Spring Conference 2016

26th & 27th February
Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh
First Name: ___________________   Surname: _____________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________________
                                                                                       Postcode: ___________________

Email: ___________________________ Phone: __________________________

Please select the appropriate registration rate:

Early bird rate rate (before 31 January)   £40   □   *Concession/LYS £20   □

Standard rate (from 1 February)   £60   □   *Concession/LYS £30   □

Special rate for first time attendees   £10   □

Day rate   £35   □

Please indicate which day you wish to attend: Friday / Saturday

*The following are entitled to the concession rate: An unemployed person; the dependant spouse of an unemployed person; a student; a school student; anyone in receipt of income support, family credit or housing benefit; anyone living on a state pension or a private pension of less than £12,000p.a; a member of LYS.

We require a photograph for your conference pass, so please tick one of the following:

I have already provided a photograph for an earlier conference   □

I attach a passport photograph (with my name and address on the back)   □

I will email a photograph to hq@scotlibdems.org.uk   □

Conference Dinner

Please indicate below how many tickets you require:
No. of tickets: ________ at £45 each

☐ Please tick if you have any special dietary requirements and provide details overleaf.

Please select your chosen method of payment:

☐ By cheque, made payable to ‘Scottish Liberal Democrats’

☐ Please debit my VISA/ MasterCard/ Maestro card

Card Number: ___________ Start Date: ___________ Exp: ___________

Issue: ___________ Security Code: ___________ Signature_____________________________ Date: ___/___/___

Please return the completed form to:
Edinburgh 2016, Scottish Liberal Democrats, 4 Clifton Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5DR or hq@scotlibdems.org.uk
CONFERENCE AGENDA AT A GLANCE

Friday 26th February
Morning session 10.00-12.30
- Welcome address
- SC1: A fair deal for delivery of essential services
- SC2: Tackling climate change and protecting nature
- Consultation session: local tax reform
- SC3: To establish a Scottish Office of Budget Responsibility

12.30-14.00 Lunch
12.45-13.45 Fringe meetings

Afternoon session 14.00-16.45
- SC4: A plan for the islands
- SC5: Empowering public sector workers
- Speech by Willie Rennie MSP, Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats
- SC6: Supporting the rights of children and young people
- EM1: Emergency motion
- Meet our candidates for the Scottish Parliament

17.00-18.00 Fringe meetings

Saturday 27th February
Morning session 09.30-12.00
- Party AGM
  - BM1: Constitutional amendment – the Deputy Leader
  - BM2: Constitutional amendment – gender balance
  - BM3: Advancing diversity in the Scottish Liberal Democrats
- EM2: Emergency motion or topical issue

12.00-14.40 Lunch
12.15-13.15 Fringe meetings
13.30-14.30 Fringe meetings

Afternoon session 14.40-16.45
- Q&A: Education
- Speech by Tim Farron MP, Leader of the Liberal Democrats
- SC7: Scottish Parliament Pre-manifesto
- Party awards
HELPFUL INFORMATION

Venue
The Assembly Rooms
54 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2LR
0131 220 4348

Parking
There is on-street parking along George Street outside the Assembly Rooms and in the surrounding streets, all of which is controlled by parking meters during the day. RingGo, a cashless payment system, can be used via telephone or online app to pay for parking. See www.myringgo.co.uk Alternatively coins can be used to buy a ticket. The nearest car park is at the St James Shopping Centre - for further information go to www.ncp.co.uk Bike racks are available in the central reservation outside the venue.

Disabled parking is available close to the front of the building and in surrounding streets. To see a map showing the location of disabled parking close to the venue, please go to www.edinburgh.gov.uk and search for “disabled parking bays”.

Security
All those attending conference must have a pass issued by the Party in order to gain access to the conference venue. Conference photo passes must be worn visibly at all times within the Assembly Rooms. Anyone found in the secure area without a valid pass will be escorted from the building.

Everyone will be subject to a search process at the entry point which may include physical searches of bags by security staff. Boxes and packages should be left unsealed wherever possible. Under no circumstances will any large bags or suitcases be allowed into the Assembly Rooms. Any bag left unattended will be brought to the attention of the police and may be removed and/or destroyed.

In order to process through security as quickly as possible, please only bring essential items with you into the Assembly Rooms. Please be aware that you will be searched each time you enter the venue so allow extra time. Coat racks will be available for storing outdoor clothing.

Conference passes
Passes will be sent out by post in advance of conference around 17th February along with a copy of the agenda. Please remember to bring your pass with you as a replacement pass will be charged at a cost of £5. The registration desk will be situated on the first floor of the Assembly Rooms. Passes must be worn visibly at all times throughout conference.

Taxis
- City Cabs Ltd 0131 228 1211
- ComCab 0131 272 8000
- Central Taxis 0131 229 2468

Public transport
The Assembly Rooms is only a 5 minute walk from Edinburgh Waverley train station and a 10 minute bus or taxi journey from Edinburgh Haymarket. For information on bus routes and fares in Edinburgh see lothianbuses.com
Wifi
There is free wifi throughout the building.

Accessibility
The Assembly Rooms is fully wheelchair accessible. There is a lift to the first floor where conference is taking place. Wheelchair accessible and disabled toilets are located throughout the venue. There is an induction loop in the Music Hall and there will be induction loops in the East and West Drawing Rooms. Please note that there will be flash photography in the Music Hall.

Refreshments
A café in the Ballroom will serve refreshments throughout conference. If you have any dietary requirements please inform the catering staff who will do their best to accommodate you. Lunchtime and evening fringes may provide complimentary refreshments.

Registration
You can still register. Please complete and return the attached form or call us on 0131 337 2314 and we can register you over the phone. Book by 31st January to benefit from discounted rates.

Amendments
All motions and constitutional amendments are open to amendment by members. Amendments must be submitted by midday on 24th February by emailing linda.wilson@scotlibdems.org.uk Amendments must be supported by at least five members.

Emergency motions and topical issues
The deadline for topical issues is 5pm on 25th February.
The deadline for emergency motions is 5pm on 25th February, to be considered for debate on 26th February or 5pm on 26th February to be considered for debate on 27th February.
Send to linda.wilson@scotlibdems.org.uk or if you are submitting an emergency motion for debate on 27th February, leave a copy at the registration desk at conference.

Speaking in debates
All movers and summators of motions must submit a speaker’s card. Speakers from the floor shall normally be allocated 3 minutes but this may be varied at the discretion of the chair of the debate.

Conference committee standing orders
Copies of standing orders will be available at conference or please call 0131 337 2314 to request a copy.

Further information
If you have any questions about conference, please contact Colum Bannatyne on 0131 337 2314 or hq@scotlibdems.org.uk
SOCIAL EVENTS

Conference dinner:
Friday 26th February, The Café at the Scottish National Gallery
19.30 for 20.00
After-dinner speaker to be confirmed.
Tickets cost £45 including welcome drink, 3 courses and coffee.
Non-members welcome.
Please contact Colum on 0131 337 2314 or hq@scotlibdems.org.uk
(Tickets must be booked in advance. Only returned tickets will be available to purchase at conference.)

LYS quiz:
Friday 26th February, time and venue TBC
£5 entry on the door
Join LYS for special guests, prizes and a drink or two

FRINGES

• Inclusion Scotland
• RNIB Scotland
• ASLDC AGM
• Educational Institute of Scotland
• Liberal International/Scottish Liberal Club

EXHIBITIONS

• Inclusion Scotland
• RNIB Scotland
• Scottish Liberal Democrat Women
• Educational Institute of Scotland
• Liberal Youth Scotland
• RSPB Scotland
• ALTER – Lib Dems for Action for Land Taxation & Economic Reform
• Association of Scottish Liberal Democrat Councillors

TRAINING
The training programme will be announced nearer the time.
Friday 26\textsuperscript{th} February

The morning session runs from 10.00 to 12.30.

10.00 Conference opens

Welcome address from Cllr Paul Edie and Party President, Cllr Eileen McCartin

\textbf{SC1: A fair deal for delivery of essential services}

\textit{Ross, Skye & Lochaber Liberal Democrats}

Mover: David Green \hspace{1cm} Summator: Cllr Angela McClean

Conference notes:

1. Consumers across the north of Scotland and islands currently pay up to 2p per unit more for the delivery of electricity to their homes than those in the cheapest parts of the country, despite the north of Scotland contributing vastly to electricity generation.

2. Analysis by energy regulator Ofgem suggests that this 2p surcharge equates to an annual cost of £86 for a typical ‘off gas grid’ consumer with all-electric heating.

3. As Ofgem’s analysis assumes consistent levels of energy usage across the whole country and takes no account of differences in weather or the accessibility of energy efficiency improvements for many rural homes, the true surplus cost to many fuel poor households in the north of Scotland and islands is likely to be significantly higher.

4. The reason for higher distribution costs in the north of Scotland and islands is the extra cost of maintaining the extensive network that serves remote and island communities. These costs cannot be avoided without unacceptable impact on what is a lifeline universal service.

5. The welcome trend towards electrification of heat and transport will reduce reliance on fossil fuels but make electricity an even more critical service and a growing proportion of total household energy bills.

6. A strong coalition including the Press and Journal, the Western Isles Fuel Poverty Action Group and major energy company SSE are already campaigning for national electricity distribution charge flattening, which would lower bills in the north of Scotland while creating a fairer and more transparent market for all consumers.

Conference believes:

1. Liberal Democrats believe no one should be enslaved by poverty. Liberal Democrats should therefore seek to eradicate fuel poverty in the estimated 101,500 homes (46.7\%) across the north of Scotland and islands that suffer from the highest fuel poverty. Reducing the cost of unfair electricity bills is one such way.

2. Essential universal services such as the delivery of electricity, telecommunications and post should not be subject to locational variations in charging.

3. The removal of geographic variations in delivery charges for essential services would result in simpler, fairer and more competitive markets with potential benefits to consumers all over the country.

4. Regulation of essential service provision should encourage competition that works for all consumers. Suppliers should not able to cherry-pick cheaper-to-serve areas in a way that harms those seeking to provide an affordable service to all.

5. Universal charging for electricity distribution could be implemented with minimal disruption to existing arrangements by aggregating the existing costs incurred by electricity network operators centrally to determine a level national price. Regional
variations in cost could still be published alongside other indicators of performance in an accessible form to strengthen the accountability of network operators.

Conference resolves:

a) To work alongside campaigners in the north of Scotland and islands, other affected parts of the UK and consumer organisations in support of a flattened electricity distribution price.

b) To call on the UK Government to maintain the Hydro Benefit Replacement Scheme and immediately bring forward the introduction of a cross-GB cost recovery mechanism for Shetland’s separate distribution network.

c) To call upon the Scottish Government and all major energy companies to state their position and work with Ofgem and the UK Government in campaigning for action.

d) To make the case for equivalent reforms, where required, to ensure a high quality universal service can be delivered to all consumers via the UK postal and telecommunications markets, including fast broadband and the delivery of goods purchased via internet or telephone.

e) To make the design of fair market arrangements to secure a high quality universal service in the provision of essential services a key plank of Liberal Democrat policy for the 2019 European elections and a core principle of the harmonisation of market arrangements across Europe.

Deadline for amendments is midday 24th February. Send to: linda.wilson@scotlibdems.org.uk
e) the large contribution of pollution from aviation to climate change, and the restrictive
Chicago Convention of 1947 which prevents the levying of taxes on commercial
aviation fuel.

Conference calls for the Scottish Parliament elected in May 2016 to take steps to tackle
climate change by:

1. using its new powers, to address fuel poverty and support warmer homes,
   including by introducing new catch-up zones in remote areas where more flexibility
   is required in the delivery of effective support for hard to heat homes;

2. introducing new building standards for greater energy efficiency, restarting the
   review cancelled by the Scottish Government in September 2015, with an ongoing
   plan to reflect the experience in Denmark where standards were increased
   incrementally over decades;

3. maintaining a complete moratorium on planning permission and licensing for
   fracking and unconventional gas extraction in Scotland for the next parliamentary
   term to allow for a full assessment of the risks involved and long term implications;

4. ending all open-cast coal mining in Scotland;

5. not enacting any substantive cut in Air Passenger Duty;

6. investing in research into the optimum way of converting domestic heating systems
   away from dependence upon fossil fuels.

Conference further calls for action from the Scottish Government to promote the natural
environment in Scotland by:

I. learning from the first two national parks in Scotland to establish new national parks
   or landscape partnership areas, bringing the benefits of improved management,
   conservation and tourism to other parts of the country;

II. ensuring that existing powers under the Nature Conservation Act of 2004 and
    Marine Act of 2010 are used by all government agencies to protect, restore and
    enhance biodiversity;

III. supporting whole river catchment management systems to deliver flood attenuation,
    including increased levels of tree planting and enhanced wildlife habitats;

IV. taking stronger action on wildlife crime using the recommendations on prosecution
    and penalties from the review group chaired by Mark Poustie, together with the
    proposals from Scottish Environment Link in its report Natural Injustice to tackle
    failings in reporting and investigation of wildlife crime.

*Deadline for amendments is midday 24th February. Send to: linda.wilson@scotlibdems.org.uk*

Consultation session: local tax reform
Policy Committee will lead a consultative session on local tax reform.

This follows the report from the cross-party Commission on Local Tax Reform in December
2015 which, in its words, “set out the factual position associated with different systems of
local taxation”.

The Commission’s view is that “local taxation can be fairer, whilst delivering the scale of
revenues needed to maintain the public services”, its belief is that local taxation should
mean voters are “able to make choices about how much tax they should pay and for what
level of public service” and it expressed an expectation that “Scotland will be offered
alternative systems of local taxation in the Scottish Parliamentary election in May 2016”.
The long-standing policy of the Scottish Liberal Democrats has been in favour of a local income tax.

The alternatives to Council Tax, identified and researched by the cross-party Commission, mean that the Scottish Liberal Democrats will have the opportunity to consider these at the conference.

A summary guide for the discussion will be produced by the Policy Committee to help members attending conference. Members may also want to have considered the recommendations of the cross-party Commission in advance.

Policy Committee will almost certainly want to take indicative votes at the conference to guide policy for the manifesto.

The principle decision will be whether to continue to support local income tax or, in the light of the cross-party Commission, to adopt an alternative based on land or property. There are several options identified for the latter.

Speakers’ cards for the consultative session will be provided in the normal way.

SC3: To establish a Scottish Office of Budget Responsibility

Tweeddale, Lauderdale & Midlothian South Liberal Democrats and Ettrick and Roxburgh & Berwickshire Liberal Democrats

Mover: John Ferry  Summator: John Ferry

Conference notes with concern that:

1) The Scottish Government continues to maintain a formal policy of seeking full fiscal autonomy (FFA) for Scotland, despite clear evidence (including from the Institute of Fiscal Studies and the National Institute of Economic & Social Research) that such a policy would be disastrous for Scotland’s economy.

2) There is a lack of official public information and accountability relating to the economic impact of FFA.

3) The existing Scottish Fiscal Commission in its scope and remit is currently inadequate for meeting fiscal analysis and accountability requirements.

4) The Scottish Government’s willingness to pursue constitutional change that would make Scotland’s public sector impossible to finance at current levels in the absence of unheralded tax rises – which if implemented could prove recessionary via a major fall in demand in the economy – demonstrates a clear disregard for the welfare of the Scottish people.

Conference reaffirms the Liberal Democrat commitment to:

i) A federal UK, noting that all successful federal nation-states maintain pan-national fiscal balancing. FFA would remove pan-UK fiscal transfers (and therefore an important economic stabiliser for Scotland).

ii) A prosperous Scotland and low unemployment.

iii) Government that is transparent and accountable.

Conference calls on the Scottish Government to:

A) Establish a Scottish Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) that would have a similar remit to the UK Office of Budget Responsibility (ie, the production of five-year
forecasts, twice per year, for the Scottish economy and Scotland’s public finances; the publication of an annual fiscal sustainability report outlining Scotland’s theoretical independent fiscal finance position; ongoing scrutiny of tax and welfare spending measures.

*Deadline for amendments is midday 24\textsuperscript{th} February. Send to: linda.wilson@scotlibdems.org.uk*

12.30-14.00 Lunch
12.45-13.45 Fringes

*The afternoon session runs from 14.00 to 16.45.*

**SC4: A plan for the islands**

*Orkney Liberal Democrats*

Mover: Tavish Scott MSP  Summator: Liam McArthur MSP

Conference notes:

1. The strong feelings in Shetland and Orkney against the centralisation of public services, for example on policing, fire services, colleges, economic development, public sector construction and civil engineering contracts.
2. Scottish Liberal Democrats support for radical action to reverse centralisation and empower communities through the Home Rule and Community Rule Commission report.
3. The distinct needs of the islands on many matters, not least the seafood industries, the Scottish Government’s exclusion of business from the Air Discount Scheme and the exclusion of Orkney and Shetland from any mechanism to reduce ferry fares.
4. The ‘Our Islands, Our Future’ campaign jointly led by Orkney Islands Council, Shetland Islands Council and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar seeking additional powers to give communities greater control over island requirements.

Conference believes:

5. The Scottish Government’s centralised “one-size-fits-all” policies damage the interests of the islands where circumstances are very different from the Scottish mainland.
6. Public bodies such as Marine Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage and Transport Scotland, for example, have a particularly big impact on island communities.
7. The seabed around islands is of vital economic importance locally and nationally.
8. Fuel poverty is higher in island communities than elsewhere in Scotland, due to poor housing stock, low incomes, and high fuel costs. This risks being made worse as Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rules result in new houses in island communities without access to mains gas are often built using less insulation.
9. Air services are a lifeline link for businesses, patients travelling to hospital appointments and the wider public. Confidence in services has been hit following months of reduced reliability due to technical faults.
10. In vital policy areas solutions in the central belt are inappropriate for the islands. Regulation of home care workers is one example. The level of accreditation required for home visits to patients on the smaller isles can appear disproportionate when visits more often deliver social interaction than healthcare provision.
• NHS Orkney and NHS Shetland have been underfunded by the Scottish Government, as assessed by the Government’s own NRAC formula and confirmed by Audit Scotland. This has led to a squeeze on NHS budgets and services, already stretched by the costly nature of the provision of services in island communities.

• Good, reliable and affordable broadband is essential. For the Northern Isles, however, the current broadband roll out is only set to see 75% of premises covered by the end of 2016. This compares to a figure of 84% for the Highlands and Islands region as a whole and 95% nationally.

• Some council ward boundaries do not take account of transport or the differences between island communities, meaning that island residents can be under-represented.

Conference resolves that a future Islands (Scotland) Bill should:

a. Subject all legislation proposed by the Scottish Government to ‘Island-Proofing’ to reflect the needs of island communities. ‘Island-Proofing’ should be extended to Scottish Government negotiations with the UK Government and with the European Union.
b. Give Scottish Government ministers the power, only at the request of local authorities, to issue statutory guidance in relation to island communities which relevant public bodies would be required to adhere to.
c. Ensure the ownership and management of the seabed round the islands should be devolved not just to Edinburgh, but passed to the islands.
d. Give Highland Council and Argyll and Bute Council the powers over the waters round their islands.
e. Reform Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rules to help in efforts to reduce bills and tackle fuel poverty.
f. Extend the statutory protection of the Shetland and Orkney seat to Na h-Eileanan an Iar.
g. Give island councils the power to make the case to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland for the introduction of single or two member wards where there is a strong geographical case.
h. Introduce a working, active “Islands Plan” to provide a framework to address the interests of the islands. A new Scottish Government should be required to present a draft plan within 3 months of its appointment, then subject to consultation before a final plan is set within 6 months of the election to last the full parliamentary term.

Conference resolves that a future Islands Plan should:

1. Make provision to meet the costly provision of services faced by island communities, such as the recruitment of NHS staff and the provision of mental health services.
2. Work with relevant parties, including Loganair, to examine the longer term provision of this lifeline service.
3. Ensure significant decisions are not taken without proper consultation, such as the decisions of the SNP Government to exclude business from the Air Discount Scheme and the exclusion of Orkney and Shetland from any mechanism to reduce ferry fares.
4. Set out a framework and delivery of funding to plug the remaining gaps in broadband and mobile phone coverage.

Conference resolves that the Scottish Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Party should:
Consult and work with Orkney Islands Council, Shetland Islands Council, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, the local authorities who have responsibility for island communities and relevant stakeholders, to build a consensus around future action.

Deadline for amendments is midday 24th February. Send to: linda.wilson@scotlibdems.org.uk

SC5: Empowering public sector workers

Policy Committee

Mover: Katy Gordon          Summator: Elisabeth Wilson

Conference notes:

1. The increasing demoralisation of front line public sector workers in Scotland, as a result of the imposition of top-down targets, the centralisation of services that previously had discretion to respond to local communities, the hollowing out of administrative functions that support public service, and lack of respect by the Scottish Government of their expertise and commitment. Specific problems include:
   A. The extra bureaucratic burden on teachers from the reintroduction of national tests in schools from P1 to S3;
   B. Complaints from the Scottish Police Federation of a target culture being imposed on rank-and-file officers which they say encourages, “policing for statistics instead of policing for the public”;
   C. Serious concerns about back office support functions for the police, particularly cutting the number of call centres;
   D. The crisis in the recruitment and retention of GPs and other health professionals with unprecedented joint statements from the Royal Colleges that the targets and working practices imposed on health workers are “skewing clinical priorities and wasting resources” and that this is a key area to be addressed if NHS Scotland is to remain sustainable;
   E. Serious teacher recruitment shortfall in the North and Northeast;
   F. Lack of adequate workforce planning by the Scottish Government given it takes ten years to train a GP; it takes four years to train a nurse, teacher or social worker; it takes two years to train a police officer; and fire fighter training is lengthy and ongoing.

Conference also notes:

G. The warning from Audit Scotland of the risks of too narrow a focus on targets;
H. Experience of public service reform from around the world where frontline professionals have been empowered to use their skills and experience;
I. The report of the Christie Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services which noted that “international and cross-sectoral research shows that workers value respect for their knowledge and experience” and “they place a high premium on being valued for what they do, and trusted and empowered to do a good job” and its recommendation for reform “to empower front-line staff and allow them to give of their best”.

Conference believes:

a) The introduction of national tests in schools from P1 to S3 opens up the return of league tables for primary schools in Scotland, abolished by the Liberal Democrats in the Scottish Government in 2003, a move welcomed by the SNP at the time;

b) These national tests also increase the burdens on teachers and league tables will lead to teaching to the test;
c) The growing pressures on the health service and the challenges of integrating
health and social care will need the skills and judgements of professional public
sector workers to be used to the fullest extent, and this is hampered by restrictive
top-down target-setting;
d) Community safety can be promoted most effectively by decentralising control of the
police and respecting the role of individual officers;
e) That the need for professional public sector workers to have the discretion to act in
the best interests of public service echoes the longstanding value of localism, held
by the Scottish Liberal Democrats.

Conference calls for:
1) Liberal Democrats in the next Scottish Parliament to champion a liberating agenda
to roll back the top-down, target-driven, one-size-fits-all culture that distorts our
public services;
2) The cancellation of the programme to require teachers to implement and account
for national tests on school children aged 5-14;
3) An expansion in the role of the Scottish Parliament’s Public Audit Committee to
allow it to consider how the pressure to achieve top-down targets may distort the
service provided to the public by specific groups of public sector workers, for
example police officers, social workers and health professionals;
4) The appointment of a Minister for Public Workforce Empowerment, working with a
taskforce of frontline professionals, charged to lead a drive for the empowerment of
public sector workers, changing the National Performance Framework to enshrine
empowerment across government and seeking to gain service benefits from
reduced form-filling by staff;
5) The Minister to prepare a Public Service and Leadership Bill to give power back to
the public servants and local leaders;
6) Safeguarding of public sector workers who whistle blow on practice which may put
individuals or communities at risk.

Deadline for amendments is midday 24th February. Send to: linda.wilson@scotlibdems.org.uk

Speech by Willie Rennie MSP, Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats

SC6: Supporting the rights of children and young people
Aberdeenshire East Liberal Democrats
Mover: Alison McInnes MSP Summator: Alex Cole-Hamilton

1 Conference believes that the rights of every child should be protected and promoted, in
2 accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, in order that they may be
3 free to reach their potential and get on in life.
4 Conference notes that the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has published its list
5 of issues in relation to the fifth periodic report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and
6 Northern Ireland and that this, along with the UK’s responses, will be considered at its
7 seventy-second session in June 2016.
8 In particular, conference further notes that the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
9 has requested:
• Information on the number of stop and searches conducted by Police Scotland on children.
• Information on progress made in raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility, which the Committee has previously stated should be increased to 12 “as a minimum”.
• Details of plans to fulfil Scotland’s international obligation to provide children with equal protection from assault.
• An update on initiatives to lower the voting age to 16.
• Further information on the measures taken or planned to meet the increase in demand for mental health services for children.

Conference welcomes:
• That Scottish Liberal Democrats have secured the end of illiberal and discredited so-called consensual stop and search through successful amendments to the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill, in addition to the introduction of a code of conduct for statutory searches.
• The establishment of the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility Advisory Group by the Scottish Government, in response to efforts by Scottish Liberal Democrats to raise the age of criminal responsibility to 12 through the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill.
• The publication of the joint report, Equally Protected: A review of the evidence on the physical punishment of children, by Children and Young People’s Commissioner for Scotland, Children 1st, Barnardo’s and the NSPCC.
• MSPs voting unanimously to lower the voting age to 16 for all future Scottish Parliament and local government elections, but is deeply disappointed that the UK Government overturned a bid by the House of Lords to extend the franchise to 16 and 17-year-olds for the forthcoming EU referendum.
• That the Scottish Government’s 2016/17 draft budget allocates an additional £50 million over five years to mental health, part of which is intended to improve child and adolescent mental health services, but considers that a further £10 million a year is nowhere near enough to provide the step change required, particularly given the share of the NHS budget spent on mental health has consistently fallen.

However, conference calls for:
2) The Scottish Government to ensure that the stop and search code of conduct fully recognises the unique vulnerability of children and to listen to the persuasive evidence against the introduction of a potential new search power for children based on the possession of alcohol.
3) The Scottish Government to raise the age of criminal responsibility in Scotland to 12 by the amendment of Section 41 of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995, bringing it into line with the age of criminal prosecution.
4) The Scottish Government to legislate to prohibit all physical punishment of children.
5) The UK Government to extend the voting franchise to 16 and 17-year-olds for all future UK and European Parliament elections and referendums.
6) Substantially increased investment in child and adolescent mental health services to enable the step-change in prevention, early detection, treatment and recovery that is desperately needed in Scotland, ending the scandal of waits of up to a year and long journeys to access treatment.

Deadline for amendments is midday 24th February. Send to: linda.wilson@scotlibdems.org.uk
EM1: Emergency motion
The deadline for emergency motions is 5pm on 25th February, to be considered for debate on 26th February or 5pm on 26th February to be considered for debate on 27th February. Send to linda.wilson@scotlibdems.org.uk or if you are submitting an emergency motion for debate on 27th February, leave a copy at the registration desk at conference.

Meet our key candidates for 2016

Close of session 16.45

17.00-18.00 Fringe meetings
19.30 Conference dinner
20.00 Liberal Youth Scotland quiz night
Saturday 27th February

The morning session runs from 09.30 to 12.00.

Party AGM

BM1: Constitutional amendment – the Deputy Leader
Liberal Youth Scotland
Mover: Robbie Simpson Summator: Robbie Simpson

1 Delete Section F7 and replace with:
2 “F7. Nominations for the Leader must be proposed by at least ten percent of the Scottish
3 Liberal Democrat Members of the Scottish Parliament. Nominations for the Deputy Leader
4 must be proposed by at least ten percent of the Scottish Liberal Democrat members of the
5 House of Commons representing Scottish constituencies.”

BM2: Constitutional amendment – gender balance
Willie Rennie MSP and 30 members
Mover: Willie Rennie MSP Summator: Willie Rennie MSP

1 Amendment 1:
2 Add at the end of Clause H7 (b) (iii)
3 “(iv) The makeup and ordering of the list may be constrained to accommodate gender
4 balance requirements specified by rules approved by Conference.”

BM3: Advancing diversity in the Scottish Liberal Democrats
Willie Rennie and 33 members
Mover: Willie Rennie MSP Summator: Jo Swinson

1 Conference notes:
2 1) The track record of Scottish Liberal Democrats for electing women and people from
3 diverse backgrounds does not reflect the party’s values of equality and opportunity.
4 2) There has only ever been one woman MP at any one time.
5 3) There have only ever been two women MSPs at any one time.
6 4) There has never been a parliamentarian from an ethnic minority.
7 5) In the last 20 years, of 36 new Liberal Democrat parliamentarians in Scotland only 5
8 have been women.
9 6) In the last 10 years, of 9 new Liberal Democrat parliamentarians in Scotland only 1
10 has been a woman.
11 7) Only 36% of Scottish Liberal Democrat councillors are women.
12 8) Only 30% of Scottish Liberal Democrat council group leaders are women.
13 9) Whilst 42% of members attending the Scottish Spring Conference in 2015 were
14 women only 32% of speakers at that conference were women.
15 10) Whilst 46% of local party secretaries are women, only 21% of Conveners are
16 women.
Conference believes:

a) The party’s parliamentary representatives should properly reflect the country we seek to represent, legislate for and govern.

b) The imbalance in our representation at all levels damages our electoral prospects.

c) We are losing out on some great talent that exists in our party and the broader liberal movement.

d) Despite the deployment of a variety of techniques and efforts, bolder action is now required.

e) New measures should be deployed to bring about greater diversity of elected parliamentarians and councillors and participation in the party’s activities.

f) The party should send a powerful signal to women and people from underrepresented groups that their participation is actively encouraged.

g) The automatic assumption that a candidate must be able to commit all evenings and weekends to campaigning even if they have caring responsibilities should change.

h) An environment and culture should be created in the party that gives women and people from diverse backgrounds opportunity to succeed in the party and to access elected office at all levels.

i) Half of the party’s parliamentary representatives should be women.

j) Our party’s parliamentary representatives should broadly reflect society in terms of ethnic background, LGBT+, disability and other characteristics.

Conference agrees:

A. The actions set out in this Business Motion apply to the next round of elections only.

B. The top candidate on our list in Scotland for the European Parliament Elections scheduled for June 2019 will be a woman and the second placed candidate will be a man. The remaining places on the list will be filled without reference to the gender of the candidates. When the votes of the members are counted to determine the order in which the candidates are to be placed (in the process set out in Clause H7(b)(iii) of the Constitution), EITHER the last remaining woman will be placed first on the list and her votes redistributed among the remaining men (if more than one) to determine subsequent places; OR the last remaining man will be placed second on the list and his votes redistributed among the remaining women (if more than one) to determine the first and any other subsequent places. The same arrangements will be applied to select the man for second place.

C. Candidates for the General Election of 2020 in the five most winnable seats by percentage majority to be overcome to win the seat that do not have an incumbent Liberal Democrat MP at the time of selection should each be selected from a shortlist comprising only women members. All the remaining 53 seats not currently held will be open contests.

D. Our candidates for the Scottish Parliament Election of 2021 for five of the ten most winnable seats (whether constituencies or top regional places) will be women. A motion will be presented to the October 2016 Conference specifying which constituencies or regional lists would be affected by this change, taking into account the results of the May 2016 election.
E. The Scottish Party Leader will have a responsibility to oversee the drive to select and secure the election to parliament of more women and candidates from other underrepresented groups. The Leader will report twice a year to Conference on progress made.

F. The Scottish Party Leader will appoint a group of party spokespeople from our councillors and candidates to speak for the party as well as parliamentarians. At least half of that group will be women and it will include members who are from ethnic minorities and other underrepresented backgrounds.

G. All members of the Scottish Executive will have a responsibility to support the drive to secure the election to parliament of more women and candidates from other underrepresented groups. They will also encourage and support more women and candidates from underrepresented groups to be elected to councils and internal committees in the Party. The Executive will agree a plan to advance this objective and the effectiveness of the plan will be the subject of a debate at the Committee once a year.

H. The job descriptions of party staff will be amended to include specific responsibilities for promoting diversity of candidate selection. This will include monitoring, communications and campaigning.

I. In parallel with their obligation to provide an annual PPERA return to Party Headquarters, all local parties will be required to report annually on: the number of local party officeholders who are women and from other underrepresented groups, the percentage of approved candidates locally who are women and from other underrepresented groups and the percentage of new members who attend local party meetings and join the local party committee. This information will be reported by party staff to the Executive and by the Executive to Conference on an annual basis.

J. A new model job description and specification for candidates will be agreed by the Executive Committee based on the model in England with input from the Campaigns and Candidates Committee, Scottish Liberal Democrat Women and other interested party organisations. This will build on the Memorandum of Understanding agreed by the Scottish Executive in 2013.

K. There will be a new Diversity Campaign Fund for use in supporting candidates in winnable seats from underrepresented groups for personal or campaign expenses. This fund will be used to reduce the practical barriers that stop people from underrepresented groups from standing for election, for example transport for people with mobility issues and BSL interpreters, as well as campaign expenditure. It will be worth at least £10,000 per year in 2016 and index linked thereafter. The Fund will be managed by the Campaigns and Candidates Committee as delegated by the Executive Committee.

L. A team of campaign mentors will be established by the Campaigns Department and Campaigns and Candidates Committee to support candidates in winnable seats from underrepresented groups.

M. Between autumn 2016 and late 2017 there will be a programme of information and training events to provide support and information for aspiring candidates. Local parties, parliamentarians, councillors and members of party committees will be asked to encourage those members who have not previously sought approval to attend these events. The numbers of members who attend these events and the local parties from which they arise will be reported to the Executive and annually to conference. The team and training will be managed by the Campaign and Candidates Convener with the support of party campaign staff in Scotland.
Communications to members will include positive promotion to women and from other under-represented groups. The work of candidates and spokespersons who are not yet elected parliamentarians will be promoted widely to members.

In interpreting this motion any approved candidate who does not identify as male or as female shall be able to access the same arrangements as are proposed for women.

Deadline for amendments is midday 24th February. Send to: linda.wilson@scotlibdems.org.uk

**EM2: Emergency motion or topical issue**
The deadline for topical issues is 5pm on 25th February. Send to linda.wilson@scotlibdems.org.uk

The deadline for emergency motions is 5pm on 25th February, to be considered for debate on 26th February or 5pm on 26th February to be considered for debate on 27th February. Send to linda.wilson@scotlibdems.org.uk or if you are submitting an emergency motion for debate on 27th February, leave a copy at the registration desk at conference.

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.00-14.40</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.15-13.15</td>
<td>Fringe meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.30-14.30</td>
<td>Fringe meetings</td>
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The afternoon session runs from 14.40 to 16.45.

**Q&A: Education**

**Speech by Tim Farron MP, Leader of the Liberal Democrats**

SC7: **Scottish Parliament Pre-manifesto - holding motion**

*Policy Committee*

Mover: TBC  
Summator: TBC

1. That conference endorses the published Pre-manifesto of the Scottish Liberal Democrats as the basis for a full, costed manifesto for the Scottish Parliament elections in May 2016, based on liberal values and offering a radical and reforming programme for government.

This is a holding motion. The full text of the motion will be published and circulated on 12th February. Deadline for amendments is midday 24th February. Send to: linda.wilson@scotlibdems.org.uk

**Party Awards**

Close of session 16.45