



WE Party Conference

15 – 18 October 2020

Title: Deputies to The Leader

Proposed by: Mandu Reid, Leader of the Women's Equality Party

Type of motion: Business Motion

Motion text:

1 Conference:

- 2 ● *Notes* the significant challenges ahead, resulting from the pandemic and a tumultuous
3 political landscape;
- 4 ● *Acknowledges* the need to boost the Party's leadership capacity, increase support available
5 to the Party Leader, and improve the diversity of the Party's leadership;
- 6 ● *Resolves* that the Party Leader will be enabled to appoint up to three Deputies of their
7 choice, to safeguard and improve the overall resilience, responsiveness, and effectiveness
8 of the Party's operation.

9 Constitutional amendments required (in *italics* below)

10 A new article 7.1.10 to be added as follows:

11 *“The Leader may appoint up to three Deputies to the Leader for up to two years from the date of*
12 *their appointment”*

13 A new ‘*Deputies to the Leader*’ section to be added after Section 7.1. to include the text below:

14 *“Deputies to the Leader must be at least 18 years of age and have been a member of the Party*
15 *for at least 12 months prior to their appointment. Their role will be to support the Leader and*
16 *serve the Party in the following ways:*

- 17 1. *Deputise for the Leader, as required, to represent the Party in the media and at external*
18 *events and high-level meetings;*
- 19 2. *Provide advice to and act as a sounding board for the Leader, helping to develop and*
20 *achieve their vision for the Party;*
- 21 3. *Provide connectivity between supporters, members, and branches and the core operation of*



- 22 *the Party, and enable the Party to reach and connect with new audiences and communities;*
23 4. *Lead or support specific projects or activities that contribute to delivering the Party's*
24 *mission, such as fundraising, partnership work, or capacity building;*
25 5. *Substitute for the Leader as acting leader upon being chosen to do so by the Steering*
26 *Committee should the Leader be incapacitated or unable to serve for any reason."*

Motion rationale:

27 The Women's Equality Party has achieved amazing things in the last five years – we have much
28 to be proud of and to celebrate. However, the Pandemic and the aftermath of it raises the stakes
29 for women in ways none of us could have imagined. To meet the challenges that lie ahead we
30 will need to build stamina, resilience and ingenuity at all levels of our party.

31 As a 'political startup' it's right that we take stock periodically and look for ways to improve and
32 evolve how we work, drawing on our own experience and/or models or examples from elsewhere.
33 Being deliberate and purposeful about doing this will give our Party the best chance possible of
34 fulfilling our mission.

35 In that spirit, this motion seeks to enable the Leader to appoint a team of up to three Deputies.
36 Experience to date strongly suggests that this additional capacity would be of great benefit to the
37 Leader and to the Party.

38 An example of where a similar arrangement works very effectively is the Mayor of London's City
39 Hall operation. Once elected, the Mayor is able to appoint up to 10 Deputy Mayors to support
40 them with delivering their manifesto. Similar arrangements apply across the UK with devolved
41 Mayors and Leaders selecting deputies that specialise in or lead on key areas to ensure the
42 success of the region/country.

43 We are a young and small but growing Party. We are hugely ambitious. The role of Leader is very
44 pressurised and demanding. Politics is disproportionately hostile to women and the political
45 system in the UK is disproportionately hostile to us as an insurgent movement. If the
46 Government's response to the pandemic has taught us anything it's that narrow perspectives
47 make for poor decisions. Alongside the Leader the team of Deputies will set an example of how
48 to break the mould of the macho, individualistic survival-of-the-fittest political leadership that
49 excludes so many people, especially women.

50 Reliable support around the Leader is essential to help us navigate the turbulence and hazards
51 we face as well as take advantage of the opportunities in our midst. Enabling the Leader to appoint
52 Deputies will ensure that the leadership team comprises people with the best possible
53 combination of skills and attributes, as well as the personal, political, and professional experience
54 required to navigate specific challenges facing The Party and The Leader at any given time, and
55 who share the Leader's vision, can work well and constructively with them and with each other
56 (which will reduce the risk of the devastating factional infighting that plagues other parties). In
57 addition, this approach will give the Leader the discretion to establish a team that reflects the
58 diversity of women our Party exists to represent and serve, thereby broadening our reach,
59 relevance, appeal, and impact.