

Peter Willisman's

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2011 GUIDE FOR CLP DELEGATES AND CLP SECRETARIES

*(Published by The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy  
email – [info@clpd.org.uk](mailto:info@clpd.org.uk) website - <http://www.clpd.org.uk/>)*

*(Also see [www.grassrootslabour.net](http://www.grassrootslabour.net) and [www.leftfutures.org](http://www.leftfutures.org) for a wide range  
of useful information about Party matters, including NEC and NPF reports)*

### **The Conference Agenda**

The following business will comprise the Conference timetable:

The National Executive Committee (NEC) Report and possible late NEC statements that can be issued to delegates during conference.

**NPF Report, including reports from the six policy commissions of the National Policy Forum**, together with separate annex reports, which will cover the progress (or otherwise) that has been made at the relevant Policy Commission in relation to each of the Contemporary Motion subjects remitted at the 2010 Annual Conference.

Contemporary Motion subjects and Emergency Motions that cover matters that would not otherwise appear on the conference agenda.

The Refounding Labour document. This will contain a range of proposals, probably including associated rule changes.

Proposed rule changes from the NEC (other than those connected to Refounding Labour) and from CLPs. (The rule change proposals from CLPs were submitted last year, but by convention (known as the '1968 Ruling') are not tabled until this year. This convention does not apply to rule change proposals from the NEC).

Elections for the CLP Section of the Conference Arrangements Committee (CAC) and National Constitutional Committee (NCC).

(Details are set out in written reports from the CAC (ie the initial Delegates Report and daily CAC Reports). The CAC is in near permanent session during Conference and acts as the Standing Orders Committee. Delegates have the right to present any queries directly to the CAC itself. Delegates who feel strongly about a point should insist on this right.)

### **Reports from the six Policy Commissions and Annex Reports**

There are now six policy commissions, which draw up policy reports for discussion by the NPF. Each of these commissions reports to Conference.

The six policy commissions (each made up of 16-20 members representing the Government, the NEC and the NPF) are: Britain in the World; Creating Sustainable

Communities; Crime, Justice, Citizenship and Equalities; Education and Skills; Health; Prosperity and Work.

At last year's Annual Conference, Contemporary Motions on the following subjects were remitted to the NPF: economic and industrial strategy; public services; rights at work; tax avoidance; and housing. Subsequently each of these Motions has been discussed at the relevant Policy Commission. In some cases, reps from organisations that submitted the Motions were invited to the discussions. Thus, in addition to its annual report to Conference, each relevant Commission will also have to report back to Annual Conference explaining how the specific issue has been, or is being, dealt with. This report will be in an annex to the Policy Commission report and will be voted on separately from the Policy Commission report.

In reporting back to the Conference, the relevant Commission co-convenor will move the annex on Conference floor.

Once the annex has been moved, the organisation which proposed the original Contemporary Motion subject (at last years' Conference) will have the right to address Conference indicating their view of how the discussions have gone over the year, what progress has been made and the likelihood of resolution of any outstanding matters. They will also be able to indicate their view of how Conference should vote on the annex which might include indicating their approval of the outcome, advising conference that progress has been made but more work is needed or asking Conference to vote against the annex on the basis of their opposition to the outcomes.

When voting on the annex Conference can choose to:

- Accept the report and therefore indicate satisfaction with the resolution of the issue or satisfaction with the progress being made on resolving the issue.
- Vote against the report indicating dissatisfaction with progress being made on the issue.
- Remit back to the Commission for yet more discussion (this happened last year with Remploy and several other issues)

### **Contemporary Motions (CMs) from CLPs/affiliated organisations**

The closing date for submission of a "contemporary motion" is 12 noon on 16<sup>th</sup> September. Emergency Resolutions cover an event that occurs after this date. Each CLP can send one CM provided that they have not already submitted a rule amendment in 2011. Head Office issued guidance on drafting CMs. The CM must be expressed in 10 words or less (usually with up to 250 words of back up). **CLPs need to ensure** that the subject has not been substantively addressed by the NPF or NEC. In the past this has meant that the CM must relate in some way to something occurring after the end of July. The CM must be on one subject only. CMs on party organisation and campaigning **are in order**. This was clearly spelt out in the Partnership in Power procedures agreed by Conference in 1997. However, in recent years the Party's senior officials seem to have forgotten this and have been resistant to such motions.

Head office usually issues a special form for CMs and it is recommended that this is returned by recorded delivery. (The CM has to be sent by email to the Assistant

CAC Secretary but should be followed by a signed hard copy on the special form). (Alternatively membersnet can be used).

The time allowed for choosing a CM is very short. In many CLPs the EC, or the officers, are empowered to agree the CM.

Before Conference the CAC makes its decision as to whether each CM is judged to be “contemporary”. Usually the CAC contacts the CLP Secretary with its decision a day or two before Conference opens. There is likely to be an appeal process on the Thursday on the eve of Conference when CLP reps. can put their case directly to the CAC. (See below)

The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy has prepared several draft CMs for consideration by CLPs. These are being circulated to CLPs but are also available on grassrootslabour.net or by phoning 01865 244459.

### **Emergency Motions**

Emergency resolutions may be submitted on matters that arise after the final date for submitting Contemporary Motions and, therefore, could not be the subject for a CM. To be valid the issues in an Emergency:

- Could not reasonably have been submitted through the Contemporary Motion process
- Should not appear elsewhere on the Conference agenda
- Should cover an issue of urgent and immediate importance to the discussions of the whole party at Annual Conference
- Should not be covered in the NPF Report
- Could not have been submitted to the NPF for its consideration

Unfortunately, there can be no guarantee that valid emergency resolutions will be debated at Conference. It is a matter for the CAC – delegates are encouraged to lobby the CAC as necessary.

There is apparently no special form for Emergency Motions. They have to be emailed to the CAC Assistant Secretary, followed by a hard copy signed by the secretary or authorised officer.

### **Refounding Labour Consultation**

This initiative has been driving by Ed Miliband and Peter Hain (Chair of the National Policy Forum). CLPs, Unions and individuals responded in considerable numbers, making a wide range of suggestions for reform.

E and P are putting forward many constructive proposals including involving trade union levy payers more effectively at the CLP level. But they seem not to realise that levy payers **are party members**, albeit affiliated members. Unfortunately E and P are also proposing a three pronged reduction in the power of the unions within the Party. They want ‘registered supporters’ to have a vote for Leaders and Deputy Leaders by reducing the union share in the electoral college. They want to reduce the size of the union vote at Annual Conference by perhaps giving a vote to MPs and/or councillors and/or NPF members. This would destroy the existing and justifiable balance at Conference of two equal wings (50% political and 50%

industrial). And E and P want to reduce the number of union reps on the National Conference Arrangements Committee.

At Liverpool delegates will be faced with a final document from E and P that is likely to be tabled as an NEC document. There may be attempts to force this through on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. Delegates are also likely to face a range of associated rule change proposals to various parts of the Rule Book. There may even be an attempt to have all these varied rule changes taken together (and voted on in one card vote). This would be against custom and practice and would be a very undemocratic procedure, since it would deny delegates a chance to assess each proposal on its specific merits.

### **Rule changes from the NEC (other than those associated with Refounding Labour)**

These are set out in the **Delegates Report** issued to delegates before Conference. Advice in relation to these rule changes will be given to delegates in CLPD's daily Campaign Briefing.

### **Rule changes from CLPs (submitted in 2010 but debated in 2011)**

Conference will have the opportunity to debate and vote on the following important rule change proposals. These were submitted in 2010, but under the Party's procedures are not brought forward until 2011. (This procedure is formally called the '1968 Ruling', but it is not really working as it was intended in 1968). But they are not actually timetabled at Conference unless a request has been made to the CAC by the CLP/delegate (the closing time for making this request is likely to be 5.30pm on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September). The safest way is for the CLP Secretary to write to the CAC (c/o Head Office) well before conference. Invariably the platform opposes all rule changes from CLPs which devalues the whole process.

At the time of writing the following are the most important rule changes coming before Conference from last year (full details will be given in the **Delegates Report**). It is vital that delegates ensure that the CLP proposals are given a fair hearing and are not brushed aside. Many of them are in line with the general thrust of the Refounding labour document.

### **A new Clause IV (from Castle Point, Ceredigion and Dagenham and Rainham LCPs)**

One of New Labour's first acts was to remove from the Rule Book the iconic Clause IV, which had been inserted in to our Constitution by the Fabians, Beatrice and Sidney Webb, and which was reprinted on every member's card. This removal was a PR exercise that was presented by New Labour, and their hacks in the media, as some sort of symbolic act. The replacement Clause IV was written by Tony Blair in his back garden and is uninspiring to say the least.

Castle Point and the other CLPs have taken up the challenge and set out a new Cause IV which is a reasoned critique of the current economic system, with a commitment to democracy, human rights and the promotion of human welfare. It reads like a powerful speech by Ed Miliband, or indeed by Ralph Miliband.

### **A Labour Party Code of Ethics (from South Ribble CLP)**

This rule change proposal provides for a Labour Party Code of Ethics that would lay down principles and standards of behaviour to cover all party members, officers, employees, contractors and public representatives. This would fill a gap in the Rule Book that needs filling.

### **A Charter of Labour Party individual and affiliated members' rights (from Hyndburn CLP)**

This rule change proposal sets out a wide range of rights to which members would be entitled, for example the right to be fully involved in policy making, including clear audit trails and feed-back and the right to complain to a party Ombudsperson. The responses to the Refounding Labour consultation revealed a desire within the Party to set out the rights of Party members in our Rule Book.

### **The right of CLPs and Unions to amend NPF documents at Annual Conference (from Bridgend, Burnley, Cardiff Central, Chingford and Woodford Green, East Devon, Gower, Mid Bedfordshire and Nottingham South CLPs)**

This rule change proposes that in the year that Annual Conference is considering the final-stage policy documents from the National Policy Forum (NPF), each CLP and each union should be permitted to submit one amendment to the material in the documents. This would give CLPs some direct role in the Party's policy-making process.

### **Four plus four should equal eight (from Bristol North West and Hemsworth CLPs)**

Subsequent to the adoption, at the 1997 Annual Conference, of the Partnership in Power process, several CLPs, supported by many trade union delegates, managed to achieve the right for CLPs to have four subjects of their choice debated at Conference. The intention of this reform was to have four subjects from the Unions debated and four separate subjects from the CLPs timetabled. Unfortunately the powers-that-be have not honoured the intention of the reform and have only allowed debates on those CLP issues that were not also chosen by trade unions. The rule change from Bristol North West and Hemsworth prevents any further shenanigans by making it crystal clear that the CLPs have the right to always have four subjects debated in addition to a further and separate four chosen by the Unions.

### **CLPs and Unions to have the right to submit a rule change and a Contemporary Motion (from Buckingham, Harrogate and Knaresborough, Hitchin and Harpenden, Holborn and St Pancras, Horsham, Ilford South and North East Bedfordshire CLPs)**

The right of CLPs and affiliated organisations to amend the party's Constitution is an important democratic right. There should be no restriction on this right. At present, CLPs and affiliated organisations can submit either a rule amendment or a 'contemporary motion', but not both. This is an arbitrary and unnecessary restriction, since there is no link whatsoever between rule changes and 'contemporary motions'. The rule change from Buckingham and the other CLPs would remove this unreasonable restriction. The trade unions are generally very supportive of this proposal.

### **To give Conference the right to vote in parts on documents (from Islington North CLP)**

Conference has the right to refer back any section of the NEC Report. But the platform has always refused to extend this right to NEC policy statements (except in 1974 when Tony Benn chaired the Conference). When Partnership in Power was introduced in 1997 delegates were led to believe that National Policy Forum reports would be voted on in parts if Conference so wished. But in practice this has not happened. Conference has to vote for the whole document on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. This means that documents are always passed, although delegates may be unhappy with one or more particular sections. This proposed rule change from Islington North would allow Conference to have a separate vote on any part of a policy document. It is a simple democratic procedure that is long overdue. The trade unions are very supportive of this proposal.

### **Increasing democracy in leadership elections (from Slough CLP)**

At the moment CLPs and Unions are not properly involved in the election process for the Party Leader and Deputy Leader. The rule change proposal from Slough would introduce more accountability and give members and trade unionists more of a direct role in these elections.

### **Separate NEC Seats for party members in Scotland and Wales (from Beverley and Holderness, Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweedale and Stratford upon Avon CLPs)**

The Scottish and Wales Labour Parties have a separate identity to that of the English Regions and each has its own General Secretary. In addition the Scottish and Welsh parties now monitor the work of the Labour Groups in the Scottish parliament and Welsh Assembly. There is, therefore, a strong case for automatic representation on the NEC from party members in Scotland and Wales. The rule change proposal from Beverley and Holderness and the other CLPs would increase the CLP representation on the NEC from six to eight. This would redress the loss of a seat from seven to six which CLPs suffered in 1997, when Partnership in Power was first introduced.

### **Strengthening the right of local party members to select candidates for public office (from Amber Valley, Blackpool South, Caerphilly, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Newport West and Uxbridge and South Ruislip CLPs)**

At recent general elections there has been considerable concern within the Party about the number of late parliamentary selections where favoured candidates seem to have been 'elbowed in' to safe seats, often at the expense of popular local members. The rule change proposal from Amber Valley and the other CLPs would limit the imposition of candidates to the most extreme of circumstances, and in the case of imposition of either shortlist or candidate, then the NEC decision in those cases should be taken jointly with local representatives.

### **Oppose attempts to gag the CLPs**

At last year's Conference, the Conference Arrangements Committee (CAC) dealt with rule changes from CLPs in a very unfair manner. Many were ruled out by a very

questionable and blanket application of the “three-year rule”. This rule states that, when a Conference decision has been made on a rule change proposal, no further amendment to that ‘part’ of the rules will be permitted for three years.

The key word here, of course, is ‘part’. In other words, if a CLP amends a completely different ‘part’ of a long clause in the Rule Book, compared to other parts that may have been recently amended, then that is in order. The CAC ignored the significance of the word ‘part’ and applied a catch-all interpretation. This is unacceptable and if there is any repeat of this unfair practice this year, then any challenge from ruled out CLPs insisting that the Rule Book is correctly interpreted, should be given full support. It is difficult enough for CLPs to have their voice heard in this Party, without the CAC gagging them.

Aggrieved delegates may go to the rostrum and seek redress by challenging the Chair of the CAC. Every delegate in the hall should do their best to support these challenges and oppose the gagging. It could be your CLP next!

### **Voting for the Conference Arrangement Committee (CAC) and National Constitutional Committee (NCC)**

The CAC has seven members. There are five general section seats (of which two must be women) and two CLP section seats (of whom one must be a woman). In 2011 only the CLP section is up for election – each CLP has 2 votes in this section.

Biographies of the CAC candidates and information about obtaining the ballot papers at conference are usually issued to CLP secretaries and/or delegates in early September. [The biogs. are usually printed in the Delegates Report]. GCs should then decide how the vote is to be cast. (The votes for the CAC are recorded and published).

Delegates will also vote for their representative on the NCC. It is important that delegates are fully mandated by their CLPs. The candidates’ biographies are likely to be sent out in early September and may be sent direct to delegates rather than to the CLP (the biogs are usually printed in the Delegates Report).

The CAC will report on the timing, etc. of all these elections, but the likely times are given below.

The NEC has issued a Code of Conduct for internal elections which includes the following:

- Candidates are allowed to canvass delegates but must not distribute literature inside the conference hall. Contact with delegates must not be carried out in a manner likely to cause offence or be seen to be applying pressure to delegates.
- If one candidate is allowed to distribute literature at an official Labour Party event then that facility must be available to all candidates.
- Labour Party staff employed by the NEC shall not canvass or distribute literature on behalf of any candidate. **(Please immediately inform NEC members of any infringements or possible infringements of the Code).**

CLPD and the Centre-Left Grassroots Alliance are supporting candidates in the CAC and NCC elections (details from CLPD on 01865 244459). Details will also be given

to delegates in our daily Campaign Briefing, distributed outside the Conference Centre.

In early/mid September Head Office issues delegates' credentials, rail tickets and card vote booklets. These were always sent to CLPs, but recently they have gone to regional offices for distribution to delegates at the Pre-Conference Regional Briefing meetings (see below). Conference documents are usually sent to delegates around mid September.

### **Late Accreditation (eg for replacement delegates)**

CLPs can apply to the CAC at Head Office if a replacement delegate becomes necessary.

CLPs should advise the Conference Unit in writing and (unless an emergency) well in advance of Conference of any change of delegate giving the reasons. The Conference Unit is in Newcastle and can be contacted by the Head Office switchboard. Due to the tight security arrangements all late registrations at Conference itself involve a long wait. New delegates are therefore advised to attend the Late Accreditation office, Conference Services Unit on the Saturday before the start of Conference (the office usually opens at 9am and is open throughout Conference for help and advice). New delegates need to have a letter of authority from the CLP Secretary, personal identification and their Party membership card (delegates must have been a member for at least 12 months). They also need a passport-style photo and full payment.

### **Pre-Conference Regional Briefings**

Before Conference delegates are usually called to at least one briefing meeting in their region. In the last few years the practice has developed of handing delegates who attend these meetings their Conference credentials and other conference material (eg card vote booklets and applications for ballot papers). Any delegates unable to attend these briefings must contact their regional office to make alternative arrangements for obtaining their credentials – any delegate without a credential is denied entry to Conference. Every CLP delegate (including women and youth delegates) should have their own card vote booklet. But when voting for the CAC and NCC only one delegate votes and this should be agreed collectively.

Delegates should be aware that sometimes in the past Regional Briefing meetings have been used, illegitimately, to pressure delegates to follow the platform line on the contentious issues coming before Conference. If delegates encounter this sort of behaviour by party officials they should formally complain at the meeting and to the NEC (and inform CLPD). Some officials even try to suggest that delegates can't be mandated. The rule book is silent on this. It is entirely a matter for the custom and practice in each CLP. Many CLPs do mandate, as do all trade unions.

In recent years a further platform-inspired tactic has developed of regional officials calling groups of delegates out of the hall during Conference sessions to be pressurised by Ministers. Delegates are, of course, at Conference to represent the views of their CLP and are accountable to their own CLP and not to ministers or regional officials. They should stand firm and not be bamboozled. Regional officials may need reminding that they are Party Civil Servants and should, therefore, be impartial.



## Conference Times

Delegates should arrive early each day, as the security arrangements involve long delays. Any delegate who misplaces documentation will need to report to the CAC for replacements. (Before Conference opens the Secretary of the CAC can be contacted at the NEC hotel). Delegates need to be in Conference from the start of each session since this is when the CAC gives its very important reports.

The Conference sessions will **probably** be:

### Sunday:

14.00 – 17.30	Conference Session	13.30 – 16.00	Contemporary Motions ballot (ie Priorities Ballot)
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### Monday:

9.30 – 12.45	Conference Session	Likely CAC ballot and/or NCC ballot	
14.15 – 16.00	Conference Session	(Probably 9.00 – 16.00)	
16.15 – 17.30	Policy Seminars		

### Tuesday:

9.30 – 11.45	Conference Session
12.00 – 12.45	Policy Seminars
14.15 – 16.00	Conference Session
16.15 - 17.30	Policy Seminars

### Wednesday:

9.30 – 12.45	Conference Session	The rule changes from CLPs are likely to be first thing Wednesday morning.
14.15 – 16.00	Conference Session	
16.15 – 17.30	Policy Seminars	

### Thursday:

9.30 – 12.45	Conference Session
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During the debates there will be a platform introductory speech and a platform reply. And during policy debates members of Policy Commissions will move reports. Ordinary delegates often feel they are not given a fair chance to speak. Platform speakers usually make lengthy speeches but ordinary delegates, if they are lucky enough to be called, are strictly limited to three minutes.

## Daily Business

### Thursday 22 September (in London)

In the last few years the CAC has adopted the practice of being in session on the eve of Conference. This is in order to receive appeals from CLPs and affiliates that have had their contemporary motions ruled as not “contemporary” and, therefore, not appropriate for the Priorities Ballot. Written appeals will be considered and there is the possibility of a telephone conference. It has to be said that major unions have had much more success than CLPs at getting the CAC to reverse its decisions. Nevertheless, it is always worth a try. Contemporary Motions that are ruled out, are not published and are referred to the NPF or NEC, whichever is appropriate. In effect they disappear without trace.

## **Sunday**

CAC Report No 1 (and the Delegates Report) moved by the Chair of the CAC. CAC Report 1 gives details of the definitively agreed timetable for the week. Delegates who feel the CAC has acted unfairly should challenge the CAC's position by moving "reference back". It is likely that CLPs, who have had their rule amendments ruled out unfairly under the 3-year-rule, will challenge the CAC on Sunday. In the interests of party democracy they should be given full support. Each day there is at least one report from the CAC some are written some are verbal. All of these can be challenged if a delegate is not satisfied with what is being said. The written CAC reports which set out the days' business etc, are handed to delegates as they enter the Conference Hall. They can also be obtained from the Labour Party stand or the CAC office.

The Party produces a conference newspaper, which is usually available inside entry points to the centre every morning. The paper contains the very important daily Record of Decisions. Delegates should keep these for reporting back purposes.

In 2011, ballot and card vote results may be published in the daily CAC Reports.

## **The Priorities Ballot**

Those Contemporary Motions that slip through the CAC's nets and reach Conference will be grouped into subjects and published in CAC Report 1 available on Sunday morning at delegation meetings, from the Party stand and when delegates enter the Conference Hall. These subject headings then go into the Priorities Ballot, which will be held on Sunday, probably between 1.30pm and 4.00pm. The Ballot opens before Conference opens, and therefore delegates are prevented from overturning any controversial decisions by the CAC in relation to what are, and what are not, valid Contemporary Motions. Thus, for the first time ever, the CAC is not accountable to Conference in respect of a major part of its decision-making powers.

## **Don't Waste your Vote**

Following pressure from the rank and file, and a successful rule change from several CLPs, supported by the unions, the procedure used to calculate the result of the Priorities Ballot has been changed. It has now been agreed to adopt a '4 and 4' formula. This guarantees that the top four motion subjects voted on by the unions and the top four subjects voted on by the CLPs, will be debated. So, for example, if the CLPs and affiliates both vote for three of the same subjects, with a fourth subject that is different, then there would be five debates on contemporary motion subjects. Thus, if CLP delegates want to make maximum use of this rare opportunity to control what conference debates, they should seek to ensure that eight subjects are chosen (four by the Unions and four different ones by the CLPs). This means that CLP delegates must **not** vote for any of the four subjects that are favoured by the Unions, since to do so is to waste your vote. The four subjects that the Unions will choose are known well in advance of the Priorities Ballot (the Unions vote as a block to ensure they get the four they want). On the Sunday morning, before the Priorities Ballot takes place, CLPD will give CLP delegates advice about the four subjects the Unions have chosen. This advice will be given at CLPD's rally on Sunday morning and in the Sunday edition of CLPD's **Campaign Briefing** handed to delegates outside the conference centre.

## **Sunday evening – CM meetings**

The delegates involved with the successful CMs emerging from the Priority Ballot (announced at the end of the Sunday afternoon session) will be requested to attend meetings, probably on Sunday evening. Every delegate must attend, unless they are given permission by the CAC to be absent. At these meetings delegates will meet the relevant NEC Policy Commission co-convenor and minister to discuss how the subject could be taken forward. Speakers to propose and second the subject on the Conference floor will also be chosen. (After debate at Conference the subject is remitted to the Policy Commission for deliberation over the next 12 months. Reps from those organisations involved with the subject should be invited to these deliberations).

At the Sunday evening meetings the various CMs are usually “composited” together into one or more composite motions. At this meeting each organisation has equal standing. The delegates alone are in charge of compositing and decisions are reached collectively. Don’t be bamboozled by ‘helpful’ officials. Don’t allow material into a composite that contradicts or negates other material – be alert for wrecking tactics.

### **Referring back sections of the CAC reports and NEC reports**

A delegate who wishes formally to challenge any recommendation by the CAC goes to the rostrum immediately after the Chair of the CAC has made a report and moves “reference back” of the relevant section of the CAC report. This is the established procedural convention, which ensures a vote on the point raised, and, if carried, is effectively a defeat for the platform.

Delegates also have the right to force a vote on any point in the NEC report by formally moving “reference back”. Delegates should have the same democratic right in relation to NPF/Policy Commission documents and NEC statements but this has been denied, despite the following statement in the Partnership in Power documents in 1997 – “Conference can refer back to the JPC the relevant section of the NPF Report if it is felt not to represent the view of the Party”. Instead delegates, who may only object to one or two sentences, are forced to move reference back of the whole document. This, of course, suits the platform but is out of line with the basic democracy that operates elsewhere in the Party.

The platform is invariably very unsympathetic to the right of “reference back”. Nevertheless delegates should stand firm and insist on their democratic rights.

### **Voting at Conference**

Voting at Conference is normally by hand unless a card vote is requested by a delegate or by the chair (voting on rule changes is always by card – delegates need to keep their wits about them. Quite often the platform gets in a muddle, which makes the situation doubly confusing).

### **Making a Speech**

**Note – Speakers from the floor are usually only allowed 3 minutes.**

## The makings of a good speech:

- Thorough preparation. Set out your aims and plan the structure. assemble a few choice facts but don't overdo it – speeches that are a list of facts turn the listeners off.
- Write the speech out in bold clear writing; always use short punchy sentences and shorter words rather than longer.
- Try to find a startling beginning or try working backwards from a stunning conclusion.
- Develop an easy and logical progression of ideas.
- Brief personal anecdotes can be helpful for illustrating a point.
- Properly rehearse the speech several times in front of friends.
- Time the speech to the precise minute.
- Remember everyone is nervous before giving a speech to Annual Conference. This is natural.
- At the outset say who you are and give your organisation. Indicate which resolution(s) you are speaking in favour of/against.
- Stand easily. Avoid making distracting gestures. Don't move about – the microphone has a short range.
- Often a major argument is built up or emphasised by rhetorically asking three short questions/making three bullet points and raising the voice as you do this.
- Vary the pitch.
- Pauses for effect are a useful tool.
- Clarity of speech, so the audience understands each word.
- The knack is speaking to listeners and not at them.
- Conclude with a flourish

Always remember:

- Matter, Manner and Method
- Preparation, Practice, Pace, Pauses, Pitch and Punch.

Finally some Don'ts

- Learn your speech by heart and then recite it.
- Speak so quickly that your listeners can't follow.
- Speak in a monotone.
- Harangue or shout.
- Give lengthy statistics.
- Patronise your listeners.
- Over-use slang expressions.
- Use jargon.
- Contrive to introduce humour or tell off-colour jokes. If a joke falls flat, ignore it and continue.
- Be apologetic.
- Name dropping should be avoided.

Movers and seconders of rule changes should get together and aim to make their speeches complement each other, rather than repeating the same points. But vital points are worth repeating in both speeches. Votes on rule changes are always by card vote. At other times delegates have the right to demand a card vote and this right is set out in the CAC's advice booklet issued to delegates.

## **Having difficulty? Consult CLPD**

CLPD are always available to give advice. Before Conference we can be contacted by phone – 01865 244459. At Conference we can be found outside in the street distributing our daily Campaign Briefing – a must for all delegates and visitors! Indeed, Michael White of The Guardian has been on record to describe Campaign Briefing as “indispensable”.

CLPD’s website, together with [www.grassrootslabour.net](http://www.grassrootslabour.net) contain a wealth of both up-to-date and archive material about all aspects of Party activity.

### **After Conference – Decisions Booklet**

After Conference a Record of Decisions booklet is published. This gives full details of each day’s business. It also gives a breakdown of the election results for the CAC and NCC.

## **HAVE A GOOD CONFERENCE !**

Peter Willsman (phone 01865 244459)

Peter Willsman has uniquely represented CLPs on all four of the Party’s national bodies: CAC (1981 - 94); NCC (1995 – 98); NEC (1998 – 99 and 2005-10); NPF (1998 – 99 and 2002-2010).

As necessary, please photocopy this Guide for other members. It can be downloaded at [www.clpd.org.uk](http://www.clpd.org.uk) and at [www.grassrootslabour.net](http://www.grassrootslabour.net)

Regular and full NEC and NPF reports are available at [www.grassrootslabour.net](http://www.grassrootslabour.net) Also see [www.leffutures.org](http://www.leffutures.org) for very useful material.

## **CLPD sponsored events at Conference 2010**

### **Sunday 25 September (10.30am The Green Room, 78 Duke Street)**

CLPD Rally and detailed briefing for delegates of the key issues coming up at Conference.

### **Wednesday 28 September (6pm The Green Room, 78 Duke Street)**

Assessment of Conference and discussion of the way forward for Labour.

## Support the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy

Annual rates: £20 individuals; £5 unwaged and low waged (under £8,000); £25 couples (£6 unwaged); £25 national & regional organisations; £15 CLPs, TUs and Co-op Parties; £5 CLP branches.

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TU ..... Date .....

E-mail .....

Return to CLPD Treasurer; 157 North Street, Luton, LU2 7QH

(CLPD has an email group; we also have a regional organiser in each region to co-ordinate local activity).