

Suggested Rule Change

A local electoral college for electing leaders of local government Labour groups

The Labour Party Rule Book 2012 Chapter 13 Rules for Local Government Labour Groups on Principal Authorities Clause V Group Officers (page 55)

Amendment

Add new subclause 2 as follows:

“A Labour group and/or CLP(s) covering its area can apply to the NEC to initiate a consultation process with a view to establishing a local electoral college to elect the Leader of the Labour Group. This consultation should involve all relevant CLPs and all of the Labour councillors. Depending on the results of the consultation, the NEC can authorise the setting up of a local electoral college.

The voting shall take place in three sections. These will consist of: (i) Labour councillors; (ii) individual party members; (iii) those members of affiliated organisations who have indicated their support for the party and that they are not members or supporters of any other party or are otherwise ineligible to be members of the party.

Procedural guidelines for the local electoral college will be laid down by the NEC”

Supporting argument

The idea of a local electoral college to choose leaders of Labour groups was floated in the first draft of Refounding Labour. It presumably met resistance from supporters of the status quo and was regrettably dropped from the final document that was presented to last year’s annual conference. Giving party members more of a role and influence within our party was a key commitment by Ed Miliband during his leadership campaign. A wider franchise for electing council leaders would be an important step forward for party democracy. In recent years, central government has made many changes to local government structures and arrangements. Many of these have increased the power of group leaders and tended to weaken their accountability to the rest of the group. A local electoral college would enhance the accountability to both councillors and party and strengthen the link between group and party.

Closing date for constitutional amendments: 22 June 2012