



## Party Business FAQs

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## Basics

Why should I come to the Party Business sessions?

This is your chance to vote and decide on the policies and procedures the Party will take forward, to take part in debates and have your voice heard. You'll hear ideas you love and ones you disagree with, and you will be able to join in the conversation to say so. Any WE member with a conference ticket can take part in Party Business.

When are sessions and how do I know what's being discussed?

Have a look at the [Conference Programme](#) for when the debates are, and check out the [motions and amendments on the website](#) to see what the motions are about (they are also available via the conference app). There are three Party Business sessions over the weekend and the programme details which motions will be debated in each session.

What rules are there for how Party Business works?

The [Standing Orders](#) set out the rules for debate and Conference will be asked to ratify them by a vote at the beginning of the first Party Business session. You can also find out the answers to how specific parts of Party Business will work in these FAQs.

## Debates

How long will the debate on a motion be?

If you look at the [Conference Programme](#) for your motion you will see how much time has been allocated – usually 10 minutes, 20 minutes or 30 minutes depending on whether an amendment is also being presented. However it also depends on the timings in the session and how many delegates wish to speak.

How many people can speak in a debate?

It's very hard to say. It depends on the time allotted to the motion, the speakers' time limits, and whether the programme is running to time. The Chair will always try and allow as many people as possible to speak, within the time constraints of the session.

What happens if people get argumentative?

It's a debate, so not everyone will agree. However, we know that WE members can and will disagree respectfully and in a reasonable way. According to the rules, debaters have to behave in a way that's appropriate, reasoned, relevant, respectful and considerate, and not defamatory, obstructive, personal or abusive. The Chair

has the right to mute and/or remove from the debate anyone whose behaviour does not abide by these rules and prevent them from participating in any or all following debates.

What order will amendments and motions be debated and voted on?

If there is an amendment to a motion to be debated then this is the debate sequence:

- The motion is proposed
- The amendment is moved
- The amendment is debated
- Conference votes on the amendment
- If the amendment passes, the motion is debated as amended
- If the amendment falls, the motion is debated unamended
- Conference votes on the motion as amended/unamended.

## Speaking in debates

I have something important to say in this debate – can I join in?

Yes, you can submit a Speaker Card during Party Business sessions (links can be found on the app and will be shared in the zoom chat), and the chair will allow for as many speakers as possible in the time available. It's really important to make sure you use your full name on the Speaker Card and on the zoom webinar so you can be found if you are called to speak. As soon as each session begins, you can submit a speaker card related to any motion on the agenda for that session.

To change your screen name in the zoom webinar: go to the participants list, hover over your name, click 'More', and choose 'Rename' to change your screen name displayed. The Chair will decide who to call and you'll get three minutes to speak (proposers of motions get five minutes). If you have any accessibility needs that mean you need more time, please indicate that on the Speaker Card. Proposers of motions/amendments will be called to present their motions/amendments and get the opportunity to sum up at the end, everyone else must submit a Speaker Card.

But how will I speak? Can I just unmute myself?

No, we're using the webinar function of zoom which means you won't be able to be seen and heard for the most part. If you are called to speak during a debate by the Chair you'll be promoted from attendee to a speaking participant on zoom (which means you'll briefly leave and reenter the meeting – don't worry, you haven't been kicked out; reentering is automatic, and will also happen after you've spoken). You will then be able to speak to all the conference delegates. It's really important to make sure you use your full name on the Speaker Card and on the zoom webinar so you can be found if you are called to speak. To do this in the zoom webinar: go to

the participants list, hover over your name, click 'More', and choose 'Rename' to change your screen name displayed.

How long will I have to speak?

Proposers of motions will have five minutes to speak. All other speakers have three minutes, although the Chair can reduce speaking time as needed to keep the session to time.

## Voting

Is the voting method the same for all motions?

The method is the same, but the majorities required are not. Most votes will require a simple majority (more than half) but any changes to the constitution require a two-thirds majority. The Chair will state before the vote what majority is required and the details about which majority is needed can be found in the [Standing Orders](#) and [Constitution](#).

But how do we vote using zoom?

When a vote is called by the Chair, a zoom poll will be launched. You will have one minute to register your vote. It will give you three options – in favour (yes), opposed (no) and abstain (don't know, don't want to vote). Select your choice and submit your vote. The Chair will then announce the results, which will also be visible on screen, and whether the motion has passed or fallen.

Who can vote?

All party members in the Conference Hall will be able to vote. Supporters who are attending Conference will be able to watch a streaming of proceedings but cannot vote.

## FAQs for motion and amendment proposers

My motion/amendment has been accepted for debate at Conference. How do I get myself noticed so I can speak?

You will see the slot your motion/amendment has been given in the [Conference Programme](#). Please make sure you log into the zoom meeting at the start of the session, using the same name which you used to submit your motion. You'll be called by the Chair when it's your turn to speak. It's really important to make sure you use your full name on zoom as with the motion/amendment you submitted so you can be found if you are called to speak. To do this in the zoom webinar: go to the participants list, hover over your name, click 'More', and choose 'Rename' to change your screen name displayed. We recommend that you remain in the session

from the beginning until after the vote on your motion/amendment as it is possible that we will run ahead of time.

How will people know what I'm talking about? Will they see the motion?

The motions and amendments [have been published](#) and will also be displayed on screen during the debates. If a motion has an amendment (accepted or not), the amendment will be shown in a different colour to the motion text. The lines of the text will be numbered to make it easier to talk about different parts of the motion.

I rejected an amendment to my motion – will it still be debated, and when?

Yes. If an amendment to your motion has been accepted by the Agenda Committee but you haven't agreed to it, it will be presented as soon as you have proposed your motion, so Conference can decide whether to adopt the amendment. There will probably be a short debate on it which you have a right to contribute to (you'll need to put in a Speaker Card to do so).

I've proposed an amendment which the motion proposer didn't agree with – can I speak in the debate?

Yes, as amendment proposer, you will have three minutes to move the amendment. There will probably be a short debate on it following which you have a right to sum up.

What happens if my amendment is accepted?

If it's accepted, your amendment will become part of the motion and Conference will debate and vote on the motion as amended.

What happens if my amendment falls at the vote at Conference?

The motion will be debated and voted on unamended.

## Procedural motions and Points of Order

I think this motion needs more work to be ready to become party policy or change the way we run our party – can I suggest that?

There is a mechanism in the [Standing Orders](#) which allows delegates to suggest a motion should be referred back. Delegates can suggest this using a Chair Card, which can be found attached to each session of Party Business in the app and will be posted in the zoom chat. You should read the Standing Orders to check exactly what detail you need to provide when submitting this procedural motion to the Chair.

Everyone's just repeating themselves and we're not coming to a conclusion – can't we vote now?

There is a mechanism in the Standing Orders which allows delegates to suggest a motion should be closed and brought to a vote. Delegates can suggest this using a Chair Card, which can be found attached to each session of Party Business in the app and will be posted in the zoom chat. You should read the [Standing Orders](#) to check exactly what detail you need to provide when submitting this procedural motion to the Chair.

This motion seems redundant to me. Can we move on?

There is a mechanism in the Standing Orders which allows delegates to suggest Conference should move on from a motion without a vote. Delegates can suggest this using a Chair Card, which can be found attached to each session of Party Business in the app and will be posted in the zoom chat. You should read the [Standing Orders](#) to check exactly what detail you need to provide when submitting this procedural motion to the Chair.

I disagree with part of a motion, though I think the rest of it works well. What can I do?

You can request a vote on separate lines of a motion. To do so, fill in a Chair Card saying you want a vote on particular lines (specify which lines) and giving your reason for doing so. The Chair has the discretion to ask you to speak on those lines, and to call a vote on them. You cannot call for a line vote on Emergency Motions.

I think proceedings are not within the rules of the Standing Orders, what can I do?

Go to the Q&A tab in zoom and state "Point of Order" to raise a point of order. The Chair and their Co-Chairs are monitoring the Q&A. The Chair will call you to speak after the next speaker has finished, when you can raise your Point of Order (you will do so without your video on but should be ready to unmute yourself). The Chair decides whether Points of Order are valid, and their decision is final. Points of Order can only be about the conduct of the debate according to the [Standing Orders](#). Please do not use the Q&A function for anything else other than typing "Point of Order".