



How should we elect our Party Leader?

We feel that either the current model or a return to an electoral college are both fair ways which take the views of different stakeholders into account. We feel that the party should be led by grassroots members and affiliates however, in the unlikely event that the party should return to a college we would propose that this should be between trade unions and members. If the even more unlikely situation takes place that elected officials are given a formal role, then Councillors and members of devolved assemblies should be given an equal role to MPs.

Assuming that there is no return to an electoral college, we believe that paying members should make up the electorate and hold the power. We are the mainstay of the party in the country.

The party should certainly maintain transferable voting for leader, to ensure the widest possible mandate for whoever wins. In addition, sitting leaders should always be presumed to be on the ballot if they are challenged and do not wish to step down.

What role should registered supporters have in leadership elections?

We feel that the consensus in the party has shifted away from the registered supporters model, who by now should have become paying members. Instead, we propose that a revision is made of bands for membership subscriptions, in order to be doubly sure that those on low incomes are always able to join and participate. We do feel that those casting votes for leader of the Labour Party should be prepared to make a long-term commitment to us as a movement and party beyond casting a vote. We feel that this opinion is also shared by many on both the left and right flanks of the party.

In addition, those who previously signed up as registered supporters should be converted into full party members at the same rate for a year, and asked if they want to renew.

Given that Labour now has over 400,000 members, we feel that the priority should shift towards a party which is stable in the long term with a healthy core; if this does not take place we risk the party taking wild political swings in the

future, and when making constitutional rules, the future in the longest term sense possible should always be placed first in mind.

What should be the nomination threshold to get on the ballot paper to stand for Party Leader?

There is a good case for reduction if this does not lead to political zig-zags, huge amounts of candidates on the ballot, or long term political instability and potential splits.

As such if the party presses ahead with a reduction in the threshold it must compensate for these potential effects – the removal of registered supporter status would fit this.

In terms of what threshold is reasonable, we believe that any candidate wishing to command the PLP should be able to win 10% of its members support.

It is also notable that the only role of MPs is now as gatekeepers. We agree that MPs secure their primary mandate from their selection, but they are selected for reasons which include their sense of judgement, and they are subject to the general electorate. Leaving MPs with no discernible role may lead to an increased trend of disloyalty to leaders in the future – the best way to secure loyalty is for those whose loyalty you expect to have a recognised stake in decision making.

There does, in our opinion, need to be a way to limit candidates to those who can show real support in the PLP, party and trade union movement. With a 5% limit, 13 MPs would be enough to reach the ballot paper. The maximum amount of candidates that could be nominated on those grounds is 20. This opens some uncomfortable political possibilities.

How should "freeze dates" work in elections for the Leader, the National Executive Committee and for delegates to Annual and other Conferences?

Freeze dates should have a strong relationship with member compliance – we would suggest that those voting should not have recently campaigned against Labour candidates, and that freeze dates should allow enough time to check that this is the case. We see no problems with the current freeze date regime for any of the positions above as long as the compliance process is made more transparent and is properly resourced.

We do believe a freeze date should be in place, and though we feel that registered supporters are now obsolete as a category in leadership elections, we are opposed to the idea of dropping freeze dates for them should they remain. Labour should emphasise recruiting members with leaders in office, not just during leadership campaigns.

Does the current composition of the National Executive Committee need to be changed or not?

We are not particularly against the current system and we don't believe changes to the NEC should be a big political priority, especially if they are based on political outcomes rather than on having an effective and representative model.

However if there is a change we would suggest adding to CLP seats, but the extra seats should be elected by members on a regional basis. Labour is at risk of developing an issue with London-centrism and a membership restricted to larger towns and cities across the country. An NEC serious about tackling this would probably require more members from outside those areas.

We have also argued previously for politically independent 'sections' to represent under-represented groups, and argued that these should each have an NEC slot elected by OMOV from that section. This would require a sweeping reform, but we believe it would be the right one.

Does the current system of elections for the National Executive Committee need to be changed or not?

Yes.

At the moment the system is dominated by factions from the wings but fails to represent the middle of the party or those who do not buy in to the organisational discipline of formal factions.

We propose that NEC elections move to a system of transferable voting (e.g. STV) in line with other positions widely elected by OMOV throughout the party, and will campaign for this if there is no change.

This would not completely remove the current political battles which take place, but would ensure that there is more of a core between the wings of the party and movement. It would also reward breadth of support in the party alongside

good organisation and well financed campaigns, where at present only the latter is rewarded.

Do changes need to be made to Annual Conference, and if so what changes?

Our members fed back over two broad themes – a rethink of access and affordability for members and CLPs, improvements in the way party democracy functions via conference.

There was a feeling that with many more members we are likely to have many more conference delegates. Given that CLPs have the same voting entitlements opinion was divided on how good or bad this is, but there was consensus that CLPs or the national party need to find better ways of making sure CLPs can afford this – either CLPs should have delegations they can show they can fundraise for and be assisted by regional offices to do so, or delegation sizes should be capped. CLPs should be encouraged to keep an access fund for both delegates and potential visitors if they can show that they are new members, unwaged, or low income. Payment methods for conference passes should be made much simpler, and more should be done by the party to source low cost accommodation and venues which can take the numbers we are seeing.

On democracy there was demand for greater transparency and accountability in terms of rules and standing orders, priority balloting, compositing, and a proper formal system to decide how speakers are called rather than bidding for the attention of the chair. Proceedings should be live streamed, and the party should employ a member of staff to explain online what the purpose or outcome of votes etc will be in real time. CAC rules and decision should be made available to delegates. CAC reports should cover the last day of proceedings. Each CLP should have its delegate/vote entitlement publicly listed, as should each affiliate.

Speeches from delegates should be subject to a shorter time limit to allow more people to speak. In moving or seconding motions, at least one speaker should be female.

There was a feeling that the power of unions over priority balloting in particular should be rebalanced slightly towards members – we would suggest that motions are split between affiliate and member motions, both subject to votes from all of conference floor.

We feel that conference should be returned to its status as the final decision maker on policy. However it is true that conference alone cannot provide policy with the level of detail or research required to run the state or provide a costed or realistic party platform.

There are still valuable functions which could be taken by the NPF, for example conference policy could be passed to the NPF for refinement and the creation of implementation plans, and the NPF could become a proposer of motions itself.

We would also urge the party to take a look at the systems used in Greece by Syriza and in Spain by Podemos, where detailed policy platforms come to conference having been subject to detailed investigation and debate by experts, unions, elected reps and party members. In both formations it is rare that democratic policy making is limited to 'contemporary resolution' style proposals – it is accepted that time and deep involvement are needed. For us, this would also be a good opportunity for the party to trial more collaborative models of policy making over a long term period, instead of the sometimes simplistic and polarising propose/for/against process which can happen with conference motions. This logic is also not in contradiction to the role of the NPF – indeed, it could become a facilitator of this process.

Finally on this front, we have previously expressed the idea that Women's conference should also have the power of proposal – we stand by that recommendation.

To sum up, policy making in the party should be overseen and signed off by conference, but it should largely be a much deeper more collaborative process before it gets to that stage. There is still space for conference resolutions at the same time – though we feel that these can be further refined by an implementation body once they have been passed.

There should be more effort to integrate first time delegates socially as well as politically, perhaps by providing social spaces after the day's business – pubs alone should not be expected to take the full burden.

What changes (if any) should be made to the way we work at a regional level?

Our members suggested changes to the NEC structure improvements to regional offices and conferences. Open Labour members suggested more

regional places on the NEC, and an expanded CLP reps section. Both of these could be done by creating an open section and a regional section. But the number of members NEC seats should not exceed those of affiliates – unions and socialist societies are losing a lot of structural power at the moment, and in our opinion they remain as important as ever to the core of the party.

Regional offices should be better resourced, especially now we have an increased regular income. However they require better governance – Regional Board minutes and voting records should be published where not unduly politically sensitive among the wider public, or about private disciplinary matters etc. Each region should have an annual regional conference to which all party members are invited. There should be a clear process for nominations and elections to the board. Each board should have an automatic place for the Young Labour regional rep. Finally, the party should review the borders of our regions towards conformance with the model of governance in the UK, i.e. the 'government office regions'. This matter should be under fairly regular review.

Regions should organise group meetings for particular CLP role holders, e.g. secretaries, which could make it easier to give training and make sure CLPs are performing to high standards.

How do we strengthen links between the Party and the trade unions locally?

The broad themes expressed by our members were governance and ongoing relationships.

Some members expressed a wish to return to delegate based GC models, and to return to something like the LGC in local government as a form of accountability as well as campaign organising. There was a feeling that unions are able to operate best with CLPs when there is a formal structure which facilitates this.

There was dismay at a general low level of communication and overlap between CLPs and union branches. TULO officers should be given contact details by local branches, and people joining unions should all be asked if they wish to join the local Labour Party. Union branches and CLPs should be encouraged centrally to provide each other with speakers.

Each CLP should have a TULO officer, and these should receive specific training and instructions in their role from TULO and the regional office.

There should be regular meetings between CLP personnel and unions, but also between unions and local elected representatives.

New members to unions should be given a Labour membership pack and contact details for their local CLP secretaries.

How do we get more trade unionists involved with the Party?

We have previously argued to abolish affiliate member status in favour of full membership. Some unions are much better equipped to recruit their members to Labour as affiliate members, and this needs to be kept in mind if structural decisions are made around the issue.

One contribution once more lays out the issue of communication breakdown locally: "I realise I may be unique in not having that knowledge above but it does seem that if you want to get more TU members involved with the Party, you first have to find them. I am truly despairing of the lack of tradespeople and manual workers in my local Branch. If we want people to be joining TUs and the Labour Party then they need to be joining something which they would be proud of and happy for their neighbours and friends to know about. It's not happening here..."

CLPs nationwide should encourage members to support grassroots industrial struggles such as strikes, demonstrations, events or local organising campaigns. When an industrial action is called or there are incidents such as large layoffs, Labour should be considering how we can best support union members and win their support in return – we may be an electoralist party, but we are also one founded around the labour interest.

Labour needs to work better with local TU offices. It would be helpful if TULO was able to give local CLPs these details.

In addition, we feel there is a need to encourage women trade unionists in particular. Unison can now claim 80% female membership, but this tends not to represent in union members who become locally active in politics.

What changes (if any) need to be made to the Party's relationship with any of our Socialist Societies, Friends Groups or other similar groups?

Our strong feedback on this issue is that there needs to be much more prominent publication of who our socialist societies are and what they do. Several members commented that they either knew little of socialist societies, or even that they found them secretive. The general consensus is that they are not sufficiently visible.

As such socialist societies require a prominent space on Labour's website, in conference booklets etc, and should be part of packs given to joiners of the party. In addition the party should explore ways of helping socialist society personnel to become more prominent in political debate in the media.

Members expressed a need for socialist societies to meet a minimum democratic standard in order to warrant their further involvement within the party, and though we would urge caution and general non-interference from the party in socialist society affairs, it is also true that the party ultimately has a right to ultimately deny affiliation. We do not advocate that the party takes this route of course, but it does make a case for a much softer level of intervention. In particular socialist societies should not be vulnerable to 'capture'; they should have clear and publicly available constitutional documents. Some feedback asked that socialist societies should be expected to use an OMOV based system with a full franchise for members when deciding on delegates to external bodies, namely CLPs, branches, regional boards – though we accept that the socialist societies NEC place has to be negotiated between their executives. These comments referred to socialist societies as a whole, but we also received specific complaints about the failure of Labour Students to enact an OMOV voting system in line with their own constitution.

The party needs a way to escalate complaints, provide aid, and possibly provide some level of sanction if societies act in violation of their own rules and other ways forward have been exhausted. Labour should expect high standards of governance, transparency and openness from bodies who wish to affiliate to it.

Finally, if the party does create a more prominent web presence for socialist societies, it should consider listing where socialist societies have made submissions to the NPF or conference, for ease of transparency and in order to encourage a high level of activity.

What role should Constituency Labour Parties have in making policy?

Local parties should pass resolutions as at present, but also do deeper long term pieces of detailed policy work, and adopt more consensus based models of policy making such as breakouts or problem solving type approaches. In addition to forming better policy, we feel that this would add a greater width of debating styles and be more inclusive, particularly if paired with techniques like active listening.

What role should Party Conference have in making policy?

It should have final democratic signoff on all policy including that which comes from the NPF. It should take final responsibility for our manifesto. It should debate contemporary motions, but also go through more detailed documents from CLPs and the NPF, which should be put to votes in parts where contentious.

What role should motions and contemporary motions have at Conference?

The same as at present, but we feel that there should be a body (such as the NPF) responsible for overseeing implementation.

How do we develop local and regional economic plans and local policy?

We would advise the party to seek best practice examples and present them, rather than adopting a one size fits all model.

How can motions from Constituency Labour Parties be dealt with more effectively?

There should be a contemporary motions sections specifically for CLPs.

What are your views on the National Policy Forum and how it works?

It could continue to exist, but the importance of conference needs to be elevated. The NPF needs to become far more transparent and have regular meetings and debates. It should have a clearer relationship with conference policy, be able to make submissions, and oversee implementation in practice of conference resolutions. Conference should also be able to resolve to send policy to the NPF for consideration if it is deemed not contemporary, insufficiently detailed etc.

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**LABOUR PARTY DEMOCRACY REVIEW
OPEN LABOUR SUBMISSION - PART 3**