



# 2017 Conference Rule Changes

These rule changes were passed and submitted by CLPs in 2016, and are therefore due to be debated at this year's Conference.

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# 1. Rule Changes to Support

The following amendments would contribute to some rebalancing of the party's rule book in a direction that would make the party more democratic and enable it to hear and discuss the concerns of party members. Labour's members, with their experience and views, are a huge asset of the party. Permitting members a fairer contribution to Labour's discussions will help Labour improve its policies and campaigns. This is why Momentum and CLPD support such changes.

## 1.1. Conference Motions

Brighton Pavilion CHAPTER 3 Clause III, Section 2C Conference Motions Page 13 Amend the first sentence as follows: delete "contemporary" and delete "which is not substantially addressed by reports of the NEC or NPF or Conference." and replace the latter with "on a matter of policy, campaigning or Party organisation and finance". Amend the second sentence: delete "determine whether the motions meet these criteria and" Amend the last sentence: delete "contemporary"

*This would allow CLPs to submit motions without having to jump through the hoops of framing issues in terms of being 'contemporary'. Currently, the requirements for motions to be 'contemporary' and for them not to have been substantially addressed by reports of the NEC or NPF or Conference forces CLPs to jump through hoops in order for key issues to be debated. As a result, discussion over key policy issues can easily be side-lined on the grounds that it is not 'contemporary'. The rule change would therefore make it easier for CLPs to submit motions, thereby increasing democratic choice and debate in the Labour Party.*

## 1.2. Constitutional Amendments - Debated in year of Submission

Filton & Bradley Stoke Newport West CHAPTER 3 Clause III, Section 2H Constitutional Amendments - debated in year of submission Page 13 Add a new sub-clause 2I at end: All constitutional amendments submitted by affiliated organisations and CLPs that are accepted as in order shall be timetabled for debate at the first party conference following their submission.

*Currently, due to the obscure and outdated '1968 convention', CLPs who submit rule changes have to wait until the following year's Conference until they can have the rule changes debated, unlike the NEC, which can decide to have rule changes debated at Conference with a week's notice. This rule change would mean that CLPs can submit constitutional amendments and debate them at conference in the same year, which would allow members to respond to events more quickly, rather than waiting an entire year. This rule change would therefore allow members to make sure proposed constitutional amendments respond to current needs.*

## **1.3. Women's Conference to submit motions to Conference**

New Forest East CHAPTER 3 Clause III, Section 2D Women's Conference to submit motions to Conference Page 13 Add a new Section D as follows and re-number rest of Section 2 accordingly: The annual women's conference may submit to conference up to two motions not substantially addressed by reports to the NEC or NPF or contemporary motions already put forward as a result of the ballot process.

*This rule change amendment would allow the Women's Conference to submit motions to Conference, thereby giving it more policymaking power, which would be a major step forward for gender equality in the Labour Party.*

## **1.4. Ensuring a Democratic Choice in Labour Leadership Elections - When there is a Vacancy**

Birmingham Hall Green Cardiff North Crewe & Nantwich Devises South West Devon CHAPTER 4 Clause II, Section 2b (i) - Election of Leader - nominations required - Page 14 Replace "15 per cent" with "5 per cent"

*Prior to 1988 the threshold required for a valid nomination to stand for Leader or Deputy Leader was 5 per cent of Labour MPs, whether there was a vacancy or an incumbent in post. The current requirement, when there is a vacancy that a candidate has to be nominated by 15 per cent of the PLP plus EPLP, allows for an undemocratic restriction in the choice of candidates that can be voted on in a leadership ballot. Whilst Jeremy Corbyn managed to gain the necessary nominations in the 2015 campaign, this was only because he was perceived as a candidate who could not win, a factor which would not hold in future elections.*

*This rule change would ensure that members can vote for a range of candidates in a leadership election, and that the leader of the party represents the political views of the membership.*

## 1.5. A New Local Government Committee Structure (instead of existing Local Campaign Forums)

Enfield North Leyton & Wansted CHAPTER 12 Clause IV Local Campaign Delete all and insert new sub-clauses as follows: 1. The membership of the LGC shall consist 75% of delegates from the local CLP(s) and 25% from affiliates. At least 50% of delegates from each group shall be Forums Page 44 women. 2. Additionally, CLP campaign co-ordinators shall be ex officio members of the LGC. Any sitting MP, AM, MSP, MEP, PCC and/or PPC may attend their LGC. Where a Cooperative Party council exists for the area concerned and they sponsor candidates in local elections they shall be entitled to appoint a member to the LGC. 3. The LGC shall meet at least four times per year with representatives of the Labour group where one exists. Consequential amendments - elsewhere replace LCF by LGC

*This would democratise local government by having LGCs which represent local party members and trade union affiliates. Currently, Local Campaign Forums are too small, meaning that they over-concentrate power in the hands of council leaders and councillors. By establishing larger bodies which are accountable to CLPs, this amendment would increase the accountability of local government and therefore make it easier for Labour members and trade union affiliates to challenge decisions taken by councils.*

## 1.6. Young Labour Rules

**Blackpool North & Cleveleys** CHAPTER 11 Clause V Young Labour Rules Page 39 Add at the end after Sub-clause 3, a new Sub-clause 4 as follows: Young Labour shall have its own constitution and standing orders, to be determined by the Young Labour AGM.

*In order to play a role in engaging young activists, Young Labour needs to have autonomy, and needs to have safeguards which ensure it retains its autonomy. The current Young Labour National Committee were elected on a programme to democratise Young Labour, but have faced numerous roadblocks. . The current rules are too open to interpretation, leading to often bizarre election procedures that contradict what rules there are. This rule change would require Young Labour to have its own constitution and standing orders, thus assuring its autonomy and its ability to have a positive influence on the party.*

## 2. Rule Changes to Challenge

The following rule change amendments were moved by CLPs and would undermine the party's democracy and weaken the voice of the party's membership.

### 2.1. Election to national committees and officers - entitlement to vote

Caerphilly CHAPTER 4 Clause II, Section 2C (vi) Election to national committees and officers - entitlement to vote Delete the words "affiliated supporters and registered supporters" and insert the words "Voting shall be cast in a single section of fully paid Labour members"

*Affiliated supporters and registered supporters are an important part of the Labour Party, that enable the party to reach beyond its membership and engage more widely with Labour supporters. Their participation in leadership elections, which was overwhelmingly supportive of Jeremy Corbyn in 2015 and 2016, is a sign of Labour's openness as a Party. It encourages voters not yet convinced of becoming members to give support to the party. Also currently the only way for trade unionists who are not members of the Labour Party to vote in leadership elections is via the category of affiliated supporters. This rule change therefore undermines the role of trade unionists in the Labour Party and should be opposed.*

### 2.2. Election to National Committees and Officers - entitlement to vote

Huddersfield CHAPTER 4 Clause II, Section 2C (vi) Election to national committees and officers - entitlement to vote Page 14 Replace existing sub-clause with: Only paid up members of the Labour Party are entitled to vote in elections for the Leader and Deputy Leader of the party.

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