Priorities Ballot: How to vote

In today’s priorities ballot, CLPs and the unions can each choose four subjects for debate. The subjects chosen should help the Party present itself as united, moving forward and preparing policy to form the next government.

The unions have already agreed which subjects they will prioritise (see box, right). These issues will be discussed by Conference.

CLP delegates should not vote for any of the four subjects chosen by the trade unions. The CLPs’ votes can select an additional four topics for debate (giving eight debates in total).

CLP delegates are urged to vote for these topics (highlights from the motions on the topics follow).

● Housing: It’s one of the most pressing issues facing the country: building council houses to meet the desperate housing need must be an absolute priority of the next Labour Government.

● Schools: we need a more robust policy of opposition to the continuing academisation of schools in England, reflecting the work of our Labour-controlled authorities which have resisted academisation.

● Windrush: the leadership has exposed the cruel and discriminator “hostile environment” policy and forced the resignation of a Tory Home Secretary. Labour’s policy is to end the policy, fully compensate victims, and demand that the Government makes immediate interim hardship payments. Labour must also scrap the Immigration Act of 2014 which enshrined the “hostile environment” in law.

● Palestine: We must support the leadership in taking a principled position of solidarity with Palestinians. Conference must prioritise calling for a freeze of UK Government arms sales to Israel and an immediate and unconditional end to the illegal blockade and closure of Gaza.

Voting to prioritise these four subjects recommended for the CLPs would help focus Conference discussions on a progressive agenda.

● Brexit
● An economy for the many
● Government contracts
● In-work poverty

Support CAC reference back: BAME and Disabled delegates must be heard!

As it has been set out, the agenda means that rule changes on BAME and Disabled members’ representation will be heard in the same short time slot as other completely unrelated changes to NEC composition.

BAME and Disabled members should not be sidelined or undermined. All rule changes concerning BAME and Disabled members, both from the Democracy Review and those submitted by CLPs, should be scheduled alongside each other to allow proper debate.

● Support reference back!

See the CLPD/Momentum Guide to Conference on:
www.clpd.co.uk

Daily briefing for delegates published by:
The Democracy Review’s rule changes

Today we have the opportunity to make significant democratic changes to our rulebook. These will give members more say at a local, regional and national level. They make progress in representation of BAME and disabled members and promise much more in relation to the long overdue democratisation of our women’s and youth structures. Importantly, they enshrine a Charter of Members Rights in the rulebook—a longstanding demand of CLPD. It will be easier to swap between GCs and all-member meeting structures, and other measures will strengthen local structures.

These are just some of the recommendations of Jeremy Corbyn’s Democracy Review. Katy Clark, along with NEC members Claudia Webbe and Andy Kerr, have been up and down the country listening to members and affiliates and coming up with proposals to support our growing Party becoming more democratic and inclusive. The report, on the party website, is well worth a read. It will be up to the incoming NEC to take forward many more recommendations to improve our local government structures and ensure members can be genuinely involved in policy making. By opening up our Party, engaging and inspiring our growing membership, we will be best placed to achieve the Labour government this country desperately needs.

Members should vote for recommendations on individual members’ rights and on local, regional and national structures. These will be a huge step forward.

On leadership nominations, when there is a vacancy, the Democracy Review recommended reducing the threshold for nominations from the PLP from 10% to 5% – alongside either 10% of CLPs or affiliates. It is disappointing therefore that the NEC decided to keep the minimum threshold of 10% of the PLP.

This would make it difficult for an MP sharing Jeremy’s political positions – which have turned Labour into a mass movement and helped us avoid the decimation faced by our sister parties in Europe - to get on the ballot paper. CLPD will ensure that we return to the Democracy Review’s recommendations in the future.

Last night at the NEC

The NEC had quite a bit of unfinished business concerning the conference.

● Rule Change re Trigger Ballots to be proposed by the NEC
If either one third or more of party branches or one third or more affiliated branches vote for a selection to take place, a selection will then proceed.

● Democracy Review Part II
In the case of a vacancy for Leader or Deputy Leader, each valid nomination must be supported by 10% of the PLP/EPLP and either 5% of CLPs or at least 3 affiliates comprising 5% of affiliated membership.

● Whether our Party should retain “registered supporters” was referred to an NEC review, as was the procedure for local affiliations from Affiliated Organisations.

● Rules Changes from CLPs that were submitted in 2017, under the one year delay come up this week. Many will fall if the NEC proposed rule changes are carried. Those remaining on the agenda will be opposed by the NEC, except the proposal that the NEC draw up standing orders for party conference; the rule change removing the one year’s delay re rule changes; the rule change proposing there be two deputy leaders, one a woman.

● Special Election of additional members to the National Constitutional Committee
The NEC will propose a rule change increasing the NCC from 11 seats to 25 seat – eight new seats elected by the trade unions and six elected by the CLPs (both gender balanced). The elections will take place as soon as possible after Conference, as a one-off arrangement. Each candidate must have five years continuous party membership and be nominated by at least 10 CLPs including their home CLP and at least 5 CLPs from outside their home region.

● Selection of candidates for the following three seats
Sheffield Hallam will select from an all-women shortlist. Barrow-in-Furness and Birkenhead will select from open shortlists.

Tomorrow’s bulletin will carry a report of yesterday’s Labour Women’s Conference.