

Draft letter/email to fellow union members

Dear

Refounding Labour to win

You may or may not have had a chance to look at the "[summary report](#)" which has just been circulated from the party's head office following the national consultation.

It regrettably makes little mention of many constructive submissions from TULO and others which would significantly improve the party's policy-making and other procedures.

The report does, however, suggest giving new powers to individual "registered supporters" who are not prepared to become members, including votes in leadership elections. This would automatically dilute the input of genuine party members and affiliates such as our union.

The report also hints that it may bring forward last minute proposals on the eve of conference – Labour's national executive meets on 20th Sept and conference begins on 25th Sept – on such key issues as:

- The balance of votes at conference
- The make-up of the party's national executive
- The make up of the party's conference arrangements committee

These are vital areas for the influence of our unions and our ability to work effectively within the Labour Party for the benefit of our members.

There are even suggestions that conference delegates will be asked to cast a single vote for or against the entire last-minute report, including a number of rule changes as yet unspecified. I think you will agree this would be a travesty of democracy.

As a Labour national executive member has pointed out, "all these areas are central to the party's future, and it would be wrong and dangerous to bounce them through conference without proper consultation."

I would therefore suggest to you, as a matter of top priority, that you send a strong message to the powers-that-be in your own union to ensure that the Labour Party rights of the Union and its members are properly protected and enhanced.

A draft text follows in case it is helpful. Please speak up before it is too late.

Yours etc...

Motion for consideration by Union bodies in near future

More Say for our members

This notes the current ongoing *Refounding Labour* consultation and the response already submitted by the Trade Union and Labour Party Liaison Organisation (TULO) on behalf of our union and others.

We welcome TULO's determination to defend and enhance the Labour Party rights of affiliates such as our own Union and of Constituency Labour Parties (CLPs) up and down the country.

We welcome TULO's constructive proposals to increase the number of affiliates and individual members (e.g. with subscription rates which are more graduated on the basis of income) rather than to dilute the influence of members by creating a new category of "registered supporters" who could claim some membership right (e.g. voting in leadership elections) without having any real commitment to the party, or making any financial contribution.

We call on our Union's representatives to speak and vote accordingly, and also to defend members' interests in the following areas:

1. **Local Organisation:** We welcome TULO's recognition of the need to retain Labour Party structures that allow meaningful input into the politics and policy of the party. We will defend the right of local union branches to send delegates to constituency General Committees.
2. **Policy Documents:** Conference should be given options and allowed to vote in parts. Affiliates and CLPs should be allowed to move amendments.
3. **Motions to conference:** We strongly endorse TULO's recommendation to remove the restrictive "contemporary" criteria which currently lead to numerous motions on issues of genuine concern being simply ruled out of order. Motions passed at conference should be incorporated within the party's policy documents.
4. **Leadership responsibility:** As the TULO submission makes clear, "if we are serious about giving members a voice, then we need to accept the freely made decisions of conference as legitimate party policy".
5. **Conference voting:** We support the currently evenly balanced system in which votes are equally divided (50/50) between CLPs and affiliates.
6. **Conference arrangements committee:** This committee should continue to consist of representatives of CLPs and affiliates only.
7. **National Executive Committee:** The NEC is the party's governing body between party conferences. It should retain its full responsibilities. The current NEC structure gives under representation to individual members and over-representation to MPs. We support the TULO proposal to increase the number of CLP seats (elected on a national basis) and in addition to reserve two seats for election by members in Scotland and Wales respectively.
8. **Joint Policy Committee:** In accordance with TULO's recommendation, this powerful body should either be democratised (with proper representation for CLPs and affiliates) or abolished.
9. **Leadership elections:** We defend the right of our Union's levy-payers to vote in leadership elections. Their input should not be diluted by allocating votes to people who are neither levy-payers nor individual members of the party.
10. **Parliamentary Selections:** A sitting MP is guaranteed a place on the shortlist and should have no reason to fear an open selection contest. TULO proposes that a sitting MP should in future need, in order to achieve automatic reselection, at least 66% of affiliated and branch nominations. This would be an improvement on current rules.
11. **Rule Changes:** **Any proposed rule changes should be circulated well in advance of conference and voted on one-by-one.**

The TULO submission makes the point that "we cannot treat our members as a force to be tamed or ignored". We now call on our union representatives to argue forcefully for the points above in order to make the Labour Party properly responsive to our members' legitimate and vital interests.