

Proposal for Policymaking

Key Principles

- All representatives on the National Policy Forum (NPF) should have a direct mandate from either members, affiliated trade unions, or both, rather than from the patronage of institutions which already hold significant influence within the party.
- All future changes to the composition of the NPF should be based on the principle of parity between members and affiliated trade unions, and should aim to defend and enhance the representation of both groups.
- Policymaking bodies should be structured in ways that allow them to fully harness the policy expertise of party members and trade unionists.

Party Policymaking

- Policymaking should be under the direction and control of Party conference, which shall itself be subject to the constitution and standing orders of the Party.
- Between Conferences, policymaking should be overseen by the National Executive Committee, which should be entirely composed of representatives with mandates from party members, affiliated trade unions, or both.
- The National Policy Forum (NPF) should continue to act as a deliberative policymaking body, accountable to party members and affiliated trade unions, which develops party policy on a rolling basis.

Composition of National Policy Forum

In accordance with the key principles outlined, the composition of the NPF should be changed accordingly:

- Seats held by elected officials, local government representatives, MPs, the European Parliamentary Labour Party, members of the House of Lords and the Shadow Cabinet should be abolished and replaced with non-voting positions allowing them to speak and express opinions.
- Seats representing affiliated trade unions should be increased to meet the principle of parity between the representation of trade unions and members.
- Members' representatives should be elected into Policy Commissions reflecting areas of expertise rather than on a regional basis.
- The overall size of the NPF should be reduced to make it more manageable.

NPF and Party Conference

- The Conference Arrangements Committee should produce guidelines clearly outlining the process by which delegates can call for reference back on parts of the NPF documents.
- Where appropriate, delegates should be encouraged to advise which parts of the NPF report they wish to call for reference back on in advance of Conference. If there are large numbers of such requests, a priorities ballot should be considered.
- The procedure by which successful composited motions get submitted into the NPF should be written down and made clear to party members, and members of delegations who moved these motions at Conference should be invited to the relevant Policy Commission meetings.
- Party conference should be able to vote on alternative positions that are supported by a minority of NPF delegates.

Additional Changes to the NPF

- There should be a more public and transparent programme of consultative events, so that each Commission has a programme of regional weekend meetings, which are widely publicised to members.
- Each Commission should invite experts to address their meetings and publish the expert submissions, so that members can specifically comment on those submissions.
- The submissions received from LP members and from experts should be published and members invited to comment before each Commission meets to draw up its report to Party Conference.
- Everyone putting in a submission should be kept informed as to what has happened to it.
- NPF reports should be drafted with greater transparency and accountability, so that members can understand how decisions have been taken regarding what gets included and what doesn't.
- Commission reports should be published sufficiently in advance of Conference for members to be able to comment on those reports through their CLP structure and thus mandate their delegates.
- Delegates to the NPF should receive increased support and guidance to allow them to represent members effectively.

Supporting Arguments

Polymaking in the Labour Party must be fully accountable to members and trade unions, in order to ensure that it fully harnesses the expertise and experiences of the key constituent actors in the party, as well as acting as a countervailing force to the pressure placed on policymaking by elite interests. This requires bringing policy under the oversight of the NEC, which itself acts under the direction and control of party Conference. Meanwhile, the National Policy Forum should remain as a key rolling body of policy development and deliberation, and should be democratised to ensure that all of its voting representatives have a mandate from members or trade unions. Meanwhile, the representation of trade unions on the NPF should be

expanded in accordance with the concept of parity between members and affiliates. Representatives to the NPF should be elected directly into Policy Commissions on the basis of their knowledge areas, in order to ensure that the expertise of party members is allocated as effectively as possible.