

BACKGROUND PAPER FOR MOTION D20

Summary of Changes

Context

The main aim of this motion is to fulfil the following entry in Record of Organisational Statements:

- To reconsider the proxy system for online conferences and the 5-vote limit per members and to bring forward proposals to Conference to change this (SOC Report Recommendation, A1 Autumn 2020).

Further to this, serious issues arose following Spring 2022 Conference concerning fraudulent use of proxy votes (this issue is detailed in the SOC Report).

Consequently, SOC considered how best to remove proxy votes altogether.

Proxy voting provides a rough fix for the problem of representation at Conference. Only a small number of members are able to take part in Conference, leading to the problem of Conference not being representative of the Party at large. Proxy votes allow members who want to take part in the Party's democracy but are unable to attend Conference to have another member vote on their behalf.

Removing proxy voting therefore leaves this accessibility issue. SOC is of the opinion that this can be solved by moving the voting on motions to a Conference Ballot that is open to all members. This requires some re-engineering of SOCC as detailed below.

As this entails a big change to how Conference works, SOC have included a requirement for these changes to be confirmed at Spring 2024 Conference (Section 6).

Section 1 - removal of voting from plenary except for procedural motions & removal of proxy voting

This Section:

- Creates Conference Ballots.
 - Motions and amendments to motions will still be debated at Conference
 - Instead of moving to a vote after debate, business will move on to the next Agenda item
 - Conference Ballots will open at the end of the plenary session for the motions and amendments debated in that plenary
 - Ballots will stay open for one week for amendments, then re-open for another week for motions in their final form
 - Motions without amendments will be voted on in the first week
 - Conference attendees are automatically registered for Conference Ballots; any other member of the Party can register for the Conference Ballots provided they have been members for three months
- Removes most references to voting on motions and amendments except for procedural motions

- Procedural motions are slightly limited; it will no longer be possible to prevent a motion from being put unless the motion proposer moves a procedural motion to withdraw their motion
- Removes proxy voting

Section 2 - adjustments to publication, consideration, and passing of the SOC report

This Section:

- Moves consideration of the SOC Report to a special meeting of SOC one week before the first plenary of Conference
- Voting on the SOC Report moves to a one week voting period following the special meeting. SOC & the ERO will work out a suitable division of that week into two voting periods; one for amendments, one for the final SOC Report
- Amends the various tweaks to the Agenda that take place via the SOC Report to account for the new timing of the SOC Report: composite motions, the GPEx power to promote one motion to the top of the agenda, errors in the Final Agenda, reports required but not received

Section 3 - replace amendments from the floor with a Special Amendments Forum

This Section:

- Removes amendments to the floor (a provision that allows Conference to amend Reports that have been received after the First Agenda deadline and so were not originally available for the amendments forum)
- Creates a Special Amendments Forum. This will open for one week following the Final Agenda
- Amendments to the SOC Report will then be considered and voted on as per Section 2 above; amendments to other Reports will be considered in the relevant Conference Ballot as per Section 1 above

Section 4 - removal of straw polls from workshops & plenary

This Section:

- Removes straw polls from workshops and their reporting to plenary

Section 5 - removal of Late Motions

This Section:

- Removes the provision for Late Motions (these allow for motions on issues that have arisen or changed since the pre-agenda deadline)
- Pulls back the Emergency Motion deadline (these also allow for motions on issues that have arisen or changed since the pre-agenda deadline, but have more restrictive content rules)