



Conference Rule Changes: Key Arguments and Counter-Arguments

Rule Changes to Support

Rule Change	Arguments	Counter-arguments	Counter to counter-arguments
<p>Brighton Pavilion CHAPTER 3 Clause III, Section 2C Conference Motions</p> <p><i>CHAPTER 3 Clause III, Section 2C</i></p> <p>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</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The criteria for 'contemporary' are arbitrary, restrictive and unfair, preventing CLPs and unions from raising the key political issues they consider most important at Conference. ○ The rule change would make Conference a more democratic body and provide CLPs with a genuine opportunity to influence policy-making at annual conference. This also ensures, as the original <i>Partnership into Power</i> proposals under Tony Blair intended, that motions on campaigning and party organisation are permissible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The 'contemporary' requirement as it currently stands is fair because CLPs can submit policy proposals to the NPF. ○ This rule change undermines the NPF, which is the appropriate body for debating policies on a rolling basis rather than through short-term majorities on the Conference floor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There should be no artificial barriers on the right of CLPs and unions to submit whatever subject their members consider important to Conference. ○ The NPF has a role to play, but removing this restriction placed on CLPs and unions would assist it to understand the issues of importance within the party. ○ In reality, the 'contemporary' criteria are sometimes applied unfairly, often in ways that contradict previous Conference decisions.

<p>"determine whether the motions meet these criteria and" Amend the last sentence: delete "contemporary".</p>			
<p>Filton & Bradley Stoke Newport West CHAPTER 3 Clause III, Section 2H Constitutional Amendments - debated in year of submission</p> <p><i>CHAPTER 3 Clause III, Section 2H</i></p> <p>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.</p>	<p>O Currently the NEC does not consider CLP rule changes for a year after being submitted and yet they can themselves agree rule changes a few days before Conference that then get debated and voted on immediately. It is unnecessary and undemocratic to require CLPs and unions to wait an entire year before their proposed rule changes get debated.</p> <p>O The Labour Party is in need of root and branch reform in favour of the members, on whose engagement the party's success depends. This rule change would remove a key obstacle preventing that happening, and would allow members to drive this change from below, transforming Labour into a members-led party.</p>	<p>O The current rules ensure institutional stability, and prevent destabilising changes.</p> <p>O The NEC should be allowed to consider rule changes before they are voted on, and the 1 year gap is necessary to allow it to do that. If rule changes were to be voted on in the September of the year that CLPs and unions submit them, the NEC wouldn't have time to consider any legal or constitutional issues.</p> <p>O This rule change would encourage competing factions trying to vote through rule changes each year when they have majorities. What Labour needs now is unity, and an outward focus to get into government.</p>	<p>O If the NEC believes a proposal needs wider discussion it can and sometimes does propose this.</p> <p>O There is more than enough time between June and the September conference (almost three months) for the NEC to consider rule changes (and if they were published sooner, others could consider them too). The NEC never considers the proposals received in the previous year from CLPs until after the closing date for proposals in the current year.</p> <p>O There is no merit to having stable but inadequate rules. If the party's members and affiliates want to change the rules, they should be able to do so without delay.</p> <p>O The members have proven they should be trusted, they have been right time and time again. They should be trusted to debate and vote on rule changes in the same year they are proposed, just like the NEC can.</p>

<p>Birmingham Hall Green Cardiff North Crewe & Nantwich Devizes South West Devon CHAPTER 4 Clause II, Section 2b (i) - Election of Leader - nominations required</p> <p>CHAPTER 4 Clause II, Section 2b (i)</p> <p><i>Replace "15 per cent" with "5 per cent"</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is undemocratic for members to be denied a full range of candidates representing the diverse range of views in the party by what is in effect a veto in the hands of the Parliamentary Labour Party. Allowing the PLP to have an effective veto over the views of the membership over an election is undemocratic. ○ Under current rules, Jeremy Corbyn would not have got on the ballot in 2015 if he had been expected to win. The 2017 manifesto wouldn't have happened, and Labour wouldn't have done so well at the election. The fact that the current rules could have easily prevented all that from happening shows how outdated they are. ○ The current rules led to only one valid nomination for leader in 2007 - a "coronation" widely perceived to have been unhelpful to the party. They also would have resulted in only 2 candidates in the deputy election in 2015 had the only BAME candidate not withdrawn to enable redistributed nominations to produce 5 valid candidates. ○ The 5% proposal is not an unreasonable demand, it is merely a return to the situation prior to 1988. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MPs are elected by their constituents and are therefore the most direct link between Labour and the electorate. That gives them democratic legitimacy and real-world experience. ○ We are a Parliamentary party and therefore it is incumbent on leadership candidates to demonstrate they have support amongst the PLP. ○ Electability is more important than party democracy. This is just navel gazing. Our people need us to be electorally credible, and we should focus on that rather than divisive infighting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Labour MPs are a good link with the electorate, but so are party members. Nobody should have the power to exclude a key political current within the Labour Party - the whole range of views should get a proper hearing. ○ Maintaining the current 15% threshold is not about ensuring constituents views are heard in Labour's internal elections - it is simply an attempt to keep Labour's left off any ballot paper. ○ The Labour left has clearly demonstrated it has an agenda that can advance and revitalise the Labour Party, and the argument that left-wing leadership would lead to electoral catastrophe is clearly defunct - indeed the opposite is the case. ○ The members have proven they should be trusted, particularly to choose a leader, they have been right time and time again, and shouldn't be denied a full choice of candidates in future leadership contests.
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<p>Enfield North Leyton & Wansted CHAPTER 12 Clause IV A New Local Government Committee Structure</p> <p><i>CHAPTER 12 Clause IV</i></p> <p>Delete all and insert new sub-clauses as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 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 Co-operative 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. <p>Consequential amendments - elsewhere replace LCF by LGC.</p>	<p>○ Council leaders frequently exercise too much control over Groups, Cabinets, individual councillors, candidate panels and selection processes. This reform would allow for more accountability which is essential for better governance in local government.</p> <p>○ In many areas Local Campaign Forums don't meet regularly and do not provide a forum for debate on local government policy.</p>	<p>○ This rule change would lead to 'backseat driving' of hardworking councillors who have been elected by local constituents, by people who don't have a mandate from local people.</p> <p>○ Councillors should be allowed to get on with the job of being councillors.</p> <p>○ It replaces an outward-facing campaign structure with an inward-focused one which will increase internal party squabbles - the exact opposite of where we need to be heading.</p>	<p>○ The more democratic Labour's internal structures are that discuss and inform its local government agenda, the better will the policy and decisions taken. Small bodies that can be become dominated by particular interests make mistakes, and over-powerful leaders can sometimes pave the way to corruption.</p> <p>○ Local governments face massive challenges due to the gigantic government cuts & crisis in housing, social care, education etc. These challenges require the involvement of wider, not narrower party circles.</p>
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Blackpool North & Cleveleys
CHAPTER 11 Clause V
Young Labour Rules

CHAPTER 11
Clause V

*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.*

○ The purpose of this rule change is to make Young Labour AGM into the sovereign body of the organisation. Self-organisation and democracy are crucial to making a youth organisation that can be really attractive to young people.

○ Many of the current rules simply say that the NEC will determine how Young Labour works as it sees fit, with no concrete rules to govern the organisation.

○ The rule would clarify how Young Labour works, increase its autonomy and stop the organisation being beholden to Labour Party staff's interpretation of the rulebook.

○ An organisation where all the important decisions are made by distant bodies cannot foster the democratic spirit that we want in our youth movement; nor will it be convincing to young people wanting to be involved in politics.

○ The current Young Labour National Committee were elected on a programme to democratise Young Labour, but they need the power to do that. This rule change

○ Historically, Young Labour has been vulnerable to takeover by entryists.

○ This rule change is divisive. Young Labour should focus on outward campaigning rather than on inward-focused arguments about rule changes.

○ The best way to prevent organisations from being taken over by small cliques is to encourage broad participation, which this rule change would do.

○ Labour needs to engage far more young people to form the activists, CLP officers, councillors and MPs of the future. Engaging young people requires making Young Labour politics meaningful and self-organisation and democracy are essential to that.

○ Labour should be opposing the Tories, not fighting against its young members. The latter are an invaluable resource in winning an election and should be treated as such.

○ Internal democracy and good outward facing campaigning are not mutually exclusive. Good internal processes boost outward facing campaigning and are necessary for the functioning of a successful mass membership party.

	would allow them to carry out their mandate.		
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Rule Changes to Oppose

<p>Caerphilly and Huddersfield CHAPTER 4 Clause II, Section 2C (vi) Election to national committees and officers - entitlement to vote of registered & affiliated supporters (<i>Two different rule changes but with a similar effect</i>)</p> <p><i>CHAPTER 4</i> <i>Clause II, Section 2C (vi)</i></p> <p>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"</p>	<p>O This rule change deprives trade unions of any role for their members who pay the political levy and we should therefore oppose.</p> <p>O Since introducing the current categories tens of thousands of levy paying trade unionists have become Affiliated Supporters and tens of thousands of other Labour supporters have become Registered Supporters. This has helped provide a path for a parallel increase in Labour's membership, which has trebled since 2014 to approximately 600,000.</p>	<p>O Party Members in work pay £48 a year for membership. Why should trade union members and members of the public get a vote for far less than that?</p> <p>O Allowing non-members to vote undermines the concept and meaning of membership. If people can vote in key leadership elections without being members, what is the point of being a member?</p>	<p>O Although we do now have a mass membership, trade unions (who founded the Labour Party) have a far larger working class membership and provide not only a vital revenue stream for the party but also a precious connection with this far bigger group of our core voters.</p> <p>O Although affiliated supporters may pay only about £10 per year to the party, levy payers often pay that for their whole working lives which is a significant contribution to the party.</p> <p>O Labour's two supporter categories, where non-members are engaged in a few of the Party's decisions, has drawn more than 200,000 people into a closer relationship to the party. It has also offered many of them a pathway into Labour membership.</p>
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