

# Scottish Liberal Democrats



**Spring Conference 2019**

**22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> February**  
**Hamilton Town House**

# HELPFUL INFORMATION

## Venue

**Hamilton Town House, 102 Cadzow St, Hamilton ML3 6HH**

***Please note: All bags will be subject to search.***

## Transport

The nearest train station is Hamilton Central which is a short walk from the venue. Taxis can be booked for transfers from the station.

Cadzow Cars: 01698 891990

Wellman Cars: 01698 891313

Hamilton Toa Taxis: 01698 281144

Buses 107 and 255 pass by the Town House.

## Parking

There is pay and display parking around Hamilton town centre.

## Conference passes

These will be available for collection on arrival at the venue. They must be worn visibly at all times throughout conference.

## Deadlines for submissions

Amendments to motions: 12noon 20<sup>th</sup> February

Emergency motions: 5pm, 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> February

Please email amendments and emergency motions to [hq@scotlibdems.org.uk](mailto:hq@scotlibdems.org.uk)

## Disabled access

The facility is fully barrier free and offers level access to all areas outwith the upper circle in the Main Hall. The facility has 12 separate toilet facilities for the disabled, passenger lifts giving access throughout, low level service points, induction loop facilities at all receptions/service points, and infra-red hearing enhancement facilities in auditoria and ceremony rooms. There are ramps to each public entrance and entry doors are either automatically controlled or on 'hold open' mechanisms. There are also three designated parking bays in the main car park at the rear of the building. Please contact Scottish Liberal Democrats HQ if you have any queries relating to disabled access.

## Refreshments

Refreshments will be available for purchase throughout the day. Lunchtime fringes may also provide some complimentary refreshments. If you have any dietary requirements, it would be helpful if you let us know in advance, so we can accommodate you.

**Accommodation**

Please email [hq@scotlibdems.org.uk](mailto:hq@scotlibdems.org.uk) to request a list of nearby hotels and B&Bs.

**Registration**

You can still register. Registration is quick and easy online at [www.scotlibdems.org.uk/s19register](http://www.scotlibdems.org.uk/s19register). If you are not able to register online please call us on 0131 337 2314 and we can register you over the phone.

**Further information**

If you require any further information about any aspect of Conference, please contact 0131 337 2314 or [hq@scotlibdems.org.uk](mailto:hq@scotlibdems.org.uk)

# CONFERENCE AGENDA AT A GLANCE

## Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> February

Morning session is from 10.00-12.30

- Welcome address
- SC1: Delivering Early Years Education and Childhood [40]
- SC2: Reshaping Scotland's Railways [40]
- Speech by Wendy Chamberlain, PPC for North East Fife
- SC3: Improving Outcomes for Scotland's Prisons and People [40]

12.30-14.00 Lunch

12.45-13.45 Fringe meetings

Afternoon session is from 14.00-18.00

- SC4: Ending Commercial Sexual Exploitation in Scotland [60]
- SC5: Closing the Attainment Gap in Scotland [30]
- Speech by Jo Swinson, MP for East Dunbartonshire
- EM1: Emergency Motion [30]
- SC6: Reversing the Closure of Public Toilets across Scotland [40]

17.00-18.00 Fringe Meetings

## Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February

Morning session is from 09.30-18.00

- Party AGM and Business Motion [60]
- Speech by Aileen Morton, Leader of Argyll and Bute Council
- SC7: Housing and Domestic Abuse [45]
- EM2/TI1: Emergency Motion or Topical Issue [30]

12.00-14.30 Lunch

12.15-13.15 Fringe Session 1

13.30-14.30 Fringe Session 2

Afternoon session is from 14.30-18.00

- Europe Session [60]
- Speech by Willie Rennie MSP, Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats
- SC8: Trans Rights are Human Rights [40]
- Party awards [15]

17.00-18.00 Fringe Meetings

# Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> February

*The morning session runs from 10.00 to 12.30*

*10.00 Conference opens*

## WELCOME ADDRESS

### SC1: Delivering Early Years Education and Childcare

**Submitted by North Edinburgh and Leith Liberal Democrats**

Mover: Bruce Wilson

Summator: Emma Walker

1 Conference notes that Accounts Commission research shows that:

- 2 1. Poor planning by the Scottish Government has put the prospect of meeting their  
3 target of doubling free childcare hours for three and four-year olds by August 2020  
4 at significant risk;
- 5 2. Local councils are now expecting to have to fund a shortfall of up to £160 million by  
6 2021/22 to deliver the policy;
- 7 3. Around ten per cent of two-year olds are registered for early years education  
8 and childcare hours despite an estimated quarter of two-year olds being  
9 eligible, due to not all eligible children being identified.

10 Conference further notes that the UK is lagging behind EU and OECD neighbours in terms  
11 of maternal employment rates due to the unacceptable cost of childcare.

12 Conference believes:

- 13 1. As early years education and childcare provision will have the effect of increasing tax  
14 revenue, it is appropriate for any funding shortfall to be fully met by the Scottish  
15 Government rather than impact on already stretched Council budgets.
- 16 2. Universal eligibility of early years education and childcare for two-year olds will  
17 ensure that no child is left behind, creating a fairer society for parents and children.

18 Conference reaffirms the Scottish Liberal Democrat 2016 manifesto commitments to:

- 19 1. Double the number of funded early years education and childcare hours during this  
20 Parliament;
- 21 2. Extend eligibility to all two-year olds;
- 22 3. Provide extra support for the most vulnerable families from an earlier age.

23 Conference calls on the Scottish Government to:

- 24 1. Urgently expand their plans for early-years education and childcare in order to  
25 address the risks to delivering the target on time that have been identified by  
26 the Accounts Commission;
- 27 2. Commit to filling any funding shortfall required to deliver the policy so that local  
28 Councils are not left footing the bill;
- 29 3. Extend the eligibility to all two-year olds rather than select groups;
- 30 4. Introduce a further target of extending eligibility of funded early education and  
31 childcare hours to all one-year olds during the next Scottish Parliament term.

## **SC2: Reshaping Scotland's Railways**

***Submitted by Aberdeenshire West Liberal Democrats, Angus North & Mearns Liberal Democrats, and Aberdeen Central, South & North Kincardine Liberal Democrats***

Mover: John Waddell

Summator: TBC

1 Conference notes:

- 2 1. The Beeching Report, Reshaping Britain's Railways, published in 1963 which lead to  
3 the closure of nearly a third of the British rail network, predominantly in rural areas,  
4 concentrating instead on journeys between cities.
- 5 2. The Railways Act 1993, which privatised Britain's railways.
- 6 3. Demand for rail travel has steadily increased since the 1990s, and is now at its  
7 highest since the 1920s
- 8 4. The reopening of some lines closed in the 1960s under the infamous 'Beeching  
9 Cuts', such as the Stirling-Alloa-Kincardine rail link, the Airdrie-Bathgate rail link,  
10 and the Borders Railway, in addition numerous local campaigns across Scotland to  
11 reopen their former railway lines
- 12 5. Some lines were saved from closure during the initial cuts, such as the 'Far North  
13 Line', due to successful community activism and lobbying
- 14 6. Since the Beeching cuts, road traffic levels have grown significantly
- 15 7. The replacement of railways with bus routes put a greater strain on our  
16 environment with an over-reliance on petrol and diesel engines
- 17 8. Railways are the best placed to transporting high numbers of passengers between  
18 larger population centres over relatively long distances at high speed and the

19 transport of very high numbers of people within a city region through metro-style  
20 services.

21 9. Since the closure of railway lines in the 1960s, many of the areas that lost their  
22 railway line have since become important commuter areas and are entirely reliant  
23 on petrol and diesel cars and buses

24 10. The Scottish Government is responsible for the letting and management of the  
25 ScotRail franchise and for providing the strategic direction, and funding, for the  
26 maintenance, renewal and expansion of Network Rail owned rail infrastructure in  
27 Scotland.

28 Conference believes:

29 1. Public transport is a necessary service, providing mobility and accessibility to those  
30 who cannot drive or cannot afford access to a car

31 2. Greater mobility and access to transport increases people's quality of life by  
32 providing them with more opportunities

33 3. Public transport is preferable to individual travel due to the impact of cars and  
34 buses on the environment

35 4. Although it is not feasible to construct lines on some old railway routes, many are  
36 still undisturbed and even preserved as routes between towns and cities

37 5. The existence of current lines and the preservation of old railway routes provides  
38 opportunities to reconstruct railway lines in a way that is cost effective and with  
39 limited challenges, compared to forming entirely brand new railway lines

40 6. A feasibility study is a suitable mechanism for determining which routes are still  
41 suitable for railway lines to be reopened and which have been build upon for other  
42 uses

43 Conference resolves:

44 1. The expansion of the rail network is of social and environment benefit to Scotland,  
45 particularly for those who live in rural areas that are no longer connected to the rail  
46 network

47 2. The re-opening of old railway stations, and the creation of new railway stations in  
48 towns currently on a railway but without a station, should be of greater priority for  
49 Transport Scotland

50 3. A feasibility study provides an opportunity for the Scottish Government, MSPs and  
51 local authorities to determine the best way moving forward to expanding the rail  
52 network, reopening closed railway lines, and determining new lines based on the  
53 existing network and previously closed lines.



54 Conference calls for the Scottish Government:

- 55 1. To formally review all the railways closed in Scotland since 1945, particularly those  
56 closed as a result of the 'Beeching Report', with a view to commissioning feasibility  
57 studies on re-opening viable railway lines
- 58 2. To, where possible, reopen old railway stations and to open new stations in towns  
59 currently on the railway network but with no access to the lines on which they are  
60 situated

## **Speech by Wendy Chamberlain, PPC for North East Fife**

### **SC3: Improving Outcomes for Scotland's Prisons and People**

**Submitted by Policy Committee**

Mover: Liam McArthur

Summator: Isobel Davidson

1 Conference notes:

- 2 1. The Scottish Government's adoption of some longstanding Scottish Liberal  
3 Democrat policies to reduce reoffending, including commitments to reform the  
4 female custodial estate, strengthen and extend the presumption against short-term  
5 sentences to 12 months, and plans to introduce dedicated mental health  
6 professionals in police stations and prisons;
- 7 2. The Scottish Government has estimated that the total economic and societal cost of  
8 reoffending is £3 billion a year;
- 9 3. Public Health Wales NHS Trust reports that those with four or more adverse  
10 childhood experiences are 20 times more likely to be imprisoned during their lives;
- 11 4. Scotland has amongst the highest per capita prison population in Western Europe;
- 12 5. On any day, more than 1,000 people are in prison on remand awaiting trial, but only  
13 around 40% of those awaiting trial in summary proceedings receive a prison  
14 sentence;
- 15 6. HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland has recorded people leaving prison with  
16 £75 in their pocket "with the prospect of having to wait several weeks before being  
17 eligible for basic benefits", and that too many people on their day of liberation do  
18 not know where they will be living causing many to end up homeless;

19 7. The House of Commons Work & Pensions Committee found employment  
20 “significantly reduces the chances of reoffending” but that only 50% of employers  
21 would consider employing someone coming from prison.

22 Conference believes:

- 23 1. The lack of throughcare and proper support for people leaving custody increases  
24 the amount of reoffending;
- 25 2. The use of remand, and the prison population as a whole, is too high;
- 26 3. For less serious offences, prison should be seen as an alternative to community-  
27 based sentences, rather than the other way around, and that judges need to be  
28 given confidence in this approach;
- 29 4. Maintaining family ties while a person is in prison reduces the likelihood of  
30 relationships breaking down, improves mental health and helps reduce the chance  
31 of reoffending;
- 32 5. People should so far as possible be given the chance to get on in life after leaving  
33 prison, having used their period incarcerated productively, and be given a level  
34 playing field with other candidates for opportunities and not be described in  
35 pejorative terms.

36 Conference calls on the Scottish Government to:

- 37 1. Reinvest savings made through reducing the prison population into community-  
38 based options, commit to 3-year funding rounds for criminal justice programmes,  
39 recognise the importance of council budgets given their role in rehabilitating people,  
40 conduct an audit of existing compulsory requirements to establish which are  
41 effective, and extend City Deals to allow innovative measures to build community  
42 resilience and tackle reoffending;
- 43 2. Routinely record adverse childhood experiences, as recommended by Scottish  
44 Government advisor Sir Harry Burns;
- 45 3. Give people on remand the opportunity to undertake short-courses, with the  
46 assurance that their engagement with purposeful activity does not imply guilt;
- 47 4. Support people to keep their tenancies and other commitments where appropriate;
- 48 5. Work through the NHS and Scottish Prison Service to fulfil the objectives of the 2011  
49 joint memorandum of understanding on healthcare provision, alongside  
50 implementing a healthcare plan for people suffering ill health within 2 weeks of their  
51 entering prison, giving them the best chance for their health, especially mental  
52 health, to be improved upon release and get on in life;

- 53 6. Make sure the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service begin fatal accident  
54 inquiries into deaths in prison within 12 months to ensure lessons that can save  
55 lives are learned;
- 56 7. Island proof prisons' policies, including the expansion of video conferencing for  
57 families;
- 58 8. Support purposeful activity in prison to equip people for employment, including  
59 literacy and numeracy skills, accredited qualifications, and options aligned to  
60 shortages in employment, supported by occupational therapists;
- 61 9. Make sure people have a bank account and have had their social security eligibility  
62 assessed before they leave prison, if relevant, for example through a fit to work  
63 assessment before release;
- 64 10. Expand throughcare and mentoring, delivered by dedicated additional staff capable  
65 of working with people before and after they leave prison to provide continuity,  
66 alongside a new right to housing, welfare and healthcare appointments within 48  
67 hours of release, underpinned by Housing First principles;
- 68 11. Work with justice partners, to measure whether people achieve positive post-prison  
69 destinations such as education, employment or training, and to publish the results  
70 alongside existing reconviction rates, to provide an evidence basis for the future  
71 introduction of a youth-guarantee equivalent;
- 72 12. Extend the Scottish Business Pledge to include a commitment to providing a level  
73 playing field for applicants who have completed a sentence.

*The deadline for amendments is 20<sup>th</sup> February Send amendments to: [hq@scotlibdems.org.uk](mailto:hq@scotlibdems.org.uk)*

**12.15-13.45                      Lunch**

**12.30-13.30                      Fringe meetings**

*The afternoon session runs from 14.00 to 18.00*

## **SC4: Ending Commercial Sexual Exploitation in Scotland**

**Submitted by 27 members**

Mover: Dr Jacqui Stoye

Summator: Diane Robertson Martin CBE

1 Conference notes that:

- 2 1. the NHS Scotland guidelines on Commercial Sexual Exploitation outline the harmful  
3 effects on women and men involved in prostitution:
  - 4 a. a majority suffer high levels of physical violence and rape;
  - 5 b. there is a significant effect on mental health (in research undertaken across  
6 five countries 67% of women in prostitution met the criteria for post-  
7 traumatic stress disorder);
  - 8 c. there is a significant link with drug misuse, which is often used as a coping  
9 mechanism for having unwanted sex.
- 10 2. research has demonstrated in countries where prostitution is decriminalised or  
11 legalised there is an associated increase in human trafficking, child prostitution and  
12 other forms of criminality.
- 13 3. the European Parliament in its policy on Gender Equality acknowledges that  
14 prostitution is a form of gender-based violence and that it 'cannot be supported as a  
15 legitimate business because it is contrary to the principles enshrined in the Charter  
16 of Fundamental Rights'.
- 17 4. in early 2014, the parliaments of the European Union and the Council of Europe  
18 both adopted nonbinding resolutions advocating member states to undertake an  
19 end demand approach to prostitution, i.e. the Swedish approach, commonly known  
20 as the Nordic Model.
- 21 5. the Nordic Model:
  - 22 a. perceives prostitution as a form of violence against women and recognises  
23 the unequal parity between the buyer who is in a position to exercise choice  
24 and the seller, who is often not able to exercise choice at all;
  - 25 b. aims to deter the purchase of sexual services by criminalising the buyers,  
26 who are otherwise law-abiding citizens who do not wish their partners,  
27 families and colleagues to know about their behaviour;
  - 28 c. decriminalises the sale of sexual services and provides funds for the sellers  
29 so that they can exit and are not left destitute.
- 30 6. the Nordic Model has been successfully pioneered in Sweden over the last sixteen  
31 years, and has been adopted in Norway, Finland, Iceland and more recently in  
32 Canada, Northern Ireland, France and the Republic of Ireland. In addition, it has  
33 been most successful when the Police have been given appropriate training to  
34 implement the law.

35 Conference believes that:

- 36 1. as 90% of prostitution in Scotland now takes place indoors, the laws applying to  
37 solicitation and kerb crawling are becoming obsolete, so a radically different  
38 approach is called for.
- 39 2. although critics of the Nordic Model often say that it will drive prostitution  
40 'underground', that is already the case as the numbers of women involved is  
41 unknown.
- 42 3. the current situation in Scotland is at odds with the European Charter of  
43 Fundamental Rights, and also with the UN Convention for the Suppression of the  
44 Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others.
- 45 4. the most appropriate way for Liberal Democrat policy to reduce harm, defend the  
46 human rights of prostituted persons, focus police time and resources on those  
47 groomed, forced, or trafficked into the sex industry, and provide additional support  
48 for those wishing to exit, would be to adopt an 'end demand' Nordic model  
49 approach.

50 Conference therefore calls for the Scottish Government to introduce legislation that:

- 51 1. decriminalises the sale of sexual services
- 52 2. criminalises the purchase of sexual services
- 53 3. offers appropriate support for those wishing to exit commercial sexual exploitation
- 54 4. provides a suitable training package to enable the Police to implement the law  
55 successfully.

## **SC5: Closing the Attainment Gap in Scotland**

### **Submitted by Policy Committee**

Mover: Tavish Scott

Summator: Isobel Davidson

- 1 Conference notes:
- 2 1. There is an attainment gap running through Scottish education. Young people from  
3 poorer backgrounds exit education with lower qualifications than their richer  
4 classmates;
- 5 2. Extensive academic research has identified that a gap starts before formal schooling  
6 begins and widens throughout school years;
- 7 3. Scottish Liberal Democrat MSPs have pushed the Scottish Government to initiate  
8 steps to increase early education and to introduce a pupil premium in schools in  
9 order to add to the services available to young people from disadvantaged  
10 backgrounds.

11 Conference believes

- 12 1. It is a great liberal task to ensure that every individual achieves their potential;
- 13 2. It is to the wider benefit of Scottish communities and the economy for every  
14 individual, no matter what their background, to have the opportunity to succeed  
15 and excel;
- 16 3. Scottish economic productivity increases as Scottish educational attainment  
17 increases, and it would increase further if no person was held back from attainment  
18 and achievement because they come from a disadvantaged background;
- 19 4. The attainment gap cannot be eliminated by schools alone and effort is required  
20 across government;
- 21 5. Some recent Scottish Government initiatives, often after persuasion from Scottish  
22 Liberal Democrats, such as expanded nursery provision and the attainment fund  
23 (equivalent to the UK pupil premium), have proved successful, but a guard needs to  
24 be established that resources are not diverted from these in future;
- 25 6. Poverty remains a significant reason why individual children do not achieve in  
26 education - from the lack of a safe, warm home to prepare for learning, to the  
27 absence of parental support for schooling, to physical hunger and lowered  
28 expectations – and that Scottish and UK-wide change is needed to make sure fewer  
29 children grow up in poverty.

30 Conference calls for:

31 The Scottish Government and Scottish local authorities to develop those existing initiatives  
32 that are helping close the attainment gap, with vigilance to prevent funding dissipating over  
33 time:

- 34 1. Ensure that parents of children in more deprived areas of Scotland are able to  
35 access the same range and choice of pre-school provision as wealthier families, with  
36 information given to parents to make sure they understand the rights that they  
37 have, the choices that are available and the benefits that early education can bring;
- 38 2. Maintain a commitment to a nursery premium - increased funding - to make sure  
39 pre-school children from poorer backgrounds can be better supported when they  
40 start in education.
- 41 3. Ensure that the attainment fund is used in schools to transform the opportunities  
42 and attainment of children, sharing best practice widely, and not used to patch up  
43 funding to meet other demands elsewhere in schooling;
- 44 4. Share success in pedagogy and teaching practice from across the world so that  
45 children from poorer backgrounds can receive teaching that is appropriate and  
46 successful for their needs.

47 Conference further calls for:

48 The Scottish Government and local authorities to initiate new steps to create a  
49 government-wide focus on attainment, fostering high levels of individual achievement in  
50 the national interest:

- 51 5. A new programme, learning the lessons from and expanding family-nurse  
52 partnerships, to support parenting of children pre-natal to age 2;
- 53 6. A more securely funded youth work service to allow it to reach young people who  
54 are not engaged successfully in formal education, and to give those young people  
55 the confidence and skills to achieve highly in their lives;
- 56 7. Proper support for colleges as a means to achievement and attainment for those  
57 who missed out on qualifications earlier in life but who demand a better, second  
58 chance to achieve;
- 59 8. Promotion of colleges as the route to high-level technical qualifications for young  
60 people from all backgrounds;
- 61 9. Scottish universities encouraged to get more young people from poorer  
62 backgrounds through to completion of their courses, through outreach work in  
63 schools in disadvantaged areas and the use of role-models for children in those  
64 areas.

65 Conference also calls on the Scottish and UK governments to work together and separately  
66 to tackle poverty:

- 67 10. Reverse the cuts to Universal Credit that threaten to bring more families into  
68 poverty;
- 69 11. Increase the provision of free meals for children, especially making sure breakfast is  
70 taken before learning starts;
- 71 12. Make sure support for clothing, equipment and free sanitary products is readily  
72 available for children from poorer backgrounds;
- 73 13. Adopt a formal UK-wide intention to end child poverty between the four UK  
74 administrations with each committing to use their powers and resources to such an  
75 end.

*The deadline for amendments is midday 20<sup>th</sup> February. Send amendments to: [hq@scotlibdems.org.uk](mailto:hq@scotlibdems.org.uk)*

## **Speech by Jo Swinson, MP for East Dunbartonshire**

## **EM1: Emergency Motion**

*Deadline for this emergency motion slot is 5pm on 21<sup>st</sup> February. Send to: [hq@scotlibdems.org.uk](mailto:hq@scotlibdems.org.uk)*

## **SC6: Reversing the Closure of Public Toilets across Scotland**

**Submitted by Aberdeenshire East Liberal Democrats**

Mover: Trevor Mason

Summator: David Evans

1 Conference notes:

- 2 1. In recent years public toilets have been closing at an alarming rate in both rural  
3 and urban areas.
- 4 2. There is no obligation on local councils to provide public toilets, and  
5 unfortunately as councils have limited budgets, the high expense of maintaining  
6 public toilets is well down the list of priorities.
- 7 3. Many towns now have been bypassed in transport networks, taking away the  
8 footfall from the local public conveniences and forcing them to close. Trunk  
9 roads can go for miles without any facilities at all.
- 10 4. Not having access to a toilet can result in 'waiting to go' which research suggests  
11 can have adverse health effects over time, including stretching of the bladder  
12 walls and an increased risk of bladder or kidney infection.

13 Conference believes:

- 14 1. That toilet facilities are an essential human need, necessary for use by everyone.
- 15 2. Public conveniences should be maintained to a high standard of hygiene and  
16 cleanliness.
- 17 3. Certain groups who have health problems, bowel problems, bladder problems  
18 etc. can feel trapped in their own home for fear of getting caught short in the  
19 street.

20 Conference calls for:

- 21 1. The Scottish Government to:
  - 22 a. create a network of public conveniences across Scotland accessible with a  
23 single chipped card, paid for by subscription.



- 24                   b. ensure that this network is extensive enough that there is a public  
25                   convenience (whether as part of this network or provided by other  
26                   organisations) available within 20 minutes walking distance wherever  
27                   people congregate in shopping areas, parks, beach areas, walks and cycle  
28                   routes; and also, no more than 20 minutes' driving distance from any  
29                   point on a major trunk road (A road).
- 30                   c. Publicise this network in a pamphlet and points of interest for sat nav,  
31                   and devise a distinctive a logo so the sites can be easily identified.
- 32           2. Scottish Local Authorities to:
- 33                   a. persuade local businesses to open their toilets to non-paying customers.  
34                   b. survey and identify potential sites for new facilities.

*The deadline for amendments is midday 20<sup>th</sup> February. Send amendments to: [hq@scotlibdems.org.uk](mailto:hq@scotlibdems.org.uk)*

## **Fringes**

## **Close of Plenary**

# Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February

*The morning session runs from 09.30 to 12.00*

*09.30 Conference opens*

## Party AGM and Business Motion

### Speech by Aileen Morton, Leader of Argyll and Bute Council

#### SC7: Housing and Domestic Abuse

**Submitted by Policy Committee**

Mover: Caron Lindsay

Summator: Isobel Davidson

- 1 Conference believes all social landlords should have policies on domestic abuse, and
- 2 the experience of abuse or violence must not lead to someone losing their tenancy or
- 3 becoming homeless.
  
- 4 Conference notes:
  - 5 1. The true scale of domestic abuse is difficult to determine as a large proportion of
  - 6 domestic abuse goes unreported, but studies suggest that many millions of
  - 7 people are affected every year, with domestic abuse being disproportionately
  - 8 experienced by women and perpetrated by men;
  
  - 9 2. According to the Council of Europe, between one in three and one in five women
  - 10 will experience domestic abuse in the course of her lifetime;
  
  - 11 3. In 2016-17, there were 58,810 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by Police
  - 12 Scotland and where gender information was recorded, 79% of all incidents of
  - 13 domestic abuse in 2016-17 had a female victim and a male perpetrator;
  
  - 14 4. Across the UK two women are killed by their partner or ex-partner every week;
  
  - 15 5. The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) campaign *Make a Stand* which gives
  - 16 housing organisations the chance to sign up to four commitments to help victims
  - 17 of domestic abuse;
  
  - 18 6. New guidance for social housing landlords is currently being developed by CIH
  - 19 Scotland, Scottish Women's Aid and others;

- 20 7. The recommendation from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group  
21 that “arrangements should be put in place so that tenancies can transfer  
22 seamlessly to the person who has experienced abuse, and reciprocal  
23 arrangements should be put in place to ensure people who experience domestic  
24 abuse can move to a safer place and have continuity of tenancy”;
- 25 8. Not all housing organisations have a policy framework which recognise domestic  
26 abuse with many incidents addressed through anti-social behaviour or rent  
27 arrears policies;
- 28 9. Some people experiencing domestic abuse may be made homeless by the  
29 services that are meant to help them, forced to leave their family home and then  
30 moved further multiple times.

31 Conference believes:

- 32 1. Victims of abuse should be supported to stay in their own home if that is what  
33 they choose;
- 34 2. Where victims are moved to a new home it should be arranged through planned  
35 management transfers, and victims should not be made to go through the  
36 statutory homeless route and into temporary accommodation or refuges;
- 37 3. Victims should not be unnecessarily financially disadvantaged as a consequence  
38 of domestic abuse;
- 39 4. Scotland should have a gendered approach to housing and homeless that  
40 recognises the causes and solution to women’s homeless is different from men’s  
41 homelessness;
- 42 5. The Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981, designed to  
43 provide for the transfer of the tenancy of a matrimonial home between the  
44 spouses and cohabiting couples in certain circumstances, is no longer fit for  
45 purpose.

46 Conference therefore calls for:

- 47 1. The Scottish Government to review and update the Matrimonial Homes (Family  
48 Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981 so that abusers can be swiftly moved out of the  
49 homes, while having their right to a home elsewhere unabridged;
- 50 2. All housing organisations to be required to make information about national and  
51 local domestic abuse support services available on their website for residents  
52 and staff, have in place an HR policy to support members of staff who may be  
53 experiencing domestic abuse, appoint a champion at a senior level to direct  
54 activity to support people experiencing domestic abuse and develop a stand-  
55 alone housing and domestic abuse policy;

- 56 3. The Scottish Government to introduce new national guidance that strengthens a  
57 victim's right to stay in their home and negates the need for them to declare as  
58 homeless;
- 59 4. The Scottish Government to develop a new 'Destitution Fund' for people  
60 experiencing domestic abuse unable to access other sources of help as  
61 recommended by the Scottish Parliament's Equalities and Human Rights  
62 Committee in 2017.

## **EM2/TI1: Emergency Motion or Topical Issue**

*Deadline for this emergency motion/topical issue discussion slot is 5pm on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. Send to: [hq@scotlibdems.org.uk](mailto:hq@scotlibdems.org.uk)*

**12.15-13.45**

**Lunch**

**12.30-13.30**

**Fringe meetings**

**12.00-13.00**

**Fringe meetings**

## **Session on Europe**

### **Speech by Willie Rennie, Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats**

## **SC8: Trans Rights are Human Rights**

**Submitted by Scottish Young Liberals**

Mover: Becca Plenderleith

Summator: Caron Lindsay

- 1 Conference notes that:
- 2 1. the response to the Scottish Government's consultation on reform of the Gender  
3 Recognition Act (GRA) has been overwhelmingly positive, with:
- 4 a. 65% of respondents from Scotland supporting a self-declaratory system  
5 for legal gender recognition;

- 6           b. 66% of respondents from Scotland supporting lowering the age at which  
7           the gender recognition process can be accessed to 16;
- 8           c. and 66% of respondents from Scotland supporting legal recognition of  
9           non-binary individuals.
- 10       2. the current requirements placed on transgender individuals by the GRA are so  
11       onerous that the majority forego legal recognition of their gender, even amongst  
12       those who have opted to undertake medical transition.
- 13       3. in response to Scottish and UK Government proposals to reform the GRA,  
14       several small groups have emerged that portray themselves as grassroots  
15       feminist movements, but are in fact mostly funded by large anonymous  
16       donations that almost certainly originate from socially conservative coalitions in  
17       the USA (as was seen during the recent campaign to repeal the 8th amendment  
18       to the Irish Constitution). These groups:
- 19           a. promote a false narrative that the expansion of rights for transgender  
20           individuals can only be achieved at the expense of rights for cisgender  
21           individuals;
- 22           b. use misleading statistics, innuendo and outright lies about the  
23           transgender community to invalidate trans identities and present trans  
24           people as threatening, particularly in order to falsely portray the existence  
25           of transgender women as a threat to the safety of cisgender women;
- 26           c. publicise fringe theories that run counter to the overwhelming scientific  
27           consensus on the treatment of trans children, in order to portray healthy  
28           acceptance of trans identities as child abuse.
- 29       4. reputable women's rights and anti gender-based violence organisations such as  
30       Scottish Women's Aid, Rape Crisis Scotland, Zero Tolerance and Women 50:50  
31       have robustly rejected claims that reforming the GRA will threaten the safety and  
32       the rights of cisgender women.

33 Conference believes that:

- 34       1. trans women are women, trans men are men, and non-binary identities are  
35       valid.
- 36       2. transgender and non-binary people should be able to live their lives free from  
37       disparagement and discrimination.
- 38       3. legal recognition of gender identity is a human right that should be contingent  
39       only on a sincere declaration by the individual concerned, not arbitrary tests that  
40       only serve to entrench gender stereotypes.

41 4. access to healthcare for transgender people is also a human right, but medical  
42 treatment for gender incongruence should be separate from recognition of  
43 gender identity, and one should not be a requirement for the other; medical  
44 interventions are a personal choice and the validity of transgender identities is  
45 not a function of individual healthcare decisions.

46 5. the recent surge in anti-trans propaganda is abhorrent, and is similar to the  
47 homophobic media onslaught that was directed at gay men and lesbians in the  
48 latter part of the 20th century; Liberal Democrats spoke out strongly then, and  
49 we must speak out strongly now.

50 Conference calls for:

51 1. the Scottish and UK Governments to move forward with reform of the Gender  
52 Recognition Act without delay.

53 2. Liberal Democrat politicians and candidates, at all levels, to continue to be  
54 robust in their public support for the rights and the safety of trans and non-  
55 binary individuals, and their opposition to transphobic propaganda and hate  
56 speech.

57 3. media organisations to ensure that in their coverage, or in the sale of advertising  
58 space, they do not give a platform to organisations that promote transphobic  
59 narratives and have shown themselves to not be acting in good faith.

*The deadline for amendments is midday 20<sup>th</sup> February. Send amendments to: [hq@scotlibdems.org.uk](mailto:hq@scotlibdems.org.uk)*

## **OTHER EVENTS AT CONFERENCE**

### **First time at conference?**

If you've not been to conference before you will receive an invitation to our first timers' session. Come along and find out more about how conference works and meet other first time attendees.

### **Forum for Councillors and Parliamentarians**

#### **Conference Dinner**

Join us for our Spring Conference Dinner on Friday 22nd February at the Hamilton Town House. A delicious three course meal and the obligatory after dinner speech will be included. Tickets are £40 and can be bought from [www.scotlibdems.org.uk](http://www.scotlibdems.org.uk).

#### **Exhibitions and Fringes**

Will be announced very soon!

## **Scottish Liberal Democrats - Standing Orders**

### **1. The Conference Committee**

- 1.1.** The Conference Committee shall be constituted as specified in Section E10 of the Constitution. The annual election of members by the conference shall be by Single Transferable Vote in a ballot of all members of the Party registered to attend Conference ('Conference Representatives').
- 1.2.** The Conference Convener shall be the Chair of the Conference Committee. At its first meeting after a new election under Section E10 of the Constitution, the Conference Committee may elect one or more Vice-Conveners.

### **2. The Timetable and Agenda - Normal Meetings**

- 2.1.** The Agenda for each ordinary meeting of Conference shall include time for:
  - 2.1.1.** Motions;
  - 2.1.2.** Emergency motions;
  - 2.1.3.** Topical motions;
  - 2.1.4.** A business session or sessions; and
  - 2.1.5.** any other business deemed appropriate by the Conference Committee. The time to be allocated to each type of business and the order of business shall be decided by the Conference Committee.
- 2.2.** The Conference Committee shall, before each meeting of the Conference, prepare a timetable which includes:
  - 2.2.1.** The closing date for the receipt of motions (other than Emergency or Topical motions), which shall not normally be less than eight weeks before the start of the meeting;
  - 2.2.2.** The due date for the publication of the Agenda, which shall not normally be less than six weeks before the start of the meeting;
  - 2.2.3.** The closing date for the receipt of Topical Motions, which shall not normally be less than two weeks before the start of the meeting; and
  - 2.2.4.** The closing date for receipt of amendments which shall not normally be less than two working days before the start of the meeting.
  - 2.2.5.** The Conference Committee may, in special circumstances, specify dates later than the normal dates under this Standing Order. It shall report to the Conference its reasons for doing so.
- 2.3.** Submitting organisations shall detail at the time of submission the name and contact details of a person authorised to agree any redrafting of a motion or amendment and the name of the mover and summator of the motion or amendment, should it be selected for debate at Conference.
- 2.4.** The Conference Committee shall decide which of the motions duly submitted shall be included within the Agenda. The proposers of the motions selected for debate shall be informed of the Conference Committee's decision. The Agenda shall be circulated to Local Parties and other bodies entitled to submit motions and amendments under the provisions of Section E19 of the Constitution so that amendments can be tabled to these motions by such bodies. Copies of motions not selected for inclusion in the Agenda shall be available for inspection.
- 2.5.** The Conference Committee shall meet the day after the deadline for submission of amendments to motions on the Agenda and shall decide which amendments should be accepted and those rejected. The proposers of the amendments selected for debate shall be informed of the Conference Committee's decision.
- 2.6.** The Conference Committee shall also meet as soon as practicable after the closing date for the receipt of topical motions and shall decide which of the topical motions duly submitted shall be debated, and the proposers of topical motions selected shall be informed of the Conference Committee's decision.



The text of any topical motions selected for debate shall be circulated to Conference Representatives, Local Parties and bodies authorised to submit motions.

- 2.7. The Conference Committee shall also prepare an agenda for the business session of each meeting of Conference. The Committee shall circulate this, with the text of proposed amendments to the Constitution in accordance with Section L of the Constitution, amendments to Standing Orders, and other party business motions, with the Agenda as per Section 2.4
- 2.8. The Party's Principal Committees may submit holding motions, which shall identify the issues to be dealt with within the motion but which may be amended and expanded upon later. Standing Orders 2 and 3 shall apply to holding motions as they would apply to ordinary motions, except that:
  - 2.8.1. the final version of the motion shall be submitted not less than two weeks before the start of the meeting of Conference;
  - 2.8.2. The text of the final version shall be circulated to Conference Representatives, Local Parties and other bodies authorised to submit motions under the provisions of Section E19 of the Constitution, who may submit amendments no later than two working days before the start of the meeting of Conference; and
  - 2.8.3. The Committee shall make available to Conference Representatives the text of the final version and any amendments chosen for debate, either by their publication in the Conference Daily Bulletin or by any other means the Committee considers most appropriate
- 2.9. The Conference Committee may, if the circumstances require, propose to Conference a variation in the order of business as set out in the Agenda. Such variation shall be put to the vote and shall take effect if approved by a majority of those voting.

### **3. Submission of Motions and Amendments**

- 3.1. The Conference Committee may refuse to select a motion for the amendment of the Constitution or Standing Orders if, in the opinion of the Committee, it is similar in effect to another motion which has been selected for debate at the same meeting of Conference. All other motions in these categories shall be circulated with the Agenda.
- 3.2. No amendment shall be selected if, in the opinion of the Conference Committee, it is insubstantial, outside the legitimate scope of the motion or tantamount to a direct negative of the motion.
- 3.3. The movers of any motion or amendment that has not been selected shall be notified as soon as is practicable and may appeal to the Conference Committee in accordance with directions given by the Committee. If an appeal is allowed, the motion or amendment shall be treated as an emergency motion or amendment notwithstanding that it does not comply with Standing Order 5.
- 3.4. This Standing Order and Standing Order 2 do not apply to procedural motions under Standing Order 8.
- 3.5. No Topical Motion may be selected for debate at Conference unless the Conference Committee is satisfied that the content of the motion is such that it could not have been submitted in time for the deadline as set out in Section 2.2 for ordinary motions. No Topical Motion can be a holding motion from a Party Committee.

### **4. The Agenda - Special Conferences**

- 4.1. Special Conferences shall deal only with the business stated in the notice of requisition, save that the Conference Committee may allow time for emergency motions and for business which is formal or, in the opinion of the Committee, uncontentious.
- 4.2. The Conference Committee shall draw up an Agenda and circulate in line with Section 2.4. If the Committee deems it necessary the Agenda can be circulated with amendments to be submitted as Emergency Amendments.
- 4.3. The provisions of Standing Orders 2 and 3 shall, so far as they are not inconsistent with Standing Orders 4.1 and 4.2, apply to special meetings of the Conference.

### **5. Emergency Motions**

- 5.1. An emergency motion or amendment must relate to significant developments which have occurred since the relevant closing date or so shortly before that date as to make it impracticable to submit a motion,

Topical Motion or amendment in due time. It must be brief and specific.

- 5.2. An emergency motion or amendment may be submitted by five Conference Representatives or by any persons or bodies authorised to submit motions under the provisions of Section E9 of the Constitution.
- 5.3. The Conference Committee may, for each day of the meeting of Conference, set aside time convenient for the debate of Emergency Motions. In such an event, proposed Emergency Motions must be submitted to the Conference Committee, duly signed, by 5pm the day before they are to be debated. Emergency Amendments to motions already on the Agenda for that meeting of Conference must be submitted by 5pm the day before the motion is to be debated.
- 5.4. The Conference Committee may refuse to select an emergency motion or amendment if, in the opinion of the Committee, it is similar in effect to another motion which has been selected for debate at the relevant meeting of Conference.
- 5.5. The Conference Committee will choose the emergency motions or amendments which, in the opinion of the Committee, are most relevant to the concerns of the Conference and can be debated within the time available. The Committee shall make available the text of all emergency motions and amendments chosen for debate either by publication in the Conference Daily Bulletin or any other means the Committee finds most appropriate.
- 5.6. Amendments shall not normally be taken to the text of an Emergency Motion. However Conference Committee may consider amendments duly signed by 5 Conference Representatives or by any body authorised to submit motions under the provisions of Section E9 of the Constitution. These amendments must be brief, suitable for debate and of a similar emergency nature. The deadline for submitting amendments to an Emergency Motion will be listed in the Conference Daily Bulletin alongside the text of the Emergency Motion. The movers of the Emergency Motion must be given the opportunity to agree that the text of the amendment be accepted without debate or vote, and the text must be circulated to voting representatives before the start of the debate.

## **6. Conduct of Debate**

### **6.1. Length of Speeches**

- 6.1.1. The Conference Committee shall decide the time to be allocated for each debate. The Conference Committee shall determine the times allocated to speakers in debates.
- 6.1.2. Movers of motions shall normally be allocated not more than 12 minutes to move and summate on a motion. Movers of amendments shall normally be allocated not more than 8 minutes to move and summate on a motion. Movers of emergency and topical motions shall normally be allocated 5 minutes to move the motion. Speakers from the floor shall normally be allocated 4 minutes but this may be varied at the discretion of the chair of the debate.
- 6.1.3. The allocation of the time between moving and summing shall be at the discretion of the mover subject only to notification of the Chair of the debate before the start of the debate. In the absence of such notification the Chair shall be entitled to limit speeches to three quarters of the time allocation for moving and one quarter for summation.

### **6.2. Order of Debate**

- 6.2.1. The Conference Committee shall direct the order of debate. Generally, however, a motion will be moved and immediately thereafter the amendments will be moved in the order directed by the Committee. There will then be a general debate. The movers of amendments (or their nominees) shall have the right to summate in the same order, after which the mover of the motion (or their nominee) shall have the right to summate.
- 6.2.2. Votes will be taken on amendments in the order in which they have been moved and finally, a vote shall be taken on the substantive motion.
- 6.3. The Conference Committee may direct that parts of any motion or amendment or group of amendments may be the subject of a separate debate the Conference Committee may also direct that a debate may comprise of more than one substantive motion. In this case it shall be up to the discretion of the Chair as to the allotment of speakers, save that the rights of movers of motions or amendments shall not be

infringed.

- 6.4. The Committee may authorise members of other State or Regional Parties to speak. The Committee may also, with the approval of conference, invite any person to address a Conference as a guest.
- 6.5. On any topical motion, policy motion or emergency motion not moved on behalf of the Policy Committee, the Policy Committee shall have the right to nominate one of its members to report to the Conference its views on the motions and/or amendments under debate. Such persons shall be called to speak at any time up to the conclusion of the debate and before any replies and shall be entitled to speak for the same length of time as the mover of the motion. The Executive Committee shall have similar rights on business motions or motions to amend the constitution and the Conference Committee shall have similar rights in relation to motions to amend Standing Orders or motions otherwise relating to the proceedings of the Conference.
- 6.6. Save as provided in Standing Orders, no person may speak more than once in any debate.
- 6.7. All members wishing to speak in any debate, including the movers and summators of motions and amendments, must submit a speaker's card and indicate whether they wish to speak in favour or against a motion or amendment. The Chair of the session shall be responsible for providing a balanced debate between the different viewpoints in the Conference. In circumstances where there is a preponderance of members wishing to speak on the same side in any debate, the Chair may announce a departure from this rule.

## **7. Voting**

- 7.1. Voting cards shall be issued to all Conference Representatives and shall be shown in respect of all votes taken. A count of voting cards will be taken when either:
  - 7.1.1. This is felt necessary by the Chair of the session to resolve uncertainty as to the outcome, or
  - 7.1.2. A request for a count has been made by 12 Conference Representatives standing in their places and showing their voting cards.
- 7.2. In the event of a count of voting cards being required, the Chair of the session shall appoint tellers for the purpose. A recount will be held only if the Chair of the session is not satisfied that the first count was accurate.

## **8. Points of Order and Procedural Motions**

- 8.1. Any voting member may rise on a point of order. A point of order shall be taken immediately, except that, during a vote no point of order shall be taken that does not refer to the vote itself. The decision of the Chair of the session on all points of order shall be final.
- 8.2. References Back
  - 8.2.1. A voting member may, at any time before the end of speeches in reply to the debate, submit in writing a motion to refer back the motion under debate. Such a submission shall state to whom the motion is to be referred and shall include a short statement of the reasons.
  - 8.2.2. The Chair may decide either to take the motion to refer back immediately or defer it until the end of debate. If more than one request for a reference back is received, the Chair shall have the discretion as to which to take but shall give consideration to the appropriateness of the bodies to which the motion is being referred, the degree to which the stated reasons for reference back reflect views expressed in the debate and the order in which the requests were submitted, before exercising the rights of discretion. No more than one reference back shall be taken to any motion.
  - 8.2.3. The Chair shall, upon taking the motion to refer back, read it and the statement of reasons and ask conference whether it wishes to debate the motion. If the conference decides not to debate the reference back, the reference back automatically falls. If the conference decides, by a majority of those voting to debate the reference back the mover of that motion may speak and the mover of the substantive motion or their nominee may reply. The Chair shall have discretion whether to allow other speakers on the motion.
  - 8.2.4. The reference back shall require a simple majority of those voting to be passed. If the substantive motion is referred to the Executive, Policy Committee or Conference Committee that body shall report

to the next meeting of conference stating the action it has taken on the reference back.

**8.3.** Suspension of Standing Orders

**8.3.1.** A voting member may, during any session of a conference, move for the suspension of Standing Orders. The mover shall submit the motion together with a written statement of its purpose, not exceeding 100 words, to the Chair who shall read them to the Conference.

**8.3.2.** No motion to suspend Standing Orders may suspend any requirement of the Constitution, not Standing Orders 2 and 3.

**8.3.3.** No motion to suspend Standing Orders to introduce a motion or amendment onto the Agenda can be taken unless the motion or amendment has been submitted to the Conference Committee in accordance with the published timetable and any right of appeal has been exercised.

**8.3.4.** The Chair shall read the statement of purpose and if the suspension is allowable, ask Conference whether it wishes to debate the request to suspend Standing Orders. If the Conference decides not to debate the request, it falls. If the Conference decides to hear the request the mover may speak and a representative of the Conference may reply. The Chair has the discretion to call other speakers and all speeches will be limited to two minutes.

**8.3.5.** A motion to suspend Standing Orders shall only be carried if supported by at least two thirds of voting Representatives present and voting. If the procedural motion is carried all Standing Orders shall remain in force except only for the purposes set out in the motion.

**8.4.** Separate Votes

**8.4.1.** A Separate Vote shall be taken on a part of a motion or amendment.

**8.4.2.** At the direction of the Conference Committee; or

**8.4.3.** At the discretion of the Chair, when requested to do so by a voting representative. Any voting representative may submit a request for a separate vote to the Chair of a debate. Such a request must be in writing and received before the commencement of the speeches in reply to the debate. The Chair has complete discretion in such a case on whether to take a separate vote.

**8.5.** These Standing Orders may be amended by a two-thirds majority of Conference Representatives present and voting on a motion duly submitted under the terms of Standing Order 3. Subject to any amendment they shall remain in force from Conference to Conference.