



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.¹ 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 Conduct², 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.

¹ Local Government Act 1972 s.85 (1)

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