

# Spring Conference Agenda

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2022



**10:00 Welcome**

**10:05 Policy Motions**

- Road Tax levied on HVO biofuel
- Care Experienced Young People in Wales

**10:40 Business Motion**

- Re-energising the Party in urban and valley areas

**11:00 Motions to Amend the Constitution**

- Changes to the Federal Board, and the creation of a Federal Council
- Changing the way that Representatives to Federal Party Committees are elected
- Tidying up membership of the Policy Development Committee
- Correcting an error in the constitution
- Clarifying limits on Committee Memberships

**11:10 Presentation on Proposals for Senedd Reform**

**11:40 Topical and Emergency Motions**

**12:00 Close of Conference**

Followed by Introduction to Connect Training

Full text of motions are available on subsequent pages

## **Policy Motion: Road tax levied on HVO biofuel**

Proposed by Gwynedd & Môn Liberal Democrats

Conference notes that:

1. Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) is a biofuel made by treating vegetable oils with hydrogen. These vegetable oils include waste fats from animal farming and from cooking, and some alternative oils, such as algae.
2. HVO is used as a fuel for lorries, replacing diesel, so helping businesses to reduce their greenhouse emissions.
3. HVO has a longer shelf life than other biofuels.
4. Most domestic oil-fired heating systems use kerosene, a fossil fuel that produces greenhouse gases when burnt.
5. HVO can be used for domestic heating oil, as a replacement for kerosene. The costs to convert domestic systems to run on HVO are low compared to other replacement energy sources, such as heat pumps.
6. HVO is taxed as road fuel, in the same way as petrol and diesel, which makes it financially unviable to use it for domestic heating. Kerosene for domestic heating oil, in contrast, only attracts VAT, currently at 5%.

Conference believes that:

1. It is vital for the planet that we reduce CO2 emissions from domestic heating.
2. That electricity-based heating is only as green as the fuel that generated the electricity.
3. That HVO can have a role in domestic heating. It is greener than fossil fuels, and is useful because it can be made by recycling waste products from cooking and animal farming.
4. HVO, when used for domestic heating, should not be taxed at the same rate as petrol and diesel used for transport.

Conference calls for:

1. HVO, when used for domestic heating, to be taxed at the same rate as kerosene.

## **Policy Motion: Care Experienced Young People in Wales**

Proposed by Welsh Young Liberals

Conference notes that:

1. There are around 7,265 children in care in Wales, an increase in 2% from 2020.
2. Wales has the highest rate of looked after children away from home in the UK at 115 per 10,000 of the under-18 population.
3. Around 20% of homeless people in Wales are care leavers.
4. Almost 25% of the adult prison population have previously been in care, and nearly 50% of under 21-year-olds in contact with the criminal justice system have spent time in care.
5. 41% of care leavers aged 19-21 years are not in education, employment, or training (NEET), compared to 12% of all 19-to-21-year-olds.
6. 7% of care leavers aged 17 years are in accommodation considered to be unsuitable.
7. NYAS Cymru's 'Listen if you Care' report states that 45% of respondents chose a word that suggested a negative experience in care overall, such as 'dreadful' and 'horrible'.
8. Care-experienced children and young people have consistently been found to have much higher rates of mental health difficulties than the general population, including a significant proportion who have more than one condition.
9. Many care leavers rely on Universal Credit once they turn 18, in the absence of support from their families.
10. There is a lower rate of Universal Credit for all under-25-year olds.
11. Many care leavers on Universal Credit are five times more likely to be sanctioned than other claimants, and are less likely to appeal their decision.
12. There are huge problems in recruiting and retaining social workers, and staff turnover is high.

Conference believes that:

1. Care-experienced young people can be more vulnerable than their non-care-experienced peers. They require support from all levels of government, local, devolved, and national.
2. Care-experienced young people need more support on average, compared again to their non-care-experienced peers. As they may not have a strong family network to support them and their wellbeing.
3. Care-experienced young people deserve at least equal access to basic support and opportunities e.g. education, welfare benefits, mental health support.
4. All children and young people deserve support in reaching their full potential, no matter what their circumstances may be.
5. That no-one should be enslaved by poverty, ignorance, or conformity.

Conference resolves that:

1. The Liberal Democrats should continue working towards a federal UK, so Wales can have its own justice system and/or control over welfare benefits for example.
2. In the meantime the Welsh Government should encourage the UK Government to give care leavers under the age of 25 the higher rate of Universal Credit. In order to compensate for the fact they may not have a strong support network, or family to help them with everyday living costs or one-off essentials.
3. The Welsh Government should also encourage the UK Government to stop benefit sanctions for care leavers. Unless they regularly break their claimant commitment, then if a sanction is to be applied it must be agreed upon by a young person's adviser.
4. Every local authority in Wales makes a commitment that their care-experienced young people are given high-priority need for housing, up until the age of 25.
5. Care-experienced young people should be taught basic knowledge of what they are entitled to in regard to an array of issues e.g. education, healthcare, housing.
6. Professionals e.g. social workers, teachers, young persons advisers who work with care-experienced young people need to have consistent, adequate, and trauma-informed mental health training.
7. All care-experienced young people should have access to CAMHS up until the age of 25.
8. Every care-experienced child or young person will be offered the best support to try and maintain meaningful contact with their siblings and other family members.
9. The Welsh Government should provide every care leaver a 'Leaving Care Grant' of a minimum £2,000, in order to support care leavers to buy furnishings and white goods for their first home. This grant should increase every year by 2%, and then be reviewed after every 5 year term.
10. University entry requirements should be lowered for care leavers, with appropriate accommodation and all-year round support for all those pursuing higher education.
11. There should be a guarantee of a job, apprenticeship, or training for all care-experienced young people when they leave school. Alongside the aim of having at least 20% of care leavers going to university.
12. Any care-experienced young person from Wales going to university, in any part of the UK should receive an annual bursary of at least £1,500 from the Welsh Government. This should also increase every year by 2%, and be reviewed after every 5 year term.
13. The Welsh Government should create a strategy on how to retain and recruit more social workers, with the aim of recruiting at least 500 more social workers over a 5 year term. Alongside, we also give social workers a 2% pay increase every year.

## **Business Motion: Re-energising the Party in urban and valley areas**

Proposed by Newport Liberal Democrats

Conference notes:

The urban and valleys areas of Wales are critical to the future success of the Welsh Party, overwhelmingly Labour-facing. Until 2012 we were a major force in these areas. In recent years, we have struggled to carve out a distinctive niche for ourselves. Some of this must lie with our failure to create unique policies for urban voters. The Party needs to re-energise urban and valley policy and campaigning.

Conference calls for:

1. A new focus on big ticket policy priorities that are relevant to urban and valley areas such as economic development and well being, housing and planning as well as environment and transport.
2. An urban and valleys campaign plan to be put in place.
3. The setting up of an urban and valleys campaigners network.
4. The party to ensure campaigning materials support the needs of campaigners in urban and valley areas, not just suitable for Tory-facing.
5. The setting up of a monitoring plan to record and action party development in urban and valley areas.

## **Motion to Amend the Constitution: Changes to the Federal Board, and the creation of a Federal Council**

Proposed by the Constitutional Affairs Committee

Conference notes that at the Spring 2022 Conference of the Federal Party the Federal Constitution of the Liberal Democrats was changed to:

1. Reduce the number of members of the Federal Board, in so doing removing the Welsh Party's representative to the Federal Board but keeping a seat at the Federal Board for the President of the Welsh Liberal Democrats.
2. Create a Federal Council, which include three members from each State Party, elected according to their own procedures.

Conference therefore acknowledges the need to amend the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats to take account of the new governance arrangements of the Federal party.

Conference therefore resolves to amend the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats as follows:

1. Delete clause G.1.2.a.x and replace with "One of the representatives of the Welsh Members on the Federal Council, chosen by those representatives".
2. In clause G.16.a delete "The Representative to the Federal Board" and replace with "The three Representatives to the Federal Council".

# **Motion to Amend the Constitution: Changing the way that Representatives to Federal Party Committees are elected**

Proposed by the Constitutional Affairs Committee

Conference notes that:

1. When the current governance structure of the Welsh Liberal Democrats was adopted into the Constitution the responsibility of electing Welsh Party Representatives to Federal Party Committees was passed to the Welsh Party Board or relevant committee, unless an election of all members was required by the Federal Constitution.
2. Previously these representatives had been directly elected by members, and sat on Welsh Party committees as additional members.

Conference believes that this decision should be revoked.

Conferences therefore resolves to amend the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats as follows:

1. Delete clauses G.16.b, G.16.c and G.16.d and replace with a new clause, numbered G.16.b:  
"The Representative to the Federal Conference Committee, the Representative to the Federal International Relations Committee, the Representative to the Federal Policy Committee, and the Representative to the Federal People Development Committee shall:  
I. Be elected by the Party Membership. Any member may apply but must have the support of 5 members.  
II. Be elected for three-year terms.  
III. Commence office on 1 January of the year following their election, with the election taking place alongside the Autumn Conference preceding the start of a three-year term."
2. In Clause G.3.2.a.ix delete "one of whom shall become the Party's representative to the Federal Policy Committee".
3. In Clause G.3.2.a add a new sub clause at the end "The Welsh Party's representative on the Federal Policy Committee".
4. Add new sub clause at end of G.4.2.a "The Welsh Party's representative on the Federal People Development Committee".

## **Motion to Amend the Constitution: Tidying up membership of the Policy Development Committee**

Proposed by the Constitutional Affairs Committee

Conference notes an anomaly in the Constitution where “a representative of the committee with responsibility for organising Conference” is a voting member of the Policy Development Committee while “a representative of the Conference Committee” is a non-voting member of the same committee.

Conference believes that this anomaly should be rectified by only having one representative of the Conference Committee as a voting member of the Policy Development Committee.

Conference therefore resolves to amend the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats as follows:

1. Delete Clause G.3.2.a.ii and replace with “A representative of the Conference Committee”.
2. Delete Clause G.3.2.b.ii

## **Motion to Amend the Constitution: Correcting an error in the constitution**

Proposed by the Constitutional Affairs Committee

Conference notes an anomaly in the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats allowing the Membership Development Committee to create working groups, but that responsibility for the composition and terms of reference of any such working group rests with the Policy Development Committee.

Conference believes that this is a typographical error that should be rectified, with the Membership Development Committee agreeing the composition and terms of references of its own working groups.

Conference resolves to amend the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats as follows:

1. In clause G.4.3 delete "Policy Development Committee" and replace with "Membership Development Committee".

## **Motion to Amend the Constitution: Clarifying limits on Committee Memberships**

Proposed by the Constitutional Affairs Committee

In Election Rules for the Annual Elections by Conference delete clause C.4 and replace with "Directly elected individual membership is limited to two Welsh Party Committees, including the Board."

## **Topical / Emergency Motion**

The deadline for submitting Topical motions is 1pm on Wednesday 29th June, while the deadline for Emergency motions is 9am on Saturday 9th July.

Any motions submitted and accepted on to the Agenda will be added to this space after the deadline.