

[Federal Communications and Elections Committee July report](#)

General Election preparedness

As is our key focus, in our last meeting we continued to discuss our General Election preparedness and planning.

In summary, our plan builds on what worked in the 2019 general election (and previous plans), changes what didn't work, and looks to the future for new ideas and approaches.

The plan is a live document and progress is being made in all the areas, with a relentless focus on ensuring that we can deliver **gains at the next General Election: whenever it may be.**

Westminster Candidates review

The Committee previously commissioned a review into our Westminster candidate selections. We felt strongly that the **recent round of selections have been too slow and cumbersome. Change is desperately needed.**

We are **thankful to Alison Suttie and Tim Farron** for their comprehensive review, the thirty interviewees and more than 50 others who provided input in writing. The review points to **a roadmap for a more efficient future process.**

Candidate selection is a State matter, and we are also thankful to the States for their engagement with the review. We **look forward to taking this work forward as a team.** The final version of the report will now go to the Joint Candidates Sub-Committee, the appropriate body for cross-state candidate discussions.

We must not be this delayed again.

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[Getting ready to remove the Conservatives from power](#)

When will the next general election be?

Sorry, I don't know. But I do know that the range of plausible dates is wide open – from only a couple of months away through to January 2025. And that whenever the date is, we also have a massive round of local elections in May.

Which is why we **need to step up our campaigning, capacity building and planning** through the second half of this year. Even if this Parliament goes its full term, the benefits of extra canvassing, member recruitment and training this summer will still be considerable.

We certainly need to be out campaigning, looking at the horror show that is the Conservative Party leadership contest so far – full of candidates who aren't headlining big issues like fixing the NHS and tackling climate change, but are rushing to the media to talk about restricting the rights of trans people.

Both our elections committee (FCEC) and the Board have recently reviewed our general election preparations, and the team at HQ is revising our contingency plans for a snap election. A **pre-manifesto overview of our policy** approach is also coming to the autumn's [federal party conference](#).

It was great to see the **huge bump in canvassing as a result of our 'Big Build' weekend in early July** – and the bump in new leaflet deliverers that came in as a result. Our party membership also not only got a bump from the win in Tiverton & Honiton, but the growth has continued since too rather than fading away as happened with previous by-election bumps.

So I'd encourage everyone in local parties to think about how to up your campaigning plans over the summer, and where we don't yet have a **Prospective Parliamentary Candidate (PPC)** in place to think about talking to your state or regional party about when to **timetable your selection** for.

Wonderful people

We've had a brilliant run of council by-elections already since the May local elections, with a net seven gains (compared to net four gains for Labour). That makes us the **best performing party in those contests**, and it was particularly good to see **Linda Chung win the Hampstead Town by-election** – winning the seat from third place and taking it from Labour.

Also deserving particular praise is the first person to top our 'Golden Mallets' scheme for people who got the most posters put up in the May elections. **Cliff Woodcraft from Sheffield topped the list with an awesome 466 (!) posters**. Badges are on their way to all the winners.

Our next big set of prizes is the Party Awards at our autumn conference. Nominations are now open for:

- The Belinda Eyre-Brook Award
- The Dadabhai Naoroji Award
- The Harriet Smith Award

- The Patsy Calton Award
- The Penhaligon Award
- The President's Award

You can [read more and make nominations here](#).

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[Autumn Conference 2022 motions selection](#)

The Federal Conference Committee (FCC) met on Saturday, 9th July to start its work on the **final agenda for Autumn 2022 Conference**, which will be taking place in Brighton, with an option for online attendance.

If you haven't yet registered for Conference, I would recommend doing so here.

At the meeting we discussed several items in relation to future venues and the meeting and motions schedule for 2023 into 2024. As previously reported, **we will be returning to York for Spring Conference 17 to 19 March 2023**.

The Federal Conference Committee has also continued work with its **Working Group on a Hybrid Conference** and has put together a technical specifications document which will be used to look at options and software platforms for a future hybrid conference. This was an interesting meeting as we also discussed wider membership engagement at Conference (applicable for in-person and hybrid conference options).

Conference is an excellent way to engage with the membership, to influence the party's policy and strategy, but also so many other activities. We are looking forward to an exciting fringe programme with a range of different topics and presentations. There will also be the extensive training programme available at Conference – we really do recommend that you look at that. The directory will be published very soon. I am especially looking forward to the return of the Lib Dem Quiz and of course Glee.

The agenda for conference, including the texts of the motions and timings, will be published shortly. As per usual the Conference will include the Leaders Speech, Committee and Parliamentary Reports, the Leaders Q&A and some set-piece speeches; we are also **delighted that Kira Rudik, leader of the Ukrainian Holos Party, will be joining us at Conference**. The further details of these will be announced in due course.

We received 41 policy motions, four business motions, five constitutional amendments and three standing order amendments. As always, unfortunately, time is tight, and we cannot take all the motions submitted.

The FCC wants to extend its **thanks to all members to take the time to write and prepare motions**; if you are interested in shaping party policy then please do reach out to the FCC via the motions (and/or amendments) drafting service and we will be able to assist you.

From the submitted motions, we selected 18 policy motions, three business motions, four constitutional amendment, and two standing order amendments. There are also slots for two emergency motions.

I have included **below the list of motions submitted** (please note that some of the naming of the motions may vary between this list and publication of the agenda), who they were submitted by and if not selected, the reason for non-selection. With regards to constitutional and standing order amendments, these are automatically selected; however, ruled either in or out of order.

You may recall from the previous report that we confirmed that there would be a debate on the issue of nuclear weapons at Autumn 2022 Conference, and a nuclear weapons motion has been selected for debate.

Please note that the next set of deadlines are:

Drafting advice deadline (emergency motions and amendments): 22 August at 13.00

Amendments and Emergency Motions deadline and deadline for Appeals against non-selection of motions: 5 September at 13.00

Appeals deadline for Amendments and Emergency Motions: 15 September at 13.00

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Celebrating 50 Years of Pride in the UK

Today, 1st of July, we are marking an incredible 50 years since the first Pride rally took place in the UK.

We have made incredible strides when it comes to protecting the fundamental human rights of those with LGBT+ identities. **I am proud that our party has supported LGBT+ rights since its very conception.**

We opposed Section 28 in the same year that we formed and were unafraid to call to “Guarantee equal rights for gay men and lesbians through changes to criminal law, anti-discrimination legislation and police practices” in the following General Election.

Pride is a celebration of how far we’ve come so I’d be remiss not to mention Lynne Featherstone’s unparalleled work legalising same-sex marriage in 2012.

But **we still have so much work to do**. In this country, the rights of LGBT+ people are still increasingly under attack. The Home Office has said that hate crimes based on sexuality have **doubled in four years**. This is simply unacceptable in a modern society.

As Liberal Democrats, we need to not only fight against discrimination wherever we see it, but to create a society in which this persecution cannot exist. We will always uphold the values of individual and social justice, reject all prejudice and discrimination, and oppose all forms of entrenched privilege and inequality.

LGBT rights are human rights. We will continue to stand up to protect them against the Conservatives.

Thank you to the trailblazers who marched to show the true meaning of LGBT+ joy 50 years ago. **Wishing you all a happy and meaningful Pride!**

Note: If you attended the first UK Pride March in 1972, please do send your photos to sarah.dobson@libdems.org.uk

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[Tiverton & Honiton](#)

We saw last year what a huge boost it gave to the party getting two new excellent MPs elected in Parliamentary by-elections. It’s good for their constituents and also good for the party’s prospects across the whole country.

We’ve also seen this month how Conservative MPs have failed to do what our country needs – to remove Boris Johnson from 10 Downing Street.

Which is why the latest contest in Tiverton and Honiton is so important for us all again. The single most effective thing you can do in the next few weeks to help bring about his demise – and to help the party win in your own patch – is to [help Richard Foord get elected on 23 June](#).

Many of the team have gone straight into this campaign from the May local

elections, without the chance to pause for the hoped for break after those. Thank you hugely to everyone who is stretching themselves to give Richard the best of chances of winning.

Thank you too to Jamie Needle and the team in Wakefield, fighting a carefully targeted campaign there which I'm sure will help the continued growth of our council group on Wakefield Council.

Treating our staff well

Some good news to report on party staff: the federal party has been awarded the ['excellence' status by the Good Work Standard](#) for how we go beyond legal minimum requirements in looking after staff.

With the amount of change since the 2019 election plus all the strains of lockdowns, it's been a particularly tough few years for our staff. But standards such as this show how we're taking seriously making the party a good and happy place to work.

Welcome to Cllr Mike Cox and Chris French

Chartered accountant, local councillor and former Parliamentary candidate Mike Cox has been appointed by the Federal Board as the new chair of our Federal Finances and Resources Committee (FFRC). Mike takes over from Tony Harris, who has stood down as a new academic career has unexpectedly opened up for him.

When Tony took up the post, the party's finances faced many difficult challenges. Tony has steered us through them and left a clear financial plan through to the next Westminster general election. At the heart of that has been much greater and earlier investment in this Parliament in our support for grassroots campaigning across the country – something we saw the benefits of in this May's elections.

Thank you to Tony and best of luck to Mike.

Thank you also to Shelley Snelson, who served as Tony's deputy, a pilot new post the FFRC has been trying out. Due to a change in her job, she is also standing down, and the FFRC will discuss later this year whether to continue, modify or wrap up the pilot.

Welcome also to Chris French, newly elected by the Board as one of the Vice Chairs of the [Racial Diversity Campaign \(RDC\)](#). Chris founded an LGBTQ+ charity and chairs a national one, as well as running a social enterprise consultancy. Best of luck Chris, and thank you for taking on the role.

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