



Women's Equality Party Conference

26 November 2022

Title: **The roles of the President and M.C.**

Proposed by: **The WE Steering Committee**

Proposer: **Catherine Mayer**

Seconder: Sandi Toksvig

Type of motion: **Business motion**

(N.B. **Bold** text is new; ~~struck through~~ text has been deleted.)

Motion text:

1 The Women's Equality Party Conference:

- 2 • notes that when the Party was founded, its co-founders Catherine Mayer and Sandi Toksvig
3 accepted lifetime roles on the Steering and Executive Committees as President and M.C.
4 respectively;
- 5 • acknowledges that this was a demonstration of their commitment to the party they founded, and
6 intended to ensure continuity and stability in the party's earliest days and to boost the party's
7 media profile and fundraising capacity;
- 8 • further acknowledges that their continued commitment and input remains of significant value in
9 those respects, but that their important contributions should not automatically grant the right to
10 seats on the Steering and Executive Committees; and
- 11 • resolves to remove that automatic right to seats on the Steering and Executive Committees
12 whilst maintaining their lifetime roles.

13 **Conference therefore resolves to change the WE Constitution as follows:**

14 7.2.1 There are two lifetime posts ~~on the Steering Committee~~ **in the Party...**

15 7.4.4 The Executive Committee shall consist of: ~~the President, the M.C. and five additional~~
16 ~~Members from the Steering Committee...~~

17 7.4.6 ...Meetings of the Executive Committee are chaired ~~by the Party President or another chair~~
18 ~~elected by a member of the committee~~ **elected** by a simple majority vote...

19 7.4.7 ...In the event of a tied vote, the **Chair** ~~President~~ shall have the casting vote.

20 Remove article 7.5.12 (ii) entirely.

21 7.5.17 In the event of a tied vote of the Steering Committee, those present of the Leader, ~~the~~
22 ~~President, the M.C.~~ and the Chairs **of the Steering and Executive Committees** shall together
23 agree on the casting vote.

Motion rationale:

24 Catherine Mayer and Sandi Toksvig agreed to take on lifetime roles in the party as a demonstration
25 of their commitment to the party they co-founded. Whilst they both will continue in their lifetime roles
26 as President and M.C. of the Women's Equality Party, they plan to stand aside from positions on the
27 Steering and Executive Committees, which they currently hold by virtue of their roles. This shift would
28 of course not prevent them from seeking election to those committees. The time is right to move away
29 from automatically granted positions, and this will also increase the weight of elected Steering
30 Committee representatives in party decision making.

31 **They remain fully and passionately committed to the party and asked to make clear, in their**
32 **own words, why they brought this motion:**

33 "We have always believed in doing politics differently - to the extent of co-founding a party that has in
34 many respects not only challenged old ways of doing things, but broken the mould and achieved real
35 and brilliant change. We could not be more proud of the party or more fervently committed to its aims.

36 We accepted lifetime roles in order to help build the party. Our formal positions in the party give helpful
37 clarity in interactions with the media and, crucially, with donors and potential donors. We hope that
38 you will agree that our input on matters of policy, strategy and operations has also been of value.

39 However as the party matures, it seems obvious to us that if we wish to continue feeding into policy,
40 strategy and operations, we should earn that privilege rather than assume it. We therefore propose
41 these constitutional changes to regularise our positions within the party in that respect while retaining
42 the titles that enhance the party's media profile and fundraising capabilities."

43 Catherine adds:

44 "I am putting myself forward for election to the Steering Committee and would be happy to continue
45 serving on the Executive Committee if my contribution is deemed useful. I am offering my services
46 because I believe I still have skills, experience and insights to contribute. However, my proudest
47 achievement in co-creating WEP is to have helped bring so many brilliant people into the party and
48 activism, and I am confident that there are many excellent (and very possibly better) candidates for
49 these positions."
