saturday's Conference Daily.*

*The deadline for requests for separate votes is 10.00, Friday 25 September; see page 5 of the Agenda for further details.*

## **F23 The UK and Europe**

*Federal Policy Committee*

Mover: Christine Jardine MP (Spokesperson for Europe).

Summation: to be announced.

1 Conference notes with deep concern:

- 2 A. The decision by the Conservative Government not to seek an extension to the post-Brexit  
3 transition period beyond 31 December 2020 despite the apparently deadlocked 'future  
4 relationship' negotiations between the UK and the EU on economic, transport, migration,  
5 welfare, fisheries and security arrangements.
- 6 B. That the UK cannot afford to crash out of the EU without a deal in place or to accept a  
7 rushed, bad deal at a time when the UK is already facing the biggest crisis in generations  
8 as a result of COVID-19 against a background of intensified China-USA-Russia rivalry.
- 9 C. That the rights of UK citizens in the EU and EU citizens in the UK remain at risk, as the  
10 Conservative Government attempts to roll back from the commitments it made in the  
11 2019 Withdrawal Agreement.
- 12 D. The Conservative Government's Internal Market Bill, which the Secretary of State for  
13 Northern Ireland has admitted will breach international law "in a very limited and specific  
14 way", trashes the UK's reputation, sets a dangerous precedent and almost certainly  
15 precludes any chance of a Free Trade Agreement with either the EU or the USA unless the  
16 offending sections are removed.

17 Conference believes that:

- 18 i) There is no deal that could be negotiated that could be more beneficial than continued  
19 membership of the EU, and the damage caused by Brexit to the UK's economy human  
20 rights, security, and standing in the world will be profound and long-lasting.
- 21 ii) The UK and its people share fundamental values of liberalism, democracy and respect  
22 for the rule of law with our European neighbours and allies; the European Union is our  
23 natural home and the UK's rightful place should be at the heart of the EU.

24 Conference affirms the party's immediate priorities to:

- 25 a) Hold the Conservative Government to account unstintingly as it fails to deliver what it  
26 promised, and expose the damage of this Government's Brexit to our economy, security,  
27 society and national unity.
- 28 b) Campaign vigorously against measures which are prejudicial to British industry,  
29 agriculture and democracy, and in so doing point to the benefits of closer relations with  
30 the EU.
- 31 c) Continue to work with others in Parliament (including in the House of Lords) to halt or  
32 amend damaging legislation such as measures in the United Kingdom Internal Market  
33 Bill.

34 d) Support international cooperation and a global rules-based system, and oppose  
35 isolationism and economic nationalism.

36 Conference calls for:

- 37 1. The Conservative Government to honour the commitments it made in the Withdrawal  
38 Agreement and the Political Declaration.
- 39 2. The rights of UK citizens in the EU and EU citizens in the UK not to be further eroded  
40 – and where possible enhanced – and the provisions of the European Convention on  
41 Human Rights and Charter of Fundamental Rights to be respected for all UK citizens.
- 42 3. The closest possible alignment between the UK and the EU towards customs union,  
43 single market and freedom of movement, including minimising tariff and non- tariff trade  
44 barriers, no lowering of environmental, food and animal welfare standards, and the  
45 maintenance of strong diplomatic, developmental, defence, security, judicial, educational  
46 and scientific cooperation.

47 In the longer term, conference resolves to keep all options open for the UK's future  
48 relationship with the EU, including membership at an appropriate future date to be  
49 determined by political circumstances, subject to public assent, market and trade conditions  
50 and acceptable negotiated terms.

*Applicability: Federal.*

*Mover: 7 minutes; summation of motion and movers and summation of any amendments: 4 minutes; all other speakers: 3 minutes.*

*The deadline for amendments to this motion is 17.00, Wednesday 23 September. Amendments selected for debate will be printed in Saturday's Conference Daily.*

*The deadline for requests for separate votes is 10.00, Saturday 26 September; see page 5 of the Agenda for further details.*