



WE Party Conference

Kettering 7 – 9 September 2018

Title: Nine months shared parental leave on 90% of pay.

Proposed by: WE Policy Committee

Proposer: Dianna Moylan

Co-Proposer: Alison Marshall

Type of motion: Policy Motion

Motion text:

- 1 That conference ratifies the shared parental leave policy set out in the 2017 manifesto.
- 2 WE propose to implement a fully equal system of nine months parental leave at 90% of pay. It will
- 3 guarantee each parent (including same-sex couples and adoptive parents) three months away from
- 4 work, with an additional three months they can split in whichever way they want.
- 5 The three months will work on a use-it-or-lose-it provision for each parent.
- 6 Mothers will still be entitled to a year off work. Statutory pay will remain in place for non-working
- 7 parents, for those whose earnings are lower than the statutory pay and for those who wish to take
- 8 longer parental leave.
- 9 Single parents should be able to nominate a second caregiver of their choice for this entitlement,
- 10 and fathers' or same sex partners' entitlements should not be reliant on whether a mother is
- 11 working or not.

Motion rationale:

- 12 Currently, mothers are entitled to six weeks leave on 90% of pay and fathers to just two weeks on
- 13 statutory pay. International evidence demonstrates that the best way to increase fathers' take-up of
- 14 parental leave is to allocate a longer and better compensated period on a "use it or lose it" basis –
- 15 otherwise the stigma and cost of taking time away from work remain huge barriers to take-up.
- 16 Our goal is to achieve truly shared parenting and caregiving. This will help reduce the pay gap,
- 17 make it easier for employers to hold on to good staff, permit more women to take on decision-
- 18 making roles in business, politics and beyond, enable more men to take part in childcare, and allow
- 19 more children to benefit from time with both their parents.
- 20 The policy document voted in by delegates in 2016 states that for parental leave "WE believe a fully



21 equal system of parental leave would guarantee both parents (including same-sex couples and
22 adoptive parents) six weeks away from work on 90% of pay, with an additional 10 months of leave
23 at statutory pay to be shared between the parents.” However, WE do not think this goes far enough
24 to fully support parents and create true equality of parenting. Therefore, WE ask for an increase to 9
25 months shared leave on 90% of pay.

26 WE will establish a parental leave investment fund to implement our shared parental leave policies.
27 The government will provide the fund with £4 billion investment from the infrastructure investment
28 fund. Employers will be required to pay an insurance levy of 0.076% of their total salary costs which
29 will be ring-fenced for the parental leave fund. Self-employed people will only enjoy rights to paid
30 parental leave if they pay the same rate to the fund. The interest generated by this fund will cover its
31 administrative operations and the annual contributions will cover the parental leave uptake. This will
32 ensure a sustainable income for parental leave and employers will not be exposed to any sudden or
33 unexpected costs related to parental leave uptake, which allows for better planning and more
34 sustainability.

35 This policy is currently in the 2017 manifesto. It was developed in response to the snap general
36 election in which there was no time to go to conference with this update to our previous policy
37 on shared parental leave. WE need to lead the way on equal parenting and it was felt our previous
38 policy was out-dated. The fast-paced nature of politics resulted in a policy update without a
39 conference resolution being necessary. The Steering Committee and elected members of Policy
40 Committee signed off on this update as it is in line with the party's constitution.