

Reports to Conference Spring 2014 – York

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FEDERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

The Federal Conference Committee (FCC) is responsible for organising the two Federal conferences each year. This includes choosing the agenda from amongst the policy and business motions submitted by conference reps, local, regional and state parties, specified associated organisations and Federal committees, and also taking decisions on topics such as venues, registration rates and other administrative and organisational matters. It works within a budget set by the FFAC.

The FCC has 21 voting members: the Party President; the Chief Whip (or substitute); three state party reps; two reps from the FE and two from the FPC; and twelve members directly elected by conference reps. It elects its own chair (currently Andrew Wiseman), who must be one of the directly elected reps.

Glasgow 2013

After our autumn conference in Glasgow, FCC carried out a full debrief looking carefully at the feedback received from attendees via the online questionnaire. Although this is something we always do it was particularly important this time. We had not been to Glasgow for a number of years and it is always a challenge going to a 'new' venue. We always keep detailed notes of the lessons learnt and with us going back to Glasgow in autumn 2014 these will be particularly helpful.

On the whole, feedback from Glasgow was positive and it proved to be a popular venue. We will work hard with the venue and City Council to iron out some of the issues that were raised in the feedback.

FCC Changes

Since last autumn one of our FPC reps have had to stand down. Dinti Batstone and Julie Smith were performing a job share. Unfortunately, for reasons totally unrelated to the job share, they both needed to stand down. I am grateful to them for their help and support in the short time they spent on the committee.

Dinti and Julie have been replaced by Prateek Buch as an FPC rep.

York 2014

This spring we are trying a new venue. York is a very popular tourist venue and I have no doubt it will prove to be a popular venue for our conference. It always presents challenges when visiting a new venue not only organisationally for the conference office staff and FCC but for members. Finding your way round, knowing where to stay, eat and drink is always an 'adventure' and we have been working closely with the local tourist board, hotels and venue to make life as easy as possible. York is an interesting and vibrant town. We have arranged for a discount on the open top tour bus (please see the conference directory for more detail) so hopefully you will get the opportunity to see some more of this beautiful city.

We are also mindful of the amount of paper that conference generates. This comes at a considerable cost – both financial and to the environment. For a number of years those attending have had the choice to receive just a hard copy of the agenda and directory or a full pack, including all reports, consultation and policy papers. Last year we introduced another option: online only, and we adjusted the conference registration cost to reflect the financial saving of not receiving paper copies from the conference office. I would like to thank all those who have taken up these options; not only have you saved yourself money but you are doing your bit to help the environment. I would urge as many members as possible to take up this option.

Once again we have frozen conference registration rates for members this year.

Motions

As always, every item on the agenda is still open to amendment. The deadline for submitting amendments – and also emergency motions and questions to reports – is 13.00 on 4 March.

We continue to provide a drafting advisory service, and I would encourage all emergency motion and amendment submitters to make

use of it – those who have used it in the past have had a much higher chance of having theirs accepted. The deadline for the advisory service for amendments and emergency motions is 13.00 18 February 2014 and for motions to the autumn conference 13.00 2 July 2014, please do use the service; drafts should be sent to motionsadvice@libdem.org.uk.

Agenda

This conference we were faced with at large number of policy papers from FPC as well as a raft of motions from local parties and representatives. Having the number of items from FPC made balancing the agenda very difficult. To ensure that we could fit in as many motions from representatives and local parties we have restricted the number of set piece speeches and limited the time available for non-debate items. We still have a large amount of debating time for some very important issues and the motions from FPC include the European election manifesto and policy papers that feed into the manifesto process.

Once again, we have also organised a number of 'Ministerial Surgeries'. They take part away from the main auditorium and are an excellent opportunity to question some of parliamentarians. These have proven to be popular with our members and I would urge you to go along to at least one.

Glasgow 2014

The autumn sees us return to Glasgow. We will be making a few changes, picking up on the feedback received. The main one is the finish time. Rather than breaking for lunch on the final day and coming back for the leader's speech, we will finish at around 2pm. We hope this earlier finish will help those who have long distances to travel. We will trial this earlier finish for two years to see how it works in different venues.

We expect registration for autumn conference to open in early May.

Stewards

As always, conference can only take place due to the massive contribution and efforts of the volunteer stewarding team, who look after

the exhibition, fringe, information desk, stage and auditorium, and ensure that we all get the most out of conference.

Federal Conference Committee

FCC members are here to help you make the most of conference – do feel free to ask us any questions you may have relating to the agenda and how to speak in debates. You can identify us by the badges we wear, with 'FCC' prominently displayed; there are also pictures of us (although looking at some of the photos it may be difficult to see the true likeness and could do with updating!) on page 2 of the Agenda and Directory.

FCC members are assigned to state and English regional parties, and SAOs. The idea is that they provide advice and assistance on submitting motions and when requested attend conferences to answer your questions. See the contact details at the end of this report, and don't hesitate to get in touch with the relevant FCC member.

Thanks

The vast bulk of the hard work of organising conference throughout the year falls on the professional staff in the Conference Office at HQ: Lucy Hope and her team Emma Price, Siân Waddington and Joe Edwards. I would also like to express my grateful thanks to all the others who make conference possible: to all my colleagues on the Conference Committee; to all the staff at HQ, in particular the Policy Projects Team, led by Christian Moon, who process the motions and prepare much of the agenda material; and of course to the stewards' team.

Conference is a fantastic event to be involved in and I'm proud to chair your FCC. I look forward to seeing you in York.

Andrew Wiseman
Chair, Federal Conference Committee
January 2014

Regional and SAO reps 2012-14

Devon & Cornwall	Justine McGuinness
East of England	Geoff Payne
East Midlands	Andrew Wiseman
London	Chris Maines
Northern	Andrew Wiseman
North West	Qassim Afzal
South Central	David Rendel
South East	Louise Bloom
West Midlands	Paul Tilsley
Western Counties	Justine McGuinness
Yorkshire & the Humber	Andrew Wiseman

The FCC has also appointed representatives to Party SAOs:

ALDES	Evan Harris
ALDC	Sandra Gidley
LGBT+	David Rendel
WLD	Sandra Gidley
Liberal Youth	Gareth Epps
PCA	Liz Lynne
Liberal Democrat Lawyers	Evan Harris
EMLD	Gareth Epps
LDDA (AO)	Liz Lynne

FEDERAL POLICY COMMITTEE

The Federal Policy Committee is responsible for researching and developing policy and overseeing the Federal Party's policy-making process. This includes producing policy papers for debate at conference, and drawing up (in consultation with the relevant parliamentary party) the Federal election manifestos for Westminster and European elections.

The FPC has 29 voting members: the Party Leader, four other MPs, the Party President, one peer, one MEP, three councillors, three state party reps and fifteen members directly elected by conference reps. It must be chaired by one of the five MP members and is currently chaired by Duncan Hames MP.

Policy Development

Since the Autumn Conference, policy papers on Immigration, Asylum and Identity, and Political Reform have been produced and are presented for discussion at York.

There will also be a consultation sessions held by the working groups on reform of Public Services, Ageing Society, equalities and Crime and Criminal Justice. These groups will produce their full policy papers for debate at the 2014 Autumn Conference in Glasgow.

The FPC is very grateful for the contribution made by the chairs and members of working groups who voluntarily give a great deal of time to assist the Party's policy development process.

At the last conference, the motion *Protecting Children from Online Pornography* was referred back to FPC. We have asked Sal Brinton to chair a small contact group including the movers of the motion, the movers of the reference back, LGBT+, Liberal Youth and the DCMS Co-Chairs to consider how to respond.

FPC Work Programme

The policy groups for Autumn 2014 will complete the programme of policy development for this Parliament set out in the *Facing the Future* review which was adopted at the Birmingham Conference in 2011. From this summer the FPC will heavily concentrate on the development of the 2015 General Election Manifesto.

Conference	Consultation Papers	Policy Papers
Spring 2014	Public Services. Equalities. Crime and Justice. Ageing Population.	Immigration, Asylum & Identity. Political Reform.
Autumn 2014		Public Services. Equalities. Crime and Justice. Ageing Population.

General Election Manifesto

Following the Manifesto themes paper debate at Glasgow, the Manifesto group has been undertaking a wide-ranging consultation with party members. This has included manifesto roadshow events in Yeovil, London, Birmingham, and Reading. We are planning a further such event in Leeds. In addition, the Manifesto Group has held a consultation session at the Welsh Party Conference last November and is planning further sessions at the upcoming North West Regional conference and Scottish and Welsh Spring Conferences.

We have also been running since last Autumn a manifesto consultation website at <http://www.manifesto2015.org/>. This includes discussion threads and the opportunity for members to make their own manifesto submissions.

Taking into account input received via the consultation, the Manifesto Group chaired by David Laws MP will draft a Pre-Manifesto setting out our key policy priorities of the 2015. The Pre-manifesto will come for debate at the October 2014 Glasgow conference.

It is planned to bring a more detailed Pre-manifesto document to the Autumn Conference in 2014.

European Election Manifesto

The European Election Manifesto Group is chaired by Martin Horwood MP. A motion based on their work is presented for debate at this conference by the Federal Policy Committee. Following the debate in York, the European Election Manifesto will be finalised for publication.

FPC Links

The Parliamentary party committees have invited participation by members of the FPC. These are currently:

Committee	
Co-Chairs Liaison	Duncan Hames MP
DCLG	Stan Collins
DECC & Defra	Duncan Brack & Andrew Wiseman
DWP	Kelly-Marie Blundell & Louise Bloom
Education & Culture	Evan Harris
Health	Prateek Buch
Home, Justice & Equalities	Geoff Payne & Lucy Care
International (inc Foreign, Defence, DFID)	Peter Price & Julie Smith
Political & Constitutional Reform (inc Scotland, Wales, NI)	Dinti Batstone & Evan Harris
Scotland Only meetings	Jeremy Purvis
Wales Only meetings	Peter Price
Transport	Lucy Care
Treasury & BIS	Julie Smith & Gareth Epps

To encourage policy debate across the party we have FPC representatives taking responsibility for promoting policy debate within each of the regions of England and to attend regional conferences where appropriate.

Region	
Devon & Cornwall	Julia Church
East of England	Geoff Payne
East Midlands	Lucy Care
London	Mark Pack
Northern	Stan Collins
North West	Stan Collins
South Central	Dinti Batstone/Gareth Epps
South East	Kelly-Marie Blundell
West Midlands	Lucy Care
Western Counties	Duncan Hames
Yorkshire & the Humber	Duncan Brack

The FPC has also appointed representatives to Party SAOs:

SAO	
ALDES	Lucy Care/Mark Pack
ALDC	Stan Collins/Mark Pack
LGBT+	Evan Harris
WLD	Louise Bloom
Liberal Youth	Gareth Epps
PCA	Julie Smith
Liberal Democrat Lawyers	Geoff Payne
EMLD	Gareth Epps
LDDA	Kelly-Marie Blundell

Policy Staffing and Volunteers

The Policy Unit consists of Christian Moon (Head of Policy), Steve O'Neil (Policy Development), Rory Belcher (Direct Communications Manager), Ed Simpson (Direct Communications and Research Officer) and Rosie

Gray (Correspondence Assistant). We have also benefitted from the support of a secondee from PWC, Lucy Webb, and a secondee from KPMG, Rosalind Huish. Interns since the Autumn Conference have included: Katie Austreng, Nicolette Stickland, and Jorge Vargas. The FPC is grateful for the hard work of staff, and for the contribution of volunteers and interns.

After nearly three years in the Policy Unit, Bess Mayhew has moved on to a new post within LDHQ as Head of Digital Communications and we wish her well in that role.

Duncan Hames MP
Chair, Federal Policy Committee
January 2014

FEDERAL EXECUTIVE

The Federal Executive is responsible for directing, co-ordinating and implementing the work of the Federal Party, including overall strategy, campaigning, organisation, and staffing. The Federal Finance and Administration Committee (see below) and the Campaigns and Communications Committee both report to the FE.

The FE has 29 voting members: the Party President (Chair), three Vice-Presidents, the Leader, two additional MPs, one peer, one MEP, two councillors, three State Party reps and fifteen members elected directly by Federal Conference Reps.

This is my penultimate FE report to conference as President of the Party! In four years we have come such a huge way in government. But the next year will be the fight of our lives - to make sure the country knows everything that we have been doing as part of the coalition.

There is one last big test before the General Elections: Thursday May 22nd. We defend more than 700 councillors, and 11 MEPs, and at stake are hundreds of campaigners who deserve to win but cannot take that victory for granted. In several councils we are defending our final foothold, and our very presence in the European parliament could be at stake.

These European elections are the most important ever. It's not just our party's place in Europe that's at stake, it's Britain's place too. We know that Europe needs reform, and we know that the best place to do that is from within. Only the Liberal Democrats, as the 'party of IN', are brave enough to make this argument and put British jobs and investment first.

It's in Britain's interests that we remain in Europe – to put it bluntly, it's thoroughly unpatriotic to want to leave.

It's also in Britain's interests that our political culture changes to ensure a fairer representation of our diverse society. And we Liberal Democrats have to be honest with ourselves and accept that our parliamentary party and the wider leadership of our party has been too male and too pale.

As I write, five out of the six held parliamentary seats that have selected new candidates so far have selected women – and two have selected ethnic minority candidates. We have appointed our new Pastoral Care Officer, the excellent Jeanne Tarrant, and are transforming our processes and our culture. The circumstances that led to the Morrissey report being commissioned were grim, but I am determined to bring good out of bad – I want ours to be a party that does tolerance, diversity, equality and respect far better than anyone else. It won't happen by accident, but it will happen if we all sign up to changing our culture for good.

SPRING CONFERENCE

As we reported to Autumn Conference in Glasgow, FE conducted a consultation with the party on ways in which we might be able to change spring conference to reduce costs and maintain member involvement.

After a great deal of work and substantial consideration, FE came to the conclusion that reducing the length of spring conference would not be beneficial to party members. We would like to thank James Gurling for his extensive work on this, and for advising us of some of the other popular suggestions that emerged during the consultation process.

In full, FE agreed that ideally, spring conference should:

- Have a fuller digital aspect, encouraging engagement and involvement from members across the country, including full digital provision of consultation sessions
- Retain the social side of Conference for members
- Take into account the cost of attendance for members
- Reduce the cost burden on the Federal Party.

We will continue to work with our colleagues in the Federal Conference Committee to achieve these aims.

UPDATE ON MORRISSEY REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Pastoral Care Officer - In January, we welcomed Jeanne Tarrant – our new Pastoral Care Officer. Her role includes guidance, supporting and

working with the wider party in implementing best practice for managing complaints, and producing best practice guidance. We look forward to working with Jeanne to ensure that everyone in the Party is aware of their rights and responsibilities, and are confident that any problems they may have are dealt with fairly and effectively. If you have any questions or concerns, you can get in touch with Jeanne at jeanne.tarrant@libdem.org.uk.

Members' Code of Conduct – Tim Farron and FE have been working on finalising a Members' Code of Conduct, which lays out for all members what they can expect from the Party, and what the Party expects from them. We are currently consulting with state parties and (S)AOs for some final input, and hope to have a finalised document agreed in April. If you have any thoughts about what should be included in the Code, you can get in touch with Rachael Clarke, our Party Governance Manager, at rachael.clarke@libdem.org.uk.

Procedural Review – Subsequent to the report back from Alistair Webster QC's investigation, Nick Clegg asked that Tim Farron and FE look into reviewing the party's disciplinary rules to ensure that we are in line with current best practice. In January, FE made the decision to obtain a fresh opinion from a non-party lawyer to look at our rules. We expect to be instructing this lawyer in the coming days, and will, along with representatives of all three State Parties, be receiving her advice and recommendations. This review will not be retrospective, and is designed to ensure that we are both operating in line with best practice, and are fulfilling our obligations under the Equality Act 2010. We expect to be able to implement any recommendations in advance of Autumn Conference 2014.

INTERNAL DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Interim Peers' Election Panel – Our Internal Democratic Reform Group, under the stellar guidance of Sue Doughty, spent a good deal of time last year putting together recommendations for a replacement to the Interim Peers' Election Panel. As requested by Conference, we submitted a motion to FCC, but they have declined to take it for discussion this spring.

We had hoped that a decision at York would allow for our first set of 'all member' elections to the Panel, in conjunction with the Presidential election this autumn. Unfortunately, owing to a lack of debate this spring, that will now not be possible – and we may be looking at being forced to wait until 2016 to replace the existing panel. We will be discussing how to proceed at our meeting in April. You can find our draft motion attached as an appendix.

'One Member, One Vote' – In addition to their work on the Interim Peers' Election Panel, the Internal Democratic Reform Group have been working on a consultation on 'one member, one vote'. This change would be for two distinct aspects of engagement – one for voting on motions at conference, and one for electing members of our Federal Committees. We believe that everyone should have an equal chance of getting involved in our policy-making process – and that it's fundamentally illiberal to have a system that currently depends on where you live as to how easy it is to become a Voting Conference Representative. If you have any thoughts or opinions on this, please e-mail Sue directly at democraticreform@libdems.org.uk. We hope to be able to bring a motion enfranchising all of our members to Autumn Conference in Glasgow.

PARTY TRUSTEES

Under Article 8.3 of the Federal Constitution, "*FE shall have power to establish a company limited by guarantee to acquire, hold and dispose of such assets of the Federal Party*". Since 1988, this role has been fulfilled by The Liberal Democrats' Trustees Ltd.

Over the past few months, Eric Lowry (Company Secretary), Susan Kramer and Duncan Greenland (Successive Chairs of the Trustees), and Ian Wrigglesworth (Former Chair) have been involved in producing a new memorandum and articles of association that better formalise the relationship between the Federal Party and the company established to manage our assets. This resulted in an amended Memorandum and Articles of Association being agreed by FE in December. As part of this change, the Trustees will now be known as the Liberal Democrats

Limited, and instead of being appointed as a Trustee, we will now appoint Directors.

We would like to thank Susan Kramer for her fantastic work as Chair, and wish her luck in her new role in the Department for Transport. We also say goodbye to Iain Vallance, who is stepping down after 13 years as a member of the Trustees. In Susan's place, we welcome Duncan Greenland as the new Chair – who was previously Chair of the Federal Finance and Administration Committee. We expect to be able to report on new appointments to the Directors at the next Conference.

ASSOCIATED ORGANISATIONS

We welcome Liberal Democrats for Seekers of Sanctuary (LDSoS) and Action for Land Tax and Economic Reform (ALTER) to our group of Associated Organisations (AOs). If you would like more information on either, you can get in touch with Suzanne Fletcher (LDSoS) on info@ld4sos.org.uk, or with ALTER on info@libdemsalter.org.uk.

We continue to have a standing group chaired by Gordon Lishman who work with our (S)AOs to help them with any problems they have, and to provide advice or support if needed. Gordon can be contacted at gordon@lishman.co.uk.

Tim Farron
Chair, Federal Executive
January 2014

APPENDIX 1- MOTION SUBMITTED TO FCC

Improving Party Democracy: The Interim Peers Panel

Conference notes:

- A. The outstanding contribution that Liberal Democrat members of the House of Lords bring to the quality of debate and to new legislation.
- B. That despite the considerable efforts of the Deputy Prime Minister, the creation of a democratic second chamber is not expected in the foreseeable future
- C. That under current arrangements, there is an aim within the Federal Executive's remit to maintain a core list of 60 from whom the Leader may choose to nominate to the House of Lords.
- D. That the arrangements for nomination to the House of Lords after a general election (Dissolution Honours) are a separate process from the nominations of Peers at other times
- E. That the Party has benefited from nominations to the Lords of people previously precluded from public involvement in party politics
- F. Although recent nominations have recognised the need to address inequalities, there continues to be a need to make the Lords more representative with regard to protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010, and geographical region
- G. That unlike the Commons, Peers receive a daily allowance for days worked in the House of Lords with no pension, and no retirement date

Conference further notes with concern:

- i. Party members who are not Conference Representatives are denied the opportunity to vote for members of the Interim Peers Panel
- ii. That, unlike all other elected representatives of the party, members of the panel are not required to undergo assessment by the party before nomination
- iii. That former members of the European, Scottish, and Westminster Parliaments together with members of the Welsh Assembly are

automatically added to the Panel with no further assessment or commitment requirements

Conference calls for:

1. All party members to have the right to vote for members of the **Interim Peers Panel**
2. For the list to consist of 80 elected members, and for the Leader to ensure that 60% of all nominations to the House of Lords in each Parliamentary Cycle other than dissolution honours will be from the Interim Peers Panel
3. **Elections to be timed as closely as possible with other all-member ballots**, with the Federal Executive being responsible for determining timing and numbers for election. The default to be elections every two years with those elected restanding or retiring after 4 years.
4. Candidates, including former MPs, AMs, MSPs, and MEPs, for election to the interim peers panel to be approved in a manner decided by the Joint States' Candidates Committee, which should include the use of 5 referees. This assessment process also to apply to personal nominations by the Leader.
5. Full information to be maintained about candidates elected on to the panel regarding protected characteristics as detailed in the Equality Act 2010, as well as those with strong regional links, together with current areas of expertise to enable the Leader to be able to address inequalities when making nominations to the House of Lords.

FEDERAL FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The FFAC committee, elected in January 2011 for a two year term, continues to monitor and report regularly to the Federal Executive on the Administration of the Party and its Finances (construed narrowly as the monies raised and spent by the Federal Party). As previously agreed the Committee now meets jointly with the Management Board of POLD (the Parliamentary Office of the Liberal Democrats). A subgroup meets on a monthly basis to review the management accounts and cashflow.

2013 results

Expenditure was £160,000 below budget due to a number of posts being kept vacant and very tight control of non-staff costs.

As reported to last autumn's conference, appeals income was very good in the first half of the year on the back off the Eastleigh by-election and this continued for the remainder of the year. Fundraising income was above budget as a result of receiving the income that had been expected in 2012 but was received late. Other sources of income, especially conference, were somewhat below budget but overall income exceeded budget by £110,000.

Federal levy (the share of membership income received by the Federal Party) was below budget partly due to the cost of membership incentive scheme. This was the payment to local parties of additional service fees if they achieved an increase in their membership numbers in the last quarter of 2013. This scheme was highly successful with a net increase in membership of almost 2,000 in the quarter at a cost to the Federal Party of £31,000.

In addition the new legacy fund received £209,000 that has been ring fenced for the long term strategic future of the Party. The Party has been notified of a number of other legacies that should be received in 2014. It is therefore expected that the legacy fund will increase significantly in the year.

Overall the draft figures for 2013 indicate a surplus for the year of around £480,000 (against a budgeted surplus of £2,000). This needs to be seen in the context of the Party's accumulated deficit at the start of 2013 of £1,152,000. The reduction in the accumulated deficit achieved the target to reduce the overdraft to £625,000 by December 2013 by a good margin and puts the Party on course to achieve the stated aim of a reduction to a maximum overdraft of £500,000 by the end of March 2014.

2014 budget

The 2014 budget has been split between an Operational and an Elections Fund. This split is to ensure that core operations are only funded from core income and that specific identified fundraising is directed to Elections Fund expenditure.

The 2014 budget is for a combined deficit of £39,000 as a result of including a provision of £40,000 for the cost of the membership incentive scheme.

There has been a further receipt of a legacy of £57,000 in January 2014.

The budget is included in appendix 1 attached.

Legacy Scheme

Local Parties are encouraged to publicise the Legacy scheme amongst their members. Funds are segregated in a separate account designated for the longer term objectives of the Party rather than day to day expenditure. The impact of the scheme on the accumulated deficit has been enormously helpful as although held in a separate account the funds can be used to offset any deficit in other accounts.

In certain circumstances a proportion of legacies received can be made directly available to the local Party.

Membership and Fundraising Services

The party ended 2013 with 43,451 members, an increase of 950 in the year. This reverses a long period in which the party's membership

dropped year on year, with only the immediate periods preceding a general election showing any membership growth.

The increase has been driven by two factors: better retention and increased recruitment. Our investment in improving the membership experience has resulted in an increase in membership retention to 87.8%, up from 76% last year. We are pushing hard to increase this further to 90%. We are also now recruiting at around double the rate we were twelve months ago. This has largely been driven by the new incentive scheme which gives local parties a significant financial reward for growing their membership.

In 2014 we need to continue this upward trend and mobilise the membership for the European, Local and General Elections. A key part of this is the roll out of our new Customer Relations Management (CRM) system at HQ (replacing our previous membership database) and the creation of a number of additional campaign focused staff positions and a new customer service team. All of these changes will be completed by the end of Q1 2014.

Peter Dunphy
Chair, Federal Finance and Administration Committee
January 2014

Appendix 1

Liberal Democrats - Federal Party	
	Total budget 2014 £
Income	
Direct mail appeals and standing orders	480,000
LDCalling	300,000
Fundraising income	2,800,000
Federal levy	765,389
Conference	1,433,000
AdLib	100,000
Inter-party cross charges	681,500
Connect income	133,000
Policy Development Fund	453,500
WFD Admin fees	84,550
Other income	38,500
Total Income	7,269,439
Expenditure	
Commercial	950,580
Elections & Field	2,886,469
Digital	986,628
Political Communications	1,426,242
Finance & Operations	967,184
Depreciation	91,824
	7,308,927
Deficit for the period	(39,488)

PARLIAMENTARY PARTY (COMMONS)

This is my first report as Chief Whip. I thoroughly enjoyed my time as a Minister at the Department for Communities and Local Government, but the challenge and excitement of being the Chief Whip – and bearer of the unusual title, Comptroller of Her Majesty’s Household – is one I could not resist.

I began my political career in 1981 when I was elected as an Avon County Councillor. I could not have dreamt that it would lead me into Government. I am incredibly proud of what we, as Liberal Democrats, have accomplished in Government over the past three and a half years.

When we entered coalition many acclaimed media commentators severely doubted whether this Government could work and whether it would last. But we have demonstrated that coalition does work; that coalition can be stable; and most importantly, that we are a competent party of Government. The hard work of our Ministers across Whitehall demonstrates this week in and week out.

The coalition with the Conservatives was formed to tackle the economic mess that was Labour’s legacy. The latest economic figures suggest that we are beginning to see the positive effects of our strategy. The deficit continues to drop – it has done so by a third since we entered office – and the economy continues to recover from the deepest recession we have ever experienced. In the reforms and spending reductions that have made this possible, we have led the fight in ensuring that fairness has not been forgotten. Many of the measures, like raising the tax threshold or introducing the Pupil Premium to help the least well off would not have happened in a purely Tory Government.

As we could have predicted, the Labour party continue to provide opportunist opposition in the chamber. Their opposition day debates in the House demonstrate how bereft of policy they are and how divided they are on issues such as immigration, EU membership and welfare. On the recent fixed odds betting terminals debate, they accused the Government of not tackling the issue with sufficient speed. They of course, failed to mention that it was during their time in office that these machines (described by some as the “crack cocaine of gambling”) were

introduced or that the Government has already commissioned a report into their impact. As Ian Swales put it, “Labour’s cultural legacy was 24 hour drinking, casinos and fixed odds betting terminals” and we should never let them walk away from the problems they caused in office.

Since we last met in Glasgow, Business in the Commons has continued to be fast paced. The Transparency & Lobbying Bill has taken up significant time in the chamber and in our group discussions. Tom Brake’s work in leading this Bill through the Commons has required great clarity and focus - especially in the face of misleading campaigns from 38 Degrees. Colleagues have wrestled with the complexities of this Bill and the significant misinformation put about by various organisations. We have seen some fierce debates and colleagues have not always been united in the division lobbies as a result. I am confident that in passing this Bill, the Government has increased transparency in the Lobbying industry and ensured that third parties play fair in their campaigning.

We have also now passed the Pensions Bill and Energy Bill led by Steve Webb and Ed Davey respectively. The Pensions Bill has made our system fairer, simpler and more sustainable for future and current pensioners. Pensioners are now protected through the triple lock against price rises and through auto-enrolment we are working with employers to ensure that the next generation of pensioners make provisions for their future as soon as they begin work. The Energy Bill is an essential tool in our journey towards a renewable focused energy sector and creates the framework for 200,000 green jobs as a result. The Bill creates provisions for investment in nuclear energy sites, but it does so to ensure that our energy supply is secure and stable until renewable forms of generation mature and come online.

Outside of Government Business, the House has also been considering Conservative MP James Wharton’s EU (Referendum) Bill. Martin Horwood did an excellent job in the chamber stating our case for a rational approach to the issue during the Commons debates.

Shortly after our autumn conference, we had a Government reshuffle. I am delighted that the excellent work of backbenchers Stephen Williams, Dan Rogerson and Simon Hughes was recognised by Nick and they have begun work in DCLG, DEFRA and Justice respectively. Nick has

rightly paid tribute to the work of Michael Moore, David Heath and Jeremy Browne who all served the Government and the Party fantastically in office.

With Simon’s change in role, we are in the position of having to elect a new Deputy Leader. We are yet to have the hustings and ballot, but by the time we meet in York one of Gordon Birtwistle, Malcolm Bruce or Lorely Burt will have been elected to this position. I’m sure that each of them is up to the task and will make the role their own.

In terms of parliamentary roles, the Government reshuffle has resulted in several changes in responsibilities across our Co-Chairs and select committee memberships. The current list of Commons Co-Chairs is as follows:

Business, Innovation & Skills	Gordon Birtwistle
Communities & Local Govt.	Annette Brooke
Constitutional & Political Reform	John Thurso
Culture, Media & Sport	John Leech
Education	Simon Wright
Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	Roger Williams
Energy & Climate Change	Tessa Munt
Health	Paul Burstow
Home Affairs, Justice & Equalities	Julian Huppert
International Affairs (including MOD & DfID)	Martin Horwood
Northern Ireland	Stephen Lloyd
Scotland	John Thurso
Transport	Mike Thornton
Treasury	Ian Swales
Wales	Mark Williams
Work & Pensions	Vacant

Parliamentary Office of the Liberal Democrats

POLD has seen significant staffing changes since the last report. Hollie Voyce, has departed for a role in the Deputy Prime Minister’s office, with

her Deputy, Jack Fletcher appointed as the new Head of Whips Office following a recruitment exercise. Georgina Orso has joined the team as Deputy Head to fill the vacancy left by Jack's promotion. Ben Williams remains my Special Adviser. During this period we were also lucky to have Hull University placement student, Stuart Rodgers with us. Stuart was a great addition to the team and we wish him all the best for the remainder of his studies. Having started in mid-January, Maria Fritzsche has begun her placement in the office and is settling-in well.

I would also like to thank my two Deputies, Mark Hunter and Jenny Willott. Both have helped me settle into the Chief Whip role and I am grateful for their support and advice. Together with our wider whips team, Sir Robert Smith, Sir Bob Russell and Ian Swales we continue to link our backbenchers and Ministers together, which enables us to find solutions to issues coming down the track.

Changes to Standing Orders

Following on from the recommendations within the Morrissey Report, the Parliamentary Party has accepted changes to their Standing Orders as recommended in the report's conclusions. In addition, colleagues have also signed a Code of Conduct, which further details what behaviour is expected of them as a Liberal Democrat MP. I have already met with Jeanne Tarrant, the party's Pastoral Care Officer to discuss how we can ensure that we are operating with a fair and robust grievance and complaints procedure. I look forward to continuing this work in the future.

Parliamentary Staff

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to extend my thanks towards the Parliamentary staff of our MPs. As always, they are a fantastic asset to our party and provide a valuable role in supporting the work of our MPs in the House and in our constituencies.

Don Foster
Chief Whip, House of Commons
January 2014

PARLIAMENTARY PARTY (LORDS)

Legislation

Since the last Conference we have considered the following Bills:

Care Bill

This Bill, which results from Lib Dem action in Government, substantially reforms the social care system and introduces a lifetime cap on care costs.

We were successful in improving a good Bill even further. Claire Tyler helped to ensure that new duties to treat those in care with dignity and respect are placed on Local Authorities. Phil Willis succeeded in securing a new qualification system that will mean that, for the first time, all those working in social care must meet a minimum standard.

Financial Services (Banking Reform) Bill

This Bill's primary aim is to ensure that steps are put in place to prevent another 2008-style financial crisis. Specifically it creates the new 'ring-fencing' system to split normal day-to-day banking processes from the casino style trading that contributed to the crash.

As a result of work by John Sharkey, the Bill was amended to include a new requirement on regulators to cap the maximum amount that can be charged by payday lenders.

Energy Bill

The Bill paves the way for the creation of 250,000 jobs, reduce the UK's dependence on foreign gas and boost investment in low carbon technology. The Lib Dem team, led by Robin Teverson, particularly focused on including measures to localise energy provision in order to open up the energy market and stop the market domination by the big six energy companies.

The team also secured an agreement that the Energy Company Obligation will be fully funded until the end of this current Parliament. A smaller, but no less important, victory was securing new measures that

will explicitly force energy companies to provide information about their domestic tariff in a form that is clear and easy to understand.

Transparency of Lobbying Bill

This Bill is focused on making sure that politics in the UK does not go down the path of America with big money backers influencing the political process or shadowy lobbyists influencing policy behind closed doors.

There was significant controversy around the Bill, mainly because during its passage it became clear that many charities were deeply concerned about potential unintended consequences for their activities. As a result Lib Dems, including the Minister leading on the Bill, William Wallace, secured a 'pause' in the legislative process so that detailed negotiations with charities and other organisations could take place.

As a result of these discussions the Government, with Jim Wallace in the lead, brought forward a package of amendments aimed at protecting free speech and charity campaigning. These amendments had the support of the vast majority of charities.

Children and Families Bill

The main aims of this Bill were to reform the adoption system to reduce delays and to overhaul the system of support for children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

We strongly supported the principles of the Bill, and our team led by Mike Storey also secured many improvements. These included changes to ensure that families of children with SEN are able to challenge more easily decisions taken about the support provided, provisions to allow children in foster care to stay with their foster parents post 18 and a new code of practice to support children with health conditions such as diabetes in schools.

Lib Dem pressure also resulted in amendments to review standardised packaging of cigarettes, with a view to bringing in so-called 'plain packaging,' to support people with dyslexia and other learning difficulties through apprenticeships (Dominic Addington) and better support and protection for child performers appearing on television (Floella Benjamin).

Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill

This Bill replaces Labour's ASBO system, which led to many young people being unnecessarily brought into the criminal justice system, with a new system of injunctions to prevent anti-social behaviour (IPNAs). IPNAs are intended to allow authorities to nip anti-social behaviour in the bud quickly and before it escalates into a criminal matter.

Sally Hamwee has been able to help secure important changes, such as providing a more robust test for issuing an injunction while ensuring those in private and social housing will be treated equally.

EU Referendum Bill

This Private Member's Bill would require a referendum on the UK's EU membership in 2017. Lib Dem Peers argued instead that we support an in/out referendum the next time power is transferred from the UK to the EU.

A number of improving amendments have been made to the Bill, but as I write it is unclear how much further the parliamentary timetable will allow the Bill to progress.

New Leader

In October Tom McNally decided to step down as Group Leader after nine years. We are tremendously grateful for Tom's services as Leader and his commitment to liberalism. I would also personally like to thank him for the strong working relationship we have maintained during my time as Chief Whip.

Jim Wallace was elected unopposed to be the new Leader of the group. Jim brings a wealth of experience to the role including of the workings of Coalition from his time as Deputy First Minister in Scotland.

New Ministers

Also in October the Government announced a major Ministerial reshuffle. Susan Kramer was appointed the new Minister of State for Transport.

Judith Jolly was also appointed as a Government Whip. Sue Garden, who was previously a Government Whip, has returned to the backbenches.

Finally, in December it was announced that Tom McNally would be stepping down as Justice Minister to become Chair of the Youth Justice Board.

New Peers

In August the Prime Minister appointed 10 new Liberal Democrat Peers. They are already taking an active role in the House.

Media

The Lords Group has continued to have a proactive media presence. Our social media presence also goes from strength to strength with more Peers using Twitter and other social media tools than ever before. Our weekly newsletter also continues to explain some of the detailed work we do to a wide audience: [subscribe by emailing lordsmedia@libdems.org.uk](mailto:lordsmedia@libdems.org.uk)

Visits

We continue to make significant progress towards our target of having undertaken 1000 constituency visits before the General Election. At our last count we had seen 380 visits by Lib Dem Peers to groups across the country.

If you would like a Peer to meet with local members, businesses or organisations please do contact Laura in the Whips' office on gilmorela@parliament.uk

Dick Newby
Chief Whip, House of Lords
January 2014

PARLIAMENTARY PARTY (EUROPE)

UK Lib Dem MEPs have continued to work hard to ensure the British cause is furthered in a constructive way in Europe. As the hardest working of the British parties they remain committed to shaping legislation which will create jobs, foster sustainable economic growth and help the UK and the EU emerge from the current economic situation as stronger, more prosperous marketplaces.

Specifically, Lib Dems have been at the forefront of work on Banking Union, the 2030 climate and energy package, finalisation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and Common Fishery Policy (CFP) deals, as well as successfully fighting for a smaller, more streamlined European budget. They continue to campaign on civil liberties issues and have been instrumental in ensuring a more liberal approach to e-cigarettes in the wide ranging Tobacco Products Directive.

Fiona Hall (North East) has been successful in pushing the Environment (ENVI) and Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) Committee MEPs to call for an ambitious 2030 climate and energy package based on binding EU-wide targets for CO2 reduction, renewables and energy efficiency. This will stimulate the creation of new green jobs and put Europe back into the lead in the race for green investment. She was also responsible in the ITRE Committee for recent legislation on cutting CO2 emissions from cars and on rolling out infrastructure for electric and hydrogen-powered vehicles.

On both the International Development (DEVE) and ITRE committees, Fiona has been the ALDE negotiator on the Commission proposals for the European and Developing Country Clinical Trials Partnerships (EDCTP2), which provides key EU funding for research into poverty related and neglected diseases such as TB, HIV/Aids, and malaria. Following the successful adoption of the transparency and accounting directives last year, Fiona has also been working on a report on 'Promoting Development through Responsible Business Practice'. This report considers, among other things, the issue of conflict minerals, in anticipation of proposals from the Commission on this topic expected early this year.

Finally, as the European Elections draw ever nearer, Fiona continues in her role as delegation leader to work closely with the Lib Dem HQ campaigns team, George Lyon as whip, Lib Dem election candidates and colleagues in Westminster to ensure the best possible result in May.

George Lyon (Scotland) worked with colleagues in the Agriculture Committee (AGRI) to finalise the CAP reform deal which was agreed in principal in June 2013. CAP reform is crucial in the move towards sustainable agriculture and the targeted use of EU funds. It ensures the UK is able to use agriculture funds to reflect national priorities. George is now focusing on ensuring secondary legislation, which is needed to implement the CAP reform, accurately reflects the agreement which was reached in June.

In the Budget Committee (BUDG), George worked with colleagues on the MFF (Multiannual Financial Framework) contact group to ensure the EU's seven year budget was agreed by the Parliament in order to enter into force from 2014. The long term framework channels further funds towards jobs, growth and investment compared with its predecessor. It also offers a more flexible approach which will ensure EU funds are spent more efficiently. George has continued to be involved in the working group charged with finding savings in the European Parliament's budget. To date he has succeeded in cutting translation costs, saving on MEP expenses and travel costs and freezing the Parliament's budget for 2014. Total savings are estimated to be at least €30m. He will continue his work to streamline the Parliament's spending in negotiations on the 2015 Budget.

George is also Chair of the Rural Better Together group which campaigns for Scotland to remain part of the UK. His key message to Scots is that Scotland's place in the UK and the EU is key to its future prosperity.

Sarah Ludford (London) As Liberal Democrat European spokeswoman on justice & human rights and a leading member of the European Parliament's Civil Liberties, Justice & Home Affairs committee Sarah's major focus since last autumn has been on criminal justice and rights

issues. Sarah remains strongly involved in data protection issues. She campaigns consistently for the robust defence and promotion of LGBT rights, which are threatened in Europe and around the world. She is piloting through the European Parliament a report calling for reform of the European Arrest Warrant so it works both effectively and fairly. Her leadership on this and related issues is part of her push with Lib Dems in government to ensure that the UK continues to work with our EU partners to fight serious cross-border crime and terrorism. As MEP for London, Sarah has fought for the enforcement of EU air quality regulations to hold Boris Johnson to account and improve air quality in the capital. She continues to work alongside fellow Lib Dem MEPs and Caroline Pidgeon AM to ensure EU rules guarantee HGV safety for cyclists.

Sharon Bowles (South East) is in her final year as a Member of the European Parliament and continues to chair the Parliament's influential Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee, as well as key "trialogue" negotiations between her Committee, the Commission and Council of Ministers. As the end of the parliamentary term approaches, the finalisation of many high profile and important dossiers has become a priority. The last few months have seen political agreements reached on a raft of legislation, including: the Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive which sets uniform rules for bank bail-ins to sever the link between the sovereign and the banks; the Deposit Guarantee Schemes Directive which extends Europe-wide protection to depositors of up to 100,000 euros (£85,000); the second Market Abuse Directive which sets criminal sanctions for those guilty of market manipulation and insider trading; the second Markets in Financial Instruments Directive and Regulation which harmonises investment services across Europe; and Omnibus II, which ensures a more sound and prudential system for the future of insurance.

On top of this, the Single Resolution Mechanism, a keystone of Banking Union, will be concluded. Sharon's committee will also set its position on the Benchmarks and Indices Regulation - a report for which Sharon is rapporteur - which seeks to prevent scandals like those seen in Libor and Euribor last year.

Catherine Bearder (South East) has continued to work on her three areas of interest. Fighting environmental destruction, stopping the vile trade of human trafficking and working for the South East region. The first two issues are very pertinent to the South East, although they may not be seen to be so.

She has supported local groups working across the region to highlight and fight against human trafficking, raising awareness of the issue in the media and lobbying law enforcement and legislators. Too often traffickers are found working in local towns and communities are horrified when it is exposed. Catherine's '*Open Your Eyes*' campaign is getting media attention and she is frequently sought out for comment and ways to tackle the issue.

From tiny bees to the mighty elephant, Catherine's commitment to the diverse environmental issues she has worked on is unshakable. Fighting the use of damaging pesticides that harm bees; protecting biodiversity; regulating the importation of non-native species that threaten our own wildlife; and as an active member of the EU/African, Caribbean and Pacific Parliamentary Assembly fighting the crisis in poaching of elephants and other endangered animals for the ivory and medicinal trade.

She has visited mines in Congo where local people extract rare minerals from the earth with their bare hands in preparation for work on transparency legislation coming to the parliament this year and spoken at an Interpol conference in Kenya on wildlife crime.

She has visited research establishments and businesses across the South East and spoken to a number of schools on issues arising from her work in the parliament as well as welcoming them to the parliament in Brussels.

Her work on challenging Euromyths has continued (www.facebook.com/euomythbuster) and she is busy working on spreading the positive message about the UK's role in the EU and the jobs that are reliant on this across her region, working with Liberal Democrat teams at all levels.

Chris Davies (North West) - The reform of the Common Fisheries Policy was approved by Parliament in December. The changes are historic, putting into practice the principle of sustainability by emphasising the rebuilding of fish stocks, curbing the discard of perfectly edible fish, and decentralising day to day management. Chris Davies (North West) has been widely praised for his campaigning role that helped secure a massive majority in support of fundamental reform.

Most recently Chris has taken the lead in putting carbon capture and storage technology back on the Commission's agenda. A report he initiated and steered through Parliament identified the measures necessary to kickstart CCS development. Many of its proposals have since been included in the Commission's proposals for a 2030 climate and energy strategy.

Andrew Duff (East of England) has continued the Parliament's preparations for May's election campaign and for the election of the new Commission President which comes immediately thereafter. He leads for the Liberals on the future direction of integration policy with respect to multi-tier governance. *A Fundamental Law of the European Union*, which was drafted by a team of the Spinelli Group led by Andrew, was published in early October. He stood down after two terms as President of the Union of European Federalists in November.

Sir Graham Watson (South West and Gibraltar) continues his work as President of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party ahead of the 2014 European elections, working to support Liberal parties and increase the Liberal vote across the continent. In the European Parliament he is showing how the EU can be used to tackle cross border crime in his role as shadow on the new anti-money laundering directive and in a campaign to make sure that the EU's Safer Internet Centres - charged with policing the internet for child pornography - retain their EU funding. Graham serves as Chairman of the global Climate Parliament network where he advocates interconnections with other EU countries in order to green and secure our electricity supply. Graham is also the chair of the India delegation – currently negotiating a free trade agreement with the EU - and shadow

for the Indonesia partnership agreement, both examples where the UK businesses and jobs are better off as part of major EU free trade agreements than trying to negotiate on their own. Recently Graham also launched an initiative calling for a more coordinated EU media strategy as part of the EU's soft diplomacy to support democratisation in other parts of the world.

Bill Newton Dunn (East Midlands) led the Liberal (ALDE) group of MEPs on the Special Committee investigating Organised Crime, Corruption and Money Laundering. The committee's report, completed in October, estimated that many millions of legitimate jobs and hundreds of billions of tax revenues are lost each year: it recommended that Europeans must work much more closely together to fight the very sophisticated cross-border gangs more successfully. Bill argues that a pan-European police body could be the solution to this. He believes this would be a great opportunity for Lib Dems, as the pro-European party and as a party who want to toughen up on law and order, also considering the Tory opt-outs from cooperation with Europe for fighting crime. He also works in the Committee on Development where he drafted the Committee's opinion on the 4th Anti-Money Laundering Directive. He worked on the establishment of a European Humanitarian Aid Volunteers Corps (EVHAC), which was negotiated with the Council and the European Commission last autumn, to be in force from March.

Rebecca Taylor MEP (Yorkshire and the Humber) - In the Legal Affairs committee, Rebecca has been very involved in calling for greater transparency and accountability for large companies for financial and non-financial reporting. She has also been engaged in ensuring strong EU rules for consumers, SMEs and other stakeholders to claim for damages for infringement of competition law.

On the Environment and Public Health committee, Rebecca's biggest achievement so far has been to steer the opinion of the European Parliament in the direction of a more liberal attitude to electronic-cigarettes, which she believes will be a vital harm-reduction tool for smokers hoping to quit tobacco. Rebecca has also worked hard to ensure that new legislation governing clinical trials will make the EU a

more attractive research environment, which should help the strong UK life science sector.

In the Yorkshire and Humber Region, Rebecca has been supporting environmental campaigners from West Yorkshire who have taken a complaint to the European Commission, about potential breaches of environmental protection laws on Walshaw Moor above Hebden Bridge.

Phil Bennion (West Midlands) has been working hard in the Employment and Social Affairs Committee to secure a better response to issues such as youth unemployment and skills mismatches through cooperation between employment services across the Union. He continues to fight for sensible rules to protect workers posted abroad and to prevent discrimination of EU migrants working in another Member State. He also saw his report on John Lewis style employee ownership schemes adopted with a large majority.

In the Transport Committee, One of his main victories was to ensure that EU minimum rules on MOT checks did not create additional, unnecessary red tape but are instead what is needed to fight against air pollution and to improve road safety in the UK and across Europe. As a highly active Member of the South Asia Delegation, he cosponsored two resolutions on the worrying political situation in Bangladesh.

Edward McMillan-Scott (Yorkshire and Humber) - Internationally recognised and respected as a staunch defender of human rights, in 2013 Edward launched a transatlantic alliance on human rights and democracy with blind Chinese dissident Chen Guangcheng, which calls on members of the European Parliament and US Congress to advocate on behalf of prisoners of conscience from around the world. Edward also pushed through an urgent human rights resolution on China's forced organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience, which he has classified as 'genocide'. 2013 also saw Edward being awarded the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation medal in recognition of his lasting efforts in the promotion and protection of human rights.

Edward leads the Single Seat campaign to end the wasteful travelling circus to Strasbourg, costing an extra £150 million and 19,000 tonnes of CO2 each year. The campaign recently oversaw a historic vote in the European parliament to invoke new powers gained under the Lisbon Treaty to begin the process of EU treaty change required to end the monthly shuttle between Brussels and Strasbourg.

In 2013 Edward launched a campaign in the European Parliament entitled EU Food Sense: your right to the right food, which campaigns for a sustainable food policy in Europe to replace the notoriously wasteful Common Agricultural Policy. Under this banner Edward has set up a cross-party sustainable food steering group which works with a number of civil organisations to engage the national and European parliament on sustainable food issues, and has received support from across the political spectrum, including the Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik.

In the Yorkshire & Humber region Edward has focused his work on the need to boost the regional economy, creating more jobs and growth. As such he has continued to support local businesses, visiting many over the last year to establish what assistance they need at an EU level to grow and prosper. Alongside his Liberal Democrat Parliamentary colleague Rebecca Taylor MEP, this year Edward also launched a region-wide business survey, encouraging companies to highlight issues and problems in the business environment that they need Edward and Rebecca to tackle.

George Lyon MEP
Chief Whip, European Parliament
January 2014

CAMPAIGN FOR GENDER BALANCE

The Campaign for Gender Balance was established by the Federal Executive in response to the conference debate on gender balance in September 2001. Since the launch of Liberal Democrat Women in June 2013, CGB's aims and objectives have been incorporated into the new LDW Constitution, with Candy Piercy (Coordinator, Representation of Women Group), taking forward the CGB remit.

The Representation of Women Group, working with the Diversity Unit in LDHQ, continues to form a key central initiative for attracting and supporting women candidates within the Party, and it implements a range of training, mentoring and support activities in order to increase the number of women standing for Parliament.

Current approval / selection figures (as of 24th January 2014):

Prospective Parliamentary Candidates:

- 33% of the currently selected candidates (excluding held seats) are women
- 38% of candidates selected in strategic seats (excluding held seats) are women
- Out of the 4 seats where sitting MPs are standing down, 3 women have been selected

Many of these women have attended our annual Future Women MPs Weekend in the past and the others have benefited from CGB mentoring and support before and throughout their selection campaigns.

Euro List:

- *32% of the Euro list are women (19 candidates out of 59 in total). Euro elections will take place in 2014.*

Approved Candidates:

- 27% of approved candidates are women

One of our key aims in 2014 is to ensure that all potential women candidates have all the encouragement, skills and support necessary to become effective Parliamentary candidates. We continue to work closely with the Elections and Field team at HQ, and with the Candidate Leadership Programme to ensure that this happens. We continue to focus on increasing female representation in Parliament; in particular we are looking at how we can ensure that the policies and culture of the party and relevant Parliaments is conducive to electing more women Parliamentarians in addition to our on-going support for potential women candidates.

Liberal Democrat Women

Liberal Democrat Women (LDW) was officially launched on 8th June 2013 in Birmingham. The new Constitution was approved by the Federal Executive and the first LDW Executive is now in place as of August 2013.

Liberal Democrat Women have 4 working groups:

- **Representation of Women**, which manages the remit of CGB regarding parliamentary candidates. This working group is coordinated by Candy Piercy
- **Communication & Campaigns** coordinated by Laura Gilmore
- **Policy** coordinated by Sue Vincent
- **Networking & Fundraising** coordinated by Jackie Beckford

To continue the good work of CGB and extend LDW's work to supporting candidates at every level of government and raising the external profile of what Liberal Democrat Women believe in and care about, we urge all party members who have not yet joined LDW to do so now.

Recent Developments

- **Training:** CGB ran nine women only training sessions at the 2013 Autumn Conference. Due to the stage of the electoral cycle, these sessions predominantly focused on key information and skills that help potential candidates to win target/winnable Parliamentary seat selections.

- **Campaign to end violence against women:** Following our all-member survey that flagged violence against women as a priority concern, LDW worked on a campaign to help 'spot and stop' abuse, working with members and NGOs. Lizzy Adams' policy motion on 'Preventing and Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence' debated in Glasgow was voted through (as amended).
- **Q&A with Jo Swinson MP Women and Equalities Minister and Miriam González Durántez:** We had a Q&A with Miriam and Jo who spoke (Chatham House Rules) on working with families and Commons. The room was packed and the fringe was well received by those who attended.
- **Scottish Women:** Jo Swinson MP's fundraising dinner organised by SLDW was an enormous success.
- **Conference Stand :** There was a real buzz about the LDW conference stand with lots of new members joining up. Our **Silent Auction** raised over £1,400 that will go towards the annual Future Women's MPs Weekend.
- **LDW Appeal:** LDW also successfully raised money for the Future Women MPs Weekend through an Appeal Letter which added to the Silent Auction meant we could hold our renowned training weekend in 2014 - thanks to all who contributed.

Current and planned activities

- **Future Women MPs Weekend:** This will be held on 21st – 23rd February 2014, and have received a very good number of applications for the course.
- **Mentoring:** CGB provides mentoring to women candidates at different stages of their careers, including a number who applied for the Leadership Programme. We view the Leadership Programme as complementary to the work of CGB. We would like to highlight that CGB are available to assist women no matter what stage or level of support they are receiving, if they would like to become Parliamentary Candidates/MPs – our aim is to help them make that happen.

- **Newsletter:** An e-mail newsletter is sent out every month to almost 1000 subscribers, this includes details of training events, relevant news items and seat adverts.
- **Approval and Selection of Women:** The Campaign continues to closely monitor information regarding approval and selection figures, to gain an accurate picture of the women's representation within the Party.
- **Spring Conference:** A full programme of training is planned for Spring Conference

We would like to thank Candy Piercy and congratulate her on being awarded an MBE. Candy has tirelessly provided training, mentoring and support to many in the Liberal Democrats. There are many current and future women Parliamentarians who are indebted to her. It is fantastic that all her hard work in the UK and internationally has been recognised.

We welcome back, Vicky Booth, Head of Diversity and Outreach from maternity leave, thanks to Jemima Jefferson who covered in her absence and Roxana Cimpeanu for all her contributions to CGB. We also welcome Arfan Bhatti, the new Candidate Liaison & Diversity Officer. We look forward to working with him.

As ever thank you to all our trainers, mentors, LDW members and other supporters without whom we wouldn't be able to continue our good work.

Ros Gordon
Chair, Liberal Democrat Women
January 2014

DIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT GROUP

The Diversity Engagement Group (DEG) was established to oversee the achievement of the Party's equality and diversity priorities. The group brings together nominated 'Champions' from all sections of the Party in leading the strategic and accountable body responsible for delivering our diversity agenda and reporting back to every Federal Conference. DEG acts as a steering group for a dedicated Diversity Unit based at Liberal Democrat HQ, and is chaired by Baroness Sal Brinton.

Regional/State Diversity Champions

Regional Diversity Champions **continue to deliver activities at a regional and local party level**. Examples of activities since last Conference include a **practical training day** organised by the North West Region called "Diversity and Inclusion Strategies Improve your Campaigning" which included an afternoon of canvassing and door knocking as part of a Hazel Grove action day.

Further activities are being planned in West Midlands, East of England, Western Counties, and South East regions.

Candidate initiatives

- The HQ team continues to run the **New Generation** initiative and **Campaign for Gender Balance** (*see separate report*), which provides targeted training, mentoring and support for potential BAME and women candidates.
- The Leadership Programme candidates received **party policy and fundraising training** on the Saturday of Autumn Conference.
- A **Leadership Programme reception** was hosted by Lord Verjee at Autumn Conference for all candidates, political mentors, MP shadows and other key individuals who support the programme.
- A **business mentors networking event** was organised in October for Leadership Programme candidates. The event was intended to be an opportunity for candidates to meet and mingle with potential business mentors and to hear from one of the

Leadership Programme participants who already has a business mentoring relationship about how that is working for them.

- **Seventeen Leadership Programme candidates** have been selected as PPCs (*as of January 2014*) - 14 women, 4 BAME candidates and 2 LGBT candidates. Six of the seventeen selected candidates on the programme having been selected for held or strategic seats.

1.	Julia Cambridge	Chesterfield
2.	Lucy Hurds	Hereford and South Herefordshire
3.	Robin Meltzer	Richmond Park
4.	Layla Moran	Oxford West and Abingdon
5.	Maajid Nawaz	Hampstead and Kilburn
6.	Shas Sheehan	Wimbledon
7.	Vikki Slade	Mid Dorset and North Poole
8.	Claire Thomas	Hull West and Hessle
9.	Christine Tinker	Shrewsbury & Atcham
10.	Lisa Smart	Hazel Grove
11.	Julie Pörksen	Berwick
12.	Jane Dodds	Montgomeryshire
13.	Jackie Porter	Winchester
14.	Terry Stacy	Islington South and Finsbury
15.	Judith Bunting	Newbury
16.	Justine Baker	Bridgewater and West Somerset
17.	Sarah Yong	Somerton and Frome

- A **Facebook webinar** was organised for Leadership Programme candidates in November.
- **Training will be provided at Spring Conference** on speaking in public

Diversity awareness within the Party

- **Some training sessions** and selection surgeries that have in the past been run for women only are being extended specifically to all under-represented groups.

- All the Regional and State Diversity Champions have been given the training materials for the **Building a Diverse and Inclusive Membership** session and are now expected to collaborate with accredited party trainers in their regions and roll this out to their respective Regional Executives. We hope that training will then be cascaded to all local parties.
- An **Unconscious Bias** training session was delivered at Autumn Conference by Candy Piercy and Jemima Jefferson and was open to everyone to attend. Two more sessions were delivered to the **strategic seats team at HQ** and to **managers at HQ** in October.
- Training has also been given to the Parliamentary Party in the Commons and the Lords

Diversity monitoring

- **Approval and selection data** is regularly monitored and analysed in order to gain an accurate picture of candidate diversity within the Party.

External engagement and activities

- The Diversity team has been working closely with the Government Equalities Office (GEO) on the **Access to Elected Office Strategy**, which aims to provide financial assistance and training to disabled individuals who want to stand as candidates for national or local elections.
- The **Access to Elected Office Fund** is open for applications and the Diversity team has been promoting this scheme through newsletters, information on the main website, the new members' magazine and through materials provided at Federal Party Conferences.

DEG Review Group

- DEG was commissioned by the Federal Executive. The FE supported the Chair of DEG's proposal to set up a **working group** to review the work of DEG against the original plan with a

view to producing a revised plan to take the work of DEG through to 2015 and 2020.

- FE selected 5 people with long term experience of the work of diversity and the DEG to develop a reinvigorated Diversity Strategy with the support of the HQ team that will focus on key achievable outcomes.
- FE **agreed** that the Working Group should consider the following topics as a minimum starting point: Structure of DEG, Internal Engagement, External Engagement, Communications, Measurements of success and Reporting to FE.
- The group met seven times and interviewed 12 people from both inside and outside the party.
- The DEG Review Group Report was circulated to the full membership of DEG for comment before submission to FE on 28th October
- An action plan has been drafted from this report and will be presented to the next FE meeting

In 2013, DEG met four times in January, March, June and September, and again in January 2014.

Baroness Sal Brinton
Chair, Diversity Engagement Group
January 2014