

Conference Daily

Saturday 23 September

Liberal Democrats Autumn Conference

Bournemouth, September 23-26 2023

Information from the Federal Conference Committee for Saturday 23 September. Please read in conjunction with the **Agenda & Directory** and **Conference Extra**.

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Saturday 23 September

F2 Federal Conference Committee Report

Q1. Submitted by Toby Keynes

At Spring Conference this year, a number of friends attending online told me they were unable to cast their votes for some sessions. Which sessions were affected, what proportion of members trying to vote are believed to have been unable for each of these sessions, and how confident are you that members won't have similar problems this Conference?

Q2. Submitted by Joe Norris

In your report, you welcome first time attendees. What steps have FCC taken to ensure first timers and returning attendees alike know where to go for safeguarding concerns?

Q3. Submitted by Fraser Graham

Do you think it is proper that chairs and aides of debates are being expected to police all speeches for compliance with the code of conduct as well as ensuring an orderly debate?

Q4. Submitted by James Bliss

Does FCC recognise that scheduling the GE Manifesto consultation, an important place that members input into the next manifesto, and the FB + others report session at the same time could be a serious conflict in the membership effectively holding board and council to account?

Q5. Submitted by Joe Norris

From its mid-July meeting, what updates can you share from the Innovation Working Group?

Q6. Submitted by Joe Norris

With the rising cost of living, what are FCC doing to maintain and expand the support offered by the Conference Access Fund?

Q7. Submitted by Adam Belcher

On what basis would a motion be rejected if an identical motion had been accepted for the cancelled conference last autumn?

Q8. Submitted by Joe Norris

What has been your committee's worst mistake, and what have you learnt from it?

Q9. Submitted by Joe Norris

Two of the biggest carbon dioxide emitters in the world, why do you think it is appropriate that BP and Chevron are at this conference?

Q10. Submitted by Joe Norris

Why did FCC select 'F31: Tackling the Housing Crisis', which seeks to abolish the national housing target - a policy committed to by conference only two years prior?

Q11. Submitted by James Bliss

Both F17 and F44 have within them a ban on disposable vapes, which is by no means an uncontroversial policy in a liberal party, does FCC recognise it could be an issue selecting multiple agenda items that seek to sneak in the same policy at one conference?

Q12. Submitted by Judith Bailey

What steps is FCC taking to discourage or sanction abusive language being shouted at conference speakers, as happened at Spring Conference?

Q13. Submitted by Gareth Epps and John Grout

Why has FCC not acted to deal with the issue arising at York Conference of the abuse of motions to amend the Constitution (and/or Conference Standing Orders) that are egregiously at odds with the Party's fundamental values? Does FCC feel that the rules around submission selection of questions to party bodies at Conference need to be revised to better-ensure that repetitious and vexatious questions, or those creating a hostile environment for a protected group, are discouraged?

Note: Both submitters of this composite question will be entitled to a supplementary question.

Q14. Submitted by John Grout

Can FCC explain why there was a police perimeter outside the York Barbican at the end of F15 at this year's Spring Conference?

Q15. Submitted by Trish Kilgour

Is FCC aware of any instances, whatsoever, of trans/non-binary members being harassed/endangered at Spring Conference 2023 by party members with gender critical beliefs?

Q16. Submitted by Fraser Graham

Have FCC noticed any increase in new people submitting motions for consideration, or is it still the case that most motions come from the same few people? What can the Federal and Regional parties be doing to encourage a wider range of submissions for conference?

Q17. Submitted by Michael Berwick-Gooding

Please can you state how many people registered for the in-person Spring Conference in York and how many registered for online access? Please can you state how many of each group had a party staff or parliamentary staff voting pass?

Q18. Submitted by Fraser Graham

Yet again we find ourselves on the South Coast of England for a conference, resulting in many members having to make difficult decisions on the cost of transport and accommodation and the time spent on a train vs air travel. Are we ever likely to see Autumn Conference return to a more central and affordable location?

F3 Tidying up Standing Orders**Amendment One**

15 members

Mover: Matt McLaren.

1 *Delete 7. (lines 34–35) and insert:*

2 7. *In SO 12.4 (Supplementary questions to reports), lines 7–8, delete*
3 *‘two minutes’ and insert ‘1 minute’.*

F4 Federal Policy Committee Report

Q1. Submitted by Joe Norris

What has been your committee's worst mistake, and what have you learnt from it?

Q2. Submitted by John Grout and Joe Norris

The timetable laid out for policy paper consultations goes to Autumn 2024, which may well take us beyond the next General Election. Does this reflect FPC's view of these areas' respective priority for the party, and how will FPC ensure that these policy areas are adequately covered in our manifesto, should the election happen first? What would happen to any working group should a GE be called before they can conclude their work?

Note: Both submitters of this composite question will be entitled to a supplementary question.

Q3. Submitted by James Bliss

Housing targets are a policy that in recent memory have been approved by conference on at least two occasions. Why does FPC feel it appropriate to attempt to subvert the settled will of conference by sneaking in abandoning targets in a policy paper, whose work started around the same time as conference last approved targets?

Q4. Submitted by Tony Vickers

When will FPC return to the work of the last Local Government Finance working party whose work was subsumed into the 2011 Tax Commission but which that body never dealt with?

Q5. Submitted by Tony Vickers

What work has been undertaken recently or is planned in future to look at inter-generational wealth inequality and appeal to younger voters who create wealth rather than privatise it?

Q6. Submitted by Zoe Hollowood

Does FPC agree that the Equality Act 2010 is an important piece of legislation in protecting groups with different protected characteristics from discrimination and harassment? Will FPC agree to a written commitment to maintain the Equality Act 2010 in the Party's manifesto?

Q7. Submitted by Fraser Graham

What is our manifesto going to say about Europe?

Q8. Submitted by Michael Berwick-Gooding

Have the 750 members who attended the online manifesto consultation sessions been surveyed to ask if they believed that their attending these sessions had any influence on what is in the pre-manifesto document? Have the survey results from the eleven thousand members who responded to the pre-manifesto online survey been collated? And if so, can the results be published in the members' only section of our website?

F5 Combating Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery

Mover: Tim Farron MP.

Amendment One

ALDC

Mover: Cllr Jacqui Taylor.

Summation: to be announced.

- 1 *In 5. (line 74) after 'agencies' insert: 'and for any additional costs to be*
- 2 *fully funded by central government'.*

Background briefing:

This motion updates and develops policy on human trafficking, modern slavery and workers rights, as well as responding to the Nationality and Borders Bill and the Illegal Migration Bill.

It builds on existing policy as set out in the policy motion *A Better Alternative to the Small Boats Legislation* (March 2023) and *Safe and Legal Routes to Save Lives* (March 2021).

F7 A Fair Deal for the Armed Forces Community

Amendment One

ALDC

Mover: Cllr Darryl Smalley.

Summation: Cllr Clair Muir.

1 *After viii) (line 34), insert:*

2 ix) The role of local authorities in delivering the Armed Forces
3 Covenant and supporting the Armed Forces community, including
4 through education, housing and healthcare.

5 x) The excellent work of Councillor Armed Forces Champions in raise
6 awareness of the needs and build support for members of the
7 armed forces, their families and veterans.

8 *After 12. (line 93), add:*

9 13. Support local authorities to meet and exceed their duties within the
10 Armed Forces Covenant and encourage councils to appoint a
11 member as Armed Forces Champion (that haven't already done so).

12 14. Bolster the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme to ensure more
13 employers achieve accreditation, and instil an expectation that all
14 public sector organisations should be working towards Gold Award.

Background briefing:

This motion updates and develops policy on armed forces and veterans welfare.

It builds on existing policy as set out in General Election Manifesto *Stop Brexit and Build a Brighter Future* (2019) and policy motion *Armed Forces Personnel: Recruitment, Retention and Welfare* (September 2017).

F8 Bring Back the Industrial Strategy

Aide: Cllr Darryl Smalley.

The FCC has agreed to make the following drafting amendment to the motion:

1 *In a) (line 61), after 'civil society' insert '(including Trades Unions)'.*

Amendment One

10 members

Mover: Joshan Parmar.

Summation: Lord Clement-Jones (Lords Spokesperson for Science, Innovation and Technology).

1 *After VI. (line 39), insert:*

2 VII. An industrial strategy is vital for addressing the rise of Artificial
3 Intelligence technology (AI), which presents huge opportunities to
4 transform our economy and people's lives for the better, whilst also
5 presenting significant risks.

6 *After 9. (line 108), add:*

7 10. Bring forward legislation with the aim of creating a clear, workable
8 and well-resourced cross-sectoral regulatory framework for AI, that
9 promotes innovation while creating certainty for AI users,
10 developers and investors; and establishing transparency and
11 accountability for AI systems in the public sector.

12 11. Negotiate the UK's participation in the Trade and Technology
13 Council so we can play a leading role in global AI regulation, and
14 work with international partners in agreeing common standards for
15 AI risk and impact assessment, testing, monitoring and audit.

Amendment Two

North West Region

Mover: Andrew Haldane.

Summation: Iain Donaldson.

1 *After iii) (line 58), insert:*

2 iv. The devolution of responsibility for regional economic development
3 as set out in the 2021 motion “A Framework for England in a Federal
4 UK”.

5 *After b) (line 66), insert:*

6 c) Provide a strategic framework for effectively addressing the needs
7 of economically disadvantaged, remote or rural areas by
8 collaborating with local, regional and devolved authorities in
9 England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, to establish and set
10 out how the strategy supports and facilitates industrial
11 regeneration and innovation across all UK nations and regions.

Background briefing:

This motion updates and develops policy on industrial strategy and economic development.

It builds on existing policy as set out in policy paper 144, *Rebuilding Trade and Cooperation with Europe* (March 2022), and policy motions *Boosting Small Businesses and Jobs in the Post-Pandemic Economy* (September 2021) and *A Green Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic* (September 2020).

F10 A Better Start In Life

Amendment One

Sheffield

Mover: Rebecca Atkinson.

Summation: Sue Alston.

1 *In 3. (line 81), after ‘SEND’ insert: ‘or potential SEND considerations’.*

2 *After b) (line 86), insert:*

3 c) Addressing the chronic shortage of speech and language
4 therapists and educational psychologists to provide timely

- 5 assessments of individual children, in order to assign individual
6 Educational Health & Care Plans where appropriate.

Background briefing:

This motion and the accompanying policy paper update and develop policy on childcare and early years.

They build on existing policy as set out in General Election Manifesto *Stop Brexit and Build a Brighter Future* (2019) and policy paper 128, *Every Child Empowered: Education for a Changing World* (March 2018).

F12 Restore Standards in Public Life

Aide: Professor Belinda Brooks-Gordon. Hall Aide: Alison Jenner.

Amendment One

11 members

Mover: Rowan Fitton.

Summation: Rowan Fitton.

1 *After 2. (line 49), insert:*

- 2 3. Introduce motions of no confidence in respect to individual
3 ministers which will allow Members of Parliament to table motions
4 to remove a Minister of the Crown from office if they fail to
5 command the confidence of the House of Commons.

Amendment Two

10 members

Mover: Tessa Munt.

Summation: Nick Coates.

1 *After 7. (line 66), insert:*

- 2 8. Put the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments and the
3 Commissioner for Public Appointments into legislation, along with
4 their underlying rules, as recommended by the Committee on
5 Standards in Public Life.

Amendment Three

10 members

Mover: Tessa Munt.

Summation: Nick Coates.

1 *After 7. (line 66), insert:*

- 2 8. Ensure more equal access to government by lobbyists and other
3 vested interests by issuing guidance for departments and requiring
4 them to report annually on the steps they have taken.

Background briefing:

This motion updates and develops policy on standards in public life, the accountability of politicians and the behaviour of parliamentarians.

It builds on existing policy as set out in policy motion *Political Reform to Tackle Sleaze* (March 2022) and the General Election Manifesto *Stop Brexit and Build a Brighter Future* (2019).

F13 Ending Period Poverty

Background briefing:

This motion creates new policy in relation to period poverty. It also builds on existing health policy as set out in policy paper 137, *Save the NHS and Social Care by Stopping Brexit* (September 2019).

F14 Parliamentary Parties

Q1. Submitted by Callum Robertson

The Liberal Democrats have a track record standing up for refugees. What more work do we have planned to support resettling of refugees from Afghanistan?

Q2. Submitted by Elaine Bagshaw

I was disappointed that post the passage of the illegal migration bill, the government has effectively criminalised asylum seeking. What more can we do to oppose this backwards step

Q3. Submitted by Candy Piercy

I am concerned by reports that the Tory Lords are opposing Wera Hobhouse's Worker Protection Bill. Why are they trying to block these protections, especially for women in the workplace?

Q4. Submitted by Adam Robertson

Should Technical Groups be given permission to be formed in the House of Commons, such as the Irish Dail allows?

Q5. Submitted by George Cunningham

3.5 million British citizens abroad will be enfranchised by the next General Election. How will our MPs serve their overseas constituents and issues better in Parliament?

Q6. Submitted by Leon Duveen

What efforts have the Parliamentary Parties to support peacemakers in Palestine & Israel and oppose the 'Judicial Reforms' in Israel?

Q7. Submitted by Andrew Hudson

Will the parliamentary parties oppose the Rail Delivery Groups proposals to close booking offices?

Q8. Submitted by Joe Norris

Do you recognise the importance of working with diversity AOs before submitting Private Member's Bills on topics that directly affect the groups they represent?

Q9. Submitted by Paul Edgworth

What steps are being taken by Parliamentarians to distinguish ourselves from the Labour Party?

Q10. Submitted by Alison Jenner

Does the party recognise that gender critical parliamentarians, councillors and party members have experienced significant abuse for their protected beliefs from within the party; how does it propose to tackle this?

Advance Notice Sunday 24 September

F23 For a Fair Deal

Amendment Six

22 members

Mover: to be announced.

1 *After VIII. (line 42), insert:*

2 Conference utterly condemns the Prime Minister's scrapping or delaying
3 of key net zero policies, which will accelerate global heating, undermine
4 business confidence and investment and increase the cost of living.

Advance Notice Monday 25 September

F33 Standing with Ukraine

The FCC has agreed to make the following drafting amendment to the motion:

1 *In iv) (lines 26–27), delete 'failure to proscribe the Group as a terrorist*
2 *organisation' and insert 'decision in September 2023 to proscribe the*
3 *Group, over eighteen months after Liberal Democrats were the first to*
4 *call for the Group's proscription'.*

5 *Delete 3. (line 56) and insert:*

6 3. Build on the long-overdue proscription of the Wagner Group, by
7 making the case to our international allies such as the US and the
8 EU to take the same step, and working with them to ensure
9 proscription orders and sanctions are not circumvented.

Amendment One

Brighton & Hove

Mover: Michael Wang.

1 *After vii) (line 36), insert:*

2 viii) The ongoing persecution of anti-war activists inside Russia,
3 including criminal proceedings for the dissemination of accurate
4 information regarding the conflict that contradicts the official
5 narratives of the Russian Government. These proceedings carry a
6 maximum sentence of 10-15 years.

7 *After 7. (line 79), add:*

- 8 8. Take a stance to defend anti-war activists inside Russia, through
9 initiatives such as:
- 10 a) Raising in all appropriate forums the cases of individuals in
11 Russia who face persecution for expressing criticism of the
12 invasion of Ukraine or disseminating truthful information
13 about it.
- 14 b) Making offers of asylum to and issuing asylum visas for
15 individuals in such cases.
-