

The PLP should be fully accountable to Labour Party Conference

Amendment

At Labour Party Rule Book 2020 Chapter 3 Party Conference, Clause III. Procedural rules for Party Conference, 2. Conference rule 2 – Agenda

Insert at 3.III.2.2 new sub-clause B as follows and reorder subsequent sub clauses:

(i) The NEC shall present to conference the report of the PLP, which shall include: a summary of its activity during the previous year, including its work to advance or implement the Labour Party's policy or programme and an addendum by the Chief Whip detailing any, or all, disciplinary action taken, or ongoing, in relation to any MPs who were elected to Parliament as Labour MPs. This report shall be circulated to all affiliated organisations and CLPs by a date to be determined by the NEC, and not later than 14 days prior to Party conference opening day. Any proposal to review any disciplinary action regarding an MP, supported by not fewer than 30 delegates, and put to conference in advance, or from the floor, shall receive priority consideration and shall be determined by a card vote. Conference shall confirm, or shall void, any decision taken to suspend, or expel, from the PLP, any MP elected to Parliament as a Labour MP. The decision of conference in determining these matters, as it sees fit, shall be final.

(ii) This sub-clause 3.III.2.2 B (ii), conferring on Conference powers set out in sub-clause 3.III.2.2 B (i) above, shall automatically expire at the close of Annual Conference 2021. At the 2021 Annual Conference an item shall be added to the agenda under which the PLP will report to the conference, its activity during the previous year, including an addendum by the Chief Whip detailing any, or all, disciplinary action taken, or ongoing, in relation to any MPs who were elected to Parliament as Labour MPs. Any proposal to review any disciplinary action regarding an MP, supported by not fewer than 30 delegates, and put to conference in advance, or from the floor, shall receive priority consideration and shall be determined by a card vote. Conference shall confirm, or shall void, any decision taken to suspend, or expel, from the PLP, any MP elected to Parliament as a Labour MP. The decision of conference in determining these matters, as it sees fit, shall be final.

Supporting argument

Currently there is no requirement (in Labour's rule book) that the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) be accountable to Annual Conference. Both the NEC and the NPF are accountable through their report to Conference, as required by the rule book.

However, the PLP is not accountable to Conference and currently the rule book does not require it to be. Conference receives no written report detailing the work that the PLP has been carrying out. There is no account made to Conference, for it to consider, setting out any PLP disciplinary action taken against Labour MPs. Neither the NEC Report nor Leader's Speech detail such matters, nor provide an opportunity for Conference to make its view clear on matters it may wish to make a decision on.

This absence of PLP accountability is a very large flaw in the Party's internal democracy, that needs to be urgently corrected, preferably this year (2021).

If this rule change is agreed, in future years Conference delegates will receive a written PLP report and will be able to discuss it. The report will include a Chief Whip's report detailing any disciplinary decisions that have been taken and Conference will be able to confirm or reject any such decisions if it wishes to.

As this change to the rules is long overdue the new rule, if agreed, will start to be implemented from this year. 2021 Annual Conference will receive a verbal report and it will be able to take decisions on the Chief Whip's report.

Closing date for Constitutional Amendments: 12 noon, Friday 11 June 2021