

AUTUMN CONFERENCE, EDINBURGH

SATURDAY 10 OCTOBER 2026

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Conference

09:30 First Timer's Session

09:50 Welcome

Chair: Fraser Graham

Opening of Conference by Cllr Ed Thornley, Leader of the Edinburgh Liberal Democrat Group

10:00 SC1 Protecting Scotland Against Wildfires

Policy motion

Chair: Isobel Knights; Aide: Ross Stalker

Submitted by member signatories

Conference notes:

1. In the last few years, Scotland has seen a rise in the number of wildfires, most notably on Dava Moor, within the Cairngorm National Park and on Arthur's Seat. Land management practices and climate change mean it is likely we will see more.

2. The tackling of wildfires requires an intensive use of resources by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services, with more than 100 firefighters required to tackle the wildfire in the Cairngorms.
3. Communities can also be impacted by the increasing number of wildfires, with residents of Nethy Bridge having to temporarily evacuate and local businesses forced to close during the Cairngorm wildfire.
4. The Scottish Government has published a Strategic Action Plan to tackle wildfires in March 2026 and announced a fund for the businesses affected by the Cairngorms Wildfire in August 2026.
5. The UK Government has issued a temporary ban on the selling of disposable barbeques, due to the significant risk they can pose in hot and dry conditions.

Conference believes:

1. As Scotland begins to experience hotter and drier summers, we need to make sure we are prepared for the heightened risk of wildfires that these types of summer bring.
2. On the ground firefighting personnel, alongside community volunteers, should be commended for their work in tackling these blazes, especially given the pressure they place on an already stretched service.
3. Despite the Scottish Government's publication of its action plan, their response to the Cairngorms wildfire fell short and that lessons must be learnt so that other communities are not let down when the next wildfire arises.

Conference calls for the Scottish Government to:

1. convene a cross-party summit with relevant stakeholders in order to learn the lessons of the Cairngorms wildfire so that communities are not let down again.
2. commission a probe to review the current state of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and identify what steps need to be taken to ensure the service can tackle major incidents without experiencing undue pressure on resources.
- ~~3. work closely with the UK Government to determine whether the temporary ban on disposable barbeques needs to be made permanent and what other measures to protect the public can be taken, ensuring that everyone can enjoy our outdoor spaces and national parks safely.~~

Amendment

Submitted by Scottish Green Liberal Democrats

Mover: Sanne Dijkstra-Downie MSP

Summator: Charles Dundas

Insert after line 18 a new section 6 under Conference notes:

“6. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service say that Scotland's wildfire season is extending and that climate change is playing a major role in making these destructive fires even more dangerous.”

Insert after line 22 a new section 2, and renumber accordingly under Conference believes:

“2. Wildfires have a negative impact on both plants and animals. In some locations they can negate many years of nature conservation work. Rewetted landscapes are more resilient to extreme weather conditions and climate change; and nature-based solutions can help to tackle wildfires by restoring degraded landscapes to better retain moisture, naturally blocking fire spread and reducing flammable vegetation.”

Insert after line 43 a new section 4 under Conference calls for the Scottish Government to:

“4. Make Scotland’s landscape more resilient by increasing public investment - alongside incentivising private investment - in peatland restoration; and by ensuring that a higher proportion of publicly funded forestry grants go towards new native woodland and enabling much more natural woodland regeneration.”

Cards:

Mover: Andrew Baxter MSP, Highland, called

Summator: Duncan Dunlop MSP, Edinburgh North East & Leith, called

Amd Mover: Sanne Dijkstra-Downie MSP, called

Amd Summator: Charles Dundas, North Edinburgh East and Leith, called

Jacqui Bell, East Lothian, called

Malcolm Wood, Edinburgh West, called

Lorna Cummock, Rutherglen, called

Pauline Flannery, Edinburgh North East & Leith, called

Cochain McNae, , not called

Votes:

Amendment: Carried nem con

Separate Vote on Conference Call item 3.: Counted. Remove lines: 33 - Retain Lines: 30. Lines are removed

Motion as amended: Carried

10:30 SC2 Equitable Exam Access For All

Policy motion

Chair: Mel Sullivan; Aide: Fraser Graham

Submitted by member signatories

Conference notes that:

1. In Scotland, as of August 2025, 2581 children and young people were home educated.

2. The rise of home educated children and young people has increased dramatically, with a 79% increase since the 2021/22 school year.

3. In Scotland, children and young people who are home educated face extreme barriers to accessing examination and assessment arrangements, including but not limited to the Scottish Government’s policy which states that local authorities are not required to, and therefore do not, meet the costs associated with home educated candidates taking examinations or other qualifications.

4. The successful pilot project run by the University of Exeter in partnership with Exeter College, Cornwall Council, Devon County Council and the exam board AQA that provided barrier and cost-free access to GCSE exams for home educated Young People.

Conference believes that:

1. Education is the best investment we can make in our children's potential and our country's future.
2. In an increasingly digital world, access to education via online education is not only possible, but an equally valid method of receiving some education, especially for Young People aged 15+, in line with the increase of Work From Home opportunities.
3. Children and young people who choose to home educate are more likely to be neurodivergent, have additional support needs or a learning disability and to have experienced bullying, violence and/or harassment in mainstream education

Conference therefore calls for the Scottish Government to:

1. Urgently publish plans to support cost-free and barrier-free access to examinations for all home educated young people in Scotland
2. Commit to developing an inclusive and accessible digital curriculum for families who choose home education
3. Work with home educated families and the home education community to develop a Home Educated Children and Young People Framework
4. Tackle the root problems that often drive families to home educate, including violence in schools, large class sizes and limited support for children and young people with additional needs.

Cards:

Mover: Eliza Twaddle, Dunfermline and West Fife, called
Summation: Amanda Clark
Beverly Hope, Edinburgh West, called
Willie Rennie, Dunfermline and West Fife, called
Fraser Graham, Edinburgh South
Fiona Dryburgh, South Lanarkshire
Freshta Amiri, Edinburgh North East and Leith
Noah McGarry, Dunfermline and West Fife, called

Votes:

Motion: carried

11:00 Speech - Sanne Dijkstra-Downie MSP, Climate, Environment & Energy Spokesperson

11:10 SC3 Support for Children with Life Limiting Conditions

Policy motion

Chair: Ross Stalker; Aide: Jacqui Bell

Submitted by member signatories

Conference notes that:

1. There are over 1, 800 families with children who have lifelimiting conditions living in the North East, Orkney & Shetland.
2. The only dedicated residential children's hospices in Scotland are Rachel House in Kinross and Robin House in Balloch, forcing families to travel hundreds of miles to access specialist respite or palliative care.
3. Charlie House, founded in 2011 with a vision for all children with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions in North East Scotland to receive the support they require in the North East:
 - a. supported over 100 local families in 2022/2023, delivering 2, 692 family support hours, 107 face-to-face visits, and over 5, 510 donated volunteer hours.
 - b. is entirely self-funded with no government support, relying solely on charitable donations and volunteer time.

Conference further notes with concern:

1. Construction sector inflation has forced Charlie House to abandon its plans for a £8m ground-up build at Woodend Hospital in favour of exploring the retrofit of an existing building or alternative site solutions.
2. The lack of support and respite care in the North East, Orkney, and Shetland for families with children who have life-limiting conditions.
3. The distances families must travel for support and respite care at all times of year, and the additional costs placed on families by the 'pay and reclaim' model of the NHS Scotland Patient Travel Scheme and the Highlands and Islands Patient Travel Scheme.

Conference believes that:

1. High-quality healthcare and respite should be delivered as close to home as possible.
2. Third-sector providers play a vital role in sustaining Scotland's care system, and government should proactively lower barriers to their success where such opportunities arise.
3. By failing to consider specific regional gaps in provision, instead making only vague one-size-fits-all commitments, the Scottish Government's Palliative Care Matters for All strategy ultimately falls short in its stated aim of tackling regional inequities.
4. Patient Travel Schemes must prioritise real human needs over bureaucratic thriftiness.

Conference calls on the Scottish Government to advance the delivery of Charlie House's dedicated support facility by:

1. directing Community Planning Partnerships to undertake a Place-Based Asset Review involving NHS Grampian, local authorities, and the charity, to identify a suitable idle public building for retrofit, or appropriate plot of serviced public land for construction, and fast-track a Community Asset Transfer at nominal cost.

2. offsetting the charity's construction costs through capital grants from existing schemes, such as the North East Just Transition Fund for zero-carbon energy systems.

3. instructing the region's NHS and Integration Joint Boards to agree a clinical commissioning framework well in advance of the centre opening, to guarantee stable long-term funding for its nursing and care posts.

Conference further calls on the Scottish Government to:

1. extend the Palliative Care Matters for All strategy to explicitly address regional inequities such as the lack of paediatric respite and end-of-life bed capacity in the North East, Orkney, and Shetland.

2. guarantee 100% Non-Domestic Rates relief for registered healthcare, hospice, and respite charities by making the 20% discretionary top-up mandatory for these specific organisations.

3. reform NHS Scotland's Patient Travel Schemes to provide upfront coverage of travel and accommodation for remote and island families accessing specialist paediatric respite and palliative care, and to supply more than one medical escort for children with the most complex medical needs.

Cards:

Mover: Isobel Knights, Angus & Mearns, called

Summation: Tanvir Ahmad, Dundee, called

Christine Jardine, Edinburgh West, called

Michael Turvey, Aberdeen West, called

Votes:

Motion: Carried nem con

11:40 PC1 Homes Around Stations

Policy motion

Chair: Leo Dempster; Aide: Paul McGarry

Policy Committee

Conference notes that:

1. Scotland faces an acute housing shortage, with too few homes being built in the places where people most want and need to live.

2. Housing shortages contribute to rising living costs, labour market constraints, slower economic growth and increased inequality. This makes it harder for young people to remain in the communities in which they have grown up.

3. Scotland has made substantial public investment in its rail network, stations and public transport infrastructure, yet much of the land surrounding stations remains occupied by surface car parks, vacant sites, low-density development or other underused land.

4. Building more homes within walking distance of high-quality public transport reduces dependence on private cars, supports town and city centres, improves the viability of public transport, and helps Scotland meet its climate objectives.

5. This has been demonstrated in other countries in Europe and Asia, leading to stronger local economies and more successful public transport systems.

6. The current planning system often makes well-designed, sustainable development around transport hubs slow, uncertain and expensive, discouraging investment and reducing housing supply.

Conference believes that:

1. The best place to accommodate much of Scotland's future housing growth is around existing public transport infrastructure, where residents can easily access employment, education and services without relying on private cars.

2. The planning system should provide certainty by establishing clear rules in advance, allowing developments that comply with agreed standards to proceed quickly.

3. Local communities should retain a strong voice in shaping the character of development through local design codes, rather than repeatedly debating the principle of development on individual planning applications.

Conference therefore calls on the Scottish Government to establish Station Growth Zones around qualifying railway stations, subway stations, tram stops and other major public transport interchanges, and:

1. Establish criteria for qualification based on service frequency and connectivity to employment, education and services.

2. Define these zones as covering, by default, all land within approximately 800 metres' walking distance of the station entrance, with local authorities able to extend boundaries to include additional areas with a clear functional connection to the station.

3. Permit the default boundary of these zones to be reduced only where physical barriers make land inaccessible from the station.

4. Amend national planning policy such that there is a strong statutory presumption in favour of higher-density residential and mixed-use development within Station Growth Zones, with planning permission normally being granted unless narrowly defined statutory grounds for refusal apply.

5. Establish national standards that require Station Growth Zone design codes to:

a. enable a substantial increase in housing capacity and density in comparison with existing development patterns.

b. be prepared such that they set out clear and objective standards for development, to be determined by planning authorities only after sufficient consultation with local communities.

6. Ensure that development complying with all standards adopted for these zones benefits from a significantly streamlined planning process.

7. Publish a national programme identifying publicly owned land suitable for station-led housing development, working with Transport Scotland, ScotRail, Network Rail, local authorities and other public landowners to bring forward sites for development.

8. Regularly review the performance of Station Growth Zones, identifying and addressing barriers preventing housing development from coming forward.

Amendment

Submitted by 5 member signatories.

Mover: Tanvir Ahmad, East Renfrewshire

~~Delete lines 43 to 47 (therefore calls on 2.) and replace with:~~

~~2. Define Station Growth Zone boundaries through local planning, taking account of the wider area functionally connected to the station or interchange, including town and city centres, walking, wheeling and cycling routes, employment and service centres, regeneration opportunities, local geography and other relevant planning considerations, rather than applying a fixed national distance.~~

~~After line 74 (end of motion), insert:~~

~~“These reviews should also measure key targets such as delivery of affordable and family-sized housing, supporting infrastructure, the reuse of brownfield and underused land, and environmental and sustainability outcomes.”~~

Cards:

Mover: Jack Clark, Edinburgh North East & Leith, called

Summation: Andy Williamson, Edinburgh South, called

Amd Mover: Tanvir Ahmad, Dundee, called

Mel Sullivan, Aberdeen City and North Kincardine, called

Ree Ralph, East Lothian, called

Neil Casey, East Renfrewshire, called

Fraser Graham, Edinburgh South, called

Hal Oster, Edinburgh West, called

Michael Turvey, Aberdeen West, called

Votes:

Amendment: counted For: 35, Against: 37. Amendment not carried

Motion: Carried

12:20 Speech - Adam Harley MSP, Health & Care Spokesperson

12:30 Lunch break and fringe

14:50 Afternoon session: Financial Appeal

15:00 Speech - Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP, Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats

15:30 PCRB Report on Reference Back of Motion SC7

Policy Committee Reference Back

Chair: Jenni Lang; Aide: David Evans

Background

Motion SC7 – “Safe and Ethical AI Deployment in GP Practices and NHS Scotland” – was submitted to the Spring 2026 Scottish Liberal Democrat Conference in Edinburgh. A petition was brought forward under Article 11 of the Conference Standing Orders to refer Motion SC7 back to Scottish Policy Committee (SPC). After a debate on the conference floor, this petition was actioned by Conference.

This report constitutes the response of the Scottish Policy Committee to this reference back, under Article 11.10.2 of the Conference Standing Orders. SPC recommends conclusion of this reference back with no further action.

Discussion

Motion SC7 primarily calls for regulation of the forms of AI technology permitted to perform particular roles within the Scottish public healthcare sector. Generally, it calls for restrictions on the use of ‘generative AI’, instead promoting use of ‘extractive NLP.’ The motion justifies these regulations by drawing a distinction between these forms of AI (Conference Believes 1) and claiming that ‘generative AI’ is inherently unreliable, biased, and incapable of reasoning or understanding (Conference Believes 2; Conference Notes 3).

SPC does not believe that the content of this motion is appropriately accessible for debate at Conference. Indeed, at Spring Conference, the majority of debate on the motion did not engage with these claims about operational specifics or the proposals to regulate them. Instead, speakers discussed the possible outcomes, positive and negative, of AI deployment for society at large. Some speakers openly admitted ignorance of the technical details in the motion, such as the distinctions between different AI architectures. SPC does not believe it is reasonable to expect conference delegates to commit the Party to specific technical claims about AI capabilities, and consequently to these specific regulations. Rather, delegates ought to decide the principles according to which organisations should make operational decisions around AI technology deployment.

SPC believes that the regulations proposed in Motion SC7 are overly rigid. They are also likely to become outdated as AI technologies continue to develop.

Motion SC7 seeks to regulate AI systems by reference to particular categories of technology and assumptions about their capabilities and limitations. SPC does not believe this provides a durable basis for policy in an area that is changing rapidly and where future developments are difficult to predict.

SPC also does not agree with all of the characterisations of AI systems set out in the motion, including some of the claims made about the nature of AI reasoning and understanding. These are matters on which there is considerable disagreement. SPC does not believe Conference should be asked to endorse particular technical or philosophical positions on these questions as a condition of adopting policy.

Instead, SPC believes policy should focus on outcomes, risks and safeguards. The key question is not how a system is categorised, but what it does, how it performs, and whether its use is consistent with the principles that should govern ethical AI deployment. SPC considers this a more practical approach and one that is more likely to remain relevant as technology develops.

It is not feasible to revise the motion into a form SPC believes is appropriate for debate at Conference. SPC has considered revising the motion to remove or replace overly technical material.

However, the motion is comprised primarily of such material, and the principles underlying the technical points are not adequately presented in the motion text. Consequently, such revision would require SPC to draw out, evidence, and set out these principles.

Additionally, due to the fairly narrow scope of the original policy motion, the redrafted motion would set out general principles for AI regulation but only apply them as policy to the public healthcare sector.

SPC will therefore instead create a comprehensive AI policy motion for submission to Spring Conference 2027. As well as setting out regulations to ensure safe and ethical AI deployment across the Scottish economy, this motion will set out policy around industrial strategy, research and innovation, and infrastructure.

The motion will focus on principles and practical outcomes, as opposed to operational details. SPC believes AI regulation is an important and timely issue, and will, of course, welcome amendments from all members in order to foster open debate on the Scottish Liberal Democrat position. SPC is also aware that an AI policy motion has been submitted to the Federal Autumn Conference 2026; if passed, this will be taken into account when drafting the motion.

Summary

SPC believes Motion SC7 is not appropriately accessible for debate at conference, and that the overall motion is significantly weakened by its rigidity. Further, SPC does not believe it is feasible to revise the motion for debate at Conference due to the high proportion of inaccessible content and the motion's narrow scope.

SPC intends to submit a comprehensive AI policy motion to Spring Conference 2027.

SPC therefore recommends conclusion of the reference back with no further action.

Sources

1. Ebrahim Norouzi, Sven Hertling, & Harald Sack. (2025). ConExion: Concept Extraction with Large Language Models.
2. Neidlinger, P., El Nahhas, O.S.M., Muti, H.S. et al. Benchmarking foundation models as feature extractors for weakly supervised computational pathology. Nat. Biomed. Eng 10, 1113–1123 (2026).
3. Liévin, V., Palepu, A., Weng, WH. et al. Towards conversational artificial intelligence for disease management. Nature 655, 1292–1299 (2026).

Appendix - Text of Motion SC7

Conference notes that:

1. According to the latest survey by the Royal College of General Practitioners Scotland, GPs spend around 22% of their day on administrative tasks that do not improve patient care.

2. Rapid development of Large Language Models (LLMs) and Large Multimodal Models (LMMs) has led to American Big Tech firms now strongly pushing the narrative that these models represent a form of general purpose artificial cognition.

3. There is growing evidence that LLMs and LMMs are not cognitive, but probabilistic, and therefore, issues such as confabulation, token bias and algorithmic pareidolia are ultimately not solvable. The increasing environmental cost of generative AI is particularly pronounced when the data centres powering the models are located in the United States.

Conference believes that:

1. While we should embrace the potential of technology to reduce the administrative burden on GPs, it is critical that a distinction is maintained between generative AI (which unreliably creates new content, even when it appears to be referencing existing knowledge) and extractive NLP (Natural Language Processing, which reliably organises and categorises data).

2. The industry narrative suggesting that LLMs and LMMs possess 'cognition', 'reasoning' or 'understanding' is scientifically flawed, and dangerous when applied to a healthcare context.

3. The use of models which are affected by token bias in a decision making context will inevitably introduce an unpredictable and unacceptable source of discrimination.

4. the 'human-in-the-loop' principle is non-negotiable, and as such a GP or another appropriate clinician must remain the final author and auditor of all clinical decisions and communications.

5. Using generative AI for direct diagnostic purposes, such as interpreting medical imagery or data, or summarising unread patient histories, poses unacceptable patient safety risks.

6. The appropriate use of AI in healthcare is proven, specialised tools that primarily assist with workflow management, rather than generative tools that make false claims of reasoning and dangerously overpromise on their capabilities.

Conference calls for Healthcare Improvement Scotland to:

1. Classify LLMs/LMMs as entirely unsuitable for diagnostic or clinical decision-making duties.

2. Produce a Safe Transcription Standard for GP surgeries and consultants, such that voice-to-text tools are only permitted if they:

a. Incorporate preprocessing steps such as noise gating, voice activity detection and speaker classification to reduce the risk of confabulation.

b. Are limited to acting as transcription assistants, with a mandatory 'human-in-the-loop' verification step before any data is committed to the patient record.

3. Ensure that only predictable, narrow-scope Computer Vision tools with medical device certification are deployed for patient image analysis.

4. Require that NHS Scotland data remains within the European Economic Area of UK jurisdiction and that no model training or computation is carried out under a US Data Processing Agreement.

5. Permit the use of LLMs to generate synthetic training data only for the purpose of building smaller, more reliable, and fully auditable NLP tools.

6. Promote the use of reliable extractive NLP technologies specifically designed to reduce the administrative burden on GPs.

Cards:

Mover: Neil Casey

Question Card: Ross Stalker, Paisley and Renfrewshire, not called, x 4

Votes:

Motion (Reference Back is now closed):Accepted

15:40 Special Conference Session – Constitutional Amendments

Chair: Paul McGarry; Aide: Leo Dempster

BM1 Constitutional Amendments

for submission to Autumn Conference 2026, as agreed by the Scottish Executive.

Approval of Defecting Councillors

At clause I5, adds the following;

5 (d): Any member of a Council who joins or seeks to join a recognised Liberal Democrat council group, without having been elected with the sanction of a Liberal Democrat Delegated Nominating Officer, shall be subject to the approval procedure established in terms of Section H, Clause 24.

Three Year Terms

At clauses F4, F20 and G1(g), replaces the words ‘two years’ with ‘three years’.

Implementation of Office Bearer Term Limits

Adds new clause after F20;

F21: No person may hold the same Office Bearer post, other than Leader or Deputy Leader, for longer than two full consecutive three year terms. If a person is elected by the members or appointed by the Executive to fulfil one of these roles not less than two years into a term, they may serve two additional three year terms. This does not apply to terms served prior to 1st January 2028.

Renumbers following clauses accordingly.

Removal of Requirement for Postal Ballots

At clause F5, removes the word ‘postal’.

Minimum Voting Age

At clause C4, after the words, “All Party Members shall be guaranteed the following rights under this Constitution”, add the following;

“...but only members whose age is at least ten years shall be entitled to vote in Party elections including Parliamentary and local government selections and the provisions of this constitution as to members’ voting rights shall be construed accordingly.”

Office Bearer Vacancy

Replaces clause F10 with the following;

F10: Save if the Convener’s term has less than six months to run the Executive may appoint an acting Convener or if the vacancy for Leader or Deputy Leader occurs less than six months before polling day in a scheduled Scottish General Election the Executive may appoint an acting Leader or Deputy Leader.”

Renumber Duplicate Clause

Renumbers the second clause H23 as H24, and renumbers following clauses accordingly.

Constitutional Amendments to Any Conference

At clause L1, after the words “called for the purpose.”, adds new sentence;

“Conference Committee, at their discretion, may also allow validly submitted constitutional amendments to be considered at any other conference of the party.”

European Parliament

At clauses F9 and the Heading before second clause H23, removes the references to the European Parliament.

Joint Candidates Sub-Committee

At F31a, change first occurrence of 13.4 to 19, and delete the word ‘States’.

Cards:

Mover: Janni Lang, Edinburgh North East and Leith, called
Summator: Charles Dundas, Edinburgh North East and Leith, called
Fraser Graham, Edinburgh South, called
John Lawrie, Edinburgh South, called
Galen Milne, Stirling & Clackmannanshire, called

Votes:

- Approval of Defecting Councillors: Carried
- Three Year Terms: Carried
- Implementation of Office Bearer Term Limits: Carried
- Removal of Requirement for Postal Ballots: Carried
- Minimum Voting Age: Carried
- Office Bearer Vacancy: Carried
- Renumber duplicate Clause: Carried
- Constitutional Amendments to Any Conference: Carried
- European Parliament: Carried
- Joint Candidates Sub-Committee: Carried

16:30 EM1 - A Liberal Response to Public Service Reform

Emergency Motions/Topical Discussions

Chair: Fraser Graham; Aide: Noah McGarry

Submitted by the ASLDC

Mover: James Calder

Conference notes with concern the Scottish Government's proposals:

1. To abolish Scotland's 14 territorial health boards to be replaced by 2 Strategic health Boards and the reduction in the number of Special Boards included in the programme for government.
2. To remove the leadership and delivery of social care out of local authority control and democratic accountability.
3. Subsequent proposals to replace Scotland's 32 local authorities with 6-10 regional authorities and 120-160 community authorities, none of which featured in the SNP manifesto.

Conference further notes:

1. The Scottish Liberal Democrats proud tradition of opposing centralising reforms, such as the previous National Care Service proposals and the disastrous restructure of Police Scotland.

Conference believes:

1. The Scottish Government's proposals represent further centralisation of power and resources away from communities and local government, leading to a greater disconnect between decision-making and the needs of communities.
2. That communities are best served and better outcomes achieved by decentralisation of powers and resources with local decision making and accountability.
3. That chronic underfunding by the Scottish Government has starved local authorities of the resources to meet increasing demand for social care of demography and increasing complexity of care.
4. The Scottish Government's ill-considered proposals for Councils and dual mandates for councillors lack clarity and will put people off from standing in next May's Council elections.
5. There is an unfeasibly short timescale for dialogue with key stakeholders including communities, staff, trade unions, and professional bodies.
6. There is an absence of any substantial evidence base to support wholesale structural changes.

Conference calls for:

1. Full engagement with Scottish Liberal Democrat councillors to shape the Liberal Democrat response over the coming months.
2. A Scottish Liberal Democrat response which:

- i. will seek to strengthen local government in Scotland and oppose any proposals that represent a centralising of powers.
 - ii. will consider pressing for greater devolution and transfer of powers and resources currently outwith local authority control to local government, including economic development, further education, skills development, strategic transport, housing, planning and environmental powers.
3. The Scottish Government to:
- i. publish a full evidence base for considering Public Service Reform.
 - ii. agree to a realistic timescale for a proper dialogue with key stakeholders and communities.

Cards:

Mover: James Calder, Dunfermline & West Fife, called
Neil Alexander, Highland, called
Ed Thornley, Edinburgh West, called
Mel Sullivan, Aberdeen City and North Kincardine, called
Cael Scott, Dumfries & Galloway, called
Peter Barrett, Perth & Kinross, called
Norman Rae, South Lanarkshire, called
Morven-May MacCallum, Highland, called
Stephen Harte, Edinburgh West, called
John Waddell, Edinburgh, called
Jackie Bell, East Lothian, called
Michael Gregori, Dumfriesshire, called
Alan Beal, Edinburgh West, called
Jeff Goodhall, Aberdeenshire East, called
Tim Brett, North East Fife, called
Ben Langmead, Dunbartonshire, called
Yi-pei Chou Turvey, Aberdeenshire West, called
Alan Reid, Argyll & Bute, called
Marion Ewenson, Aberdeenshire East, called

Votes:

Motion: Carried nem con

17:30 Thanks and Close