



# WE Party Conference

15 – 18 October 2020

**Amendment Title:** Removing random appointments to Local Councils

**Proposed by:** The Steering Committee of the Women's Equality Party

**Proposer:** Francesca Pridding

**Type of amendment:** Amendment to business motion

**Title of motion you wish to amend:**

Reimagining the UK Economic and Political System

**Motion text you wish to amend:**

Lines 11 and 12

**Wording of amendment:**

1 Delete lines 11 and 12

**Amendment rationale:**

2 The term 'Local Authority' incorporates a wide variety of institutions, it can mean a Parish  
3 Council with a precept of £500 per year but equally it can refer to a Council such as  
4 Birmingham City Council or a large Unitary Authority. In all of these organisations  
5 however, the fact remains that Members/Councillors are held to account **only** by a vote  
6 of the electorate due to the flimsiest of standards regimes.

7 Performance obligations on a Councillor are merely to attend a meeting once every 6  
8 months.<sup>1</sup> This aspect of the motion could mean that WE are compelled to campaign for  
9 random members of the public being selected to receive a members' allowance in excess  
10 of £13k per year and only attend 2 meetings during that year.

11 Local Authorities across the UK are required to adopt a Code of Conduct<sup>2</sup>, it serves to  
12 remind Councillors of existing law, and suggests a course of behaviour. Breaches of the  
13 Code are not sanctioned in any meaningful way, often, the only deterrent for a badly  
14 behaving Councillor is Party deselection which would be nullified by random selection.

15 Random appointments also risk tipping the balance of power on a Council with a narrow  
16 majority, posing the real risk of bolstering the 2-party system and disenfranchising smaller  
17 parties with only a slim chance that we could serendipitously randomly select a WE  
18 member.

<sup>1</sup> Local Government Act 1972 s.85 (1)

<sup>2</sup> Localism Act 2011, Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000, Local Government Act 2000