



LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL SERVICES DIVISION

**Growing Fórsa
Fighting for Local
Government Services**

CONFERENCE 2023

AGENDA

3rd - 5th May 2023

Contents

Conference timetable	2
Standing Orders Committee	4
General standing orders for conference	5
Voting procedures for elections	7
Standing Orders Report No.2	12
Motions	15
Appendices	24
▪ Appendix 1: Motions considered to be out of order	24
▪ Appendix 2: Motions advisory to the National Executive Committee	25
▪ Appendix 3: Nominations received by the deadline set out in rule 21(v)	27
▪ Appendix 4: Motion, amendment, and nomination withdrawal form	31

Conference timetable

Wednesday 3rd May

14.00	Registration opens
15.15	Registration closes
15.30	Conference opening by Michael Whyms, Cathaoirleach
15.40	Address by local dignitaries
15.55	Appointment of tellers and scrutineers
16.00	Adoption of general standing orders
16.10	Standing Orders Committee report
16:20	Adoption of previous minutes and biennial report
16:30	Remembering former colleagues
16.35	Distinguished service awards
16.45	Address by Richy Carrothers, Head of Division
16:55	Social policy: Motion 1
17.05	Guest speaker: Dr. Rory Hearne, Assistant Professor, Maynooth University
17.25	Housing and homelessness: Motions 2, 3, 4 and 5
17:55	Staffing and operational: Motions 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11
18.35	Union power and strength: Motion 6
18:45	Strategic Change presentation
19:00	Conference adjourns

Thursday 4th May

10:00	Conference resumes
10.05	Empowering local government: Motion 12
10.15	Guest speaker: Daria Cibrario, Local and Regional Government Officer, Public Services International
10:35	Water services: Motions 13, 14, 15 and 16
11.05	Policies: Motions 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21
11:40	Job evaluation scheme: Motions 22, 23 and 24
12.10	Blended working and flexible working: Motions 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30
13.00	Conference adjourns for lunch

Conference timetable

Thursday 4th May (continued)

- 14.15 Conference resumes
- 14:15 Fórsa equality video
- 14.20 Guest speaker: Sinéad Gibney, Chief Commissioner Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
- 14.50 Advisory motions: Motions 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38 and 39
- 16:30 Emergency motions
- 17.00 Conference adjourns
- 20:00 Conference dinner

Friday 5th May

- 10.00 Joint divisional session: Services & Enterprises Division and Local Government & Local Services Division
- 10.05 Presentation by Professor John Geary, Professor of Employment Relations, UCD
- 10.30 Address by Owen Reidy, General Secretary, Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- 10.45 Workshop with Jane McAlevey
- 12.30 Panel discussion: Organising to deliver for members
- 13.00 Conference ends

Standing Orders Committee

Civil Service Division

Siobhán Daly
 Helen Lundy (Secretary)

Education Division

Eileen Coman
 Niamh Jordan**

Health and Welfare Division

Gerry Foley (Vice-chairperson)
 Don Meskell

Local Government and Local Services Division

Rose Marie Conroy (Chairperson)
 Audrey Warren*

Municipal Employees' Division

Tom Kavanagh
 Michael Ross

Services and Enterprises Division

Teresa Kearns (Returning officer)
 Billy Gallagher

*Kathryn Collins resigned from SOC in 2022 and was replaced by Audrey Warren who transferred from the Education Division to the Local Government and Local Services (LGLS) Division.

** Niamh Jordan was nominated by the Education Division Executive Committee to replace Audrey Warren on her transfer to LGLS Division.

General standing orders for conference

1. These standing orders shall be read in conjunction with the rulebook of the union. If there is conflict on meaning, then the rulebook shall prevail.
2. The Standing Orders Committee shall recommend the timetable for Conference and the order in which motions and amendments submitted shall be taken. When the time allotted to a group of motions has elapsed, the chairperson shall allow the debate in progress to finish. S/he shall then proceed to the next group of motions, thus guillotining any remaining motions in the current section. Such guillotined motions may be taken up by the chairperson later in Conference as time permits. Otherwise, they are automatically referred to the appropriate executive committee.
3. Unless otherwise decided by Conference, only one motion may be before Conference for discussion at any time.
4. Individual motions and amendments should be proposed by a speaker from the appropriate executive committee or from the branch which gave notice of the motion or amendment. Where no delegate of that branch is present, the motion may be proposed by any other member of Conference. In the case of motions in common debate, all motions and amendments shall be deemed to be formally proposed, unless the Conference has been given advance notice that the proposer of a motion or amendment does not wish it to be proposed. There is no requirement for any motion or amendment to be seconded. Once the agenda has been adopted, motions may only be withdrawn with the agreement of conference.
5. Only members of conference as defined by Rules 16(i) and 20(ii) or the equivalent grade committee representatives as defined in Rule 25(ii)(e) of the rulebook may address conference. This rule shall not preclude the Standing Orders Committee from making recommendations to conference, which shall be considered immediately by conference.
6. Unless otherwise agreed by conference, no member shall address conference unless s/he is proposing or speaking to a motion or amendment or:
 - (i) is raising a point of order; or
 - (ii) is raising a point of fact; or
 - (iii) is delivering the chairperson's address.
7. All speakers should address conference from the rostrum or microphone, and should announce her/his name and branch or committee. The proposer of a motion shall speak for not more than four (4) minutes, and all other speakers shall have not more than three (3) minutes. Members of the relevant Executive Committee and members of staff will be limited to three (3) minutes when clarifying points or answering questions.

1 In accordance with rule 20(iv) and with the exception of the casting vote of the conference chairperson, only delegates and members of the National Executive Committee may vote at conference.

8. Where several motions and/or amendments submitted deal with the same topic, the Standing Orders Committee may produce a composite or comprehensive motion. If it is not possible to do this, there may be a common debate on the issue covered by the group of motions and/or amendments. The first speaker on behalf of the proposing branch or the first speaker on behalf of the DEC in the case of motions proposed by the DEC shall be deemed to be the proposer of the motion. Each proposer shall have a maximum of four (4) minutes. In the subsequent debate, no-one may speak more than once, but each speaker may refer to any of the motion(s)/amendment(s) then before conference, up to a maximum of three (3) minutes. Proposers of motions taken in common debate shall, subject to the discretion of the conference chairperson, have the right of reply but only in respect of the motion proposed by her/him and the right of reply shall be strictly confined to answering previous speakers on that motion and/or where clarification has been sought and the proposer shall not introduce any new matter into the debate. When the chairperson is satisfied that sufficient time has been allowed for debate, each motion and/or amendment shall be voted on separately in accordance with the relevant Standing Orders Committee report.
9. Amendments to amendments may not be moved, even under the terms of Rules 17(ix) and 21(ix) of the rulebook.
10. Except as otherwise provided, no member of conference shall speak to a motion more than once. For the purpose of this standing order, an amendment to a motion and a motion which has been amended shall each be considered to be a new motion.
11. Subject to the discretion of the conference chairperson, the proposer of a substantive motion, not in common debate, shall have a right to reply immediately before the motion is put to conference, provided that opposition has been expressed or clarification has been requested. However, the right of reply shall be strictly confined to answering previous speakers on that motion and/or where clarification has been sought and the proposer shall not introduce any new matter into the debate. The proposer of an amendment shall not have a right of reply.
12. The following types of motion may be moved at any time:
 - (i) Motion to "refer to the National Executive Committee or Divisional Executive Committee." The chairperson of conference will then ask the proposer of the motion or amendment if s/he agrees. If not, there will be a short debate on the motion to refer, before conference decides the issue by voting. If the motion to refer is defeated, the original debate will continue.
 - (ii) Motion "that the question be now put." This motion may only be put to conference if the chairperson is satisfied that a reasonable amount of time for debate has been allowed. If the chairperson is so satisfied, the motion shall be put without discussion.
 - (iii) Motion "that conference proceeds to next business." After this motion has been moved the proposer of the motion/amendment under discussion has the right to speak briefly against the procedural motion, which shall then be put without further discussion. If it is defeated, debate shall continue on the original motion/amendment.
 - (iv) Motion to "suspend standing orders." Such a motion shall state the purpose and period of time for which standing orders shall be suspended. This procedural motion must be passed by three-quarters of the delegates present and voting to be adopted.
13. If two or more members of conference wish to speak, the chairperson will call on the members whom s/he first observes, except that when a member of the Standing Orders Committee rises, s/he shall be the next to speak.
14. If, in the opinion of the chairperson, grave disorder has arisen, s/he may at her/his discretion, adjourn the meeting for a specified time.
15. Mobile phones may not be used in the conference hall while conference is in session.
16. No literature, other than conference documents - agenda, minutes, and reports - may be circulated in the conference hall without the express advance approval of conference by a simple majority of delegates present and voting.
17. No smoking or vaping is permitted in the conference premises.

Brief outline of proportional representation system as used for Fórsa DEC elections

There are various electoral systems used in different countries and organisations to achieve what are considered in those areas to be democratic outcomes. In Ireland, we have multi-seat constituencies with a system of proportional representation (PR) with transferable votes. This applies if your first (or second etc.) choice is not elected or is elected with a surplus of votes. The 'left over' votes are then transferred to other candidates of your choice. There are some differences between the PR system used for Dáil elections and those used for Seanad elections - where the Panel elections and University Seat elections use further variations of the PR system.

Fórsa decided to adopt an electoral system aligned to the Seanad Panel election system where each vote is treated as being equal to 1,000 votes. While the Fórsa system is designed specifically for NEC and DEC elections, it can be used for elections at branch and other levels. Branches and equivalent grade committees/national professional committees are, of course, free to use any of the other Oireachtas models of PR should they wish.

Ballot paper

In any election, it is important that the ballot paper is accurate, with candidates listed in alphabetical order (by surname, then first name).

While the ballot paper may give instructions as to how to vote (e.g. mark, 1, 2, 3 etc. opposite each candidate in order of your choice), the ballot paper may not contain any advice or recommendation as to who to vote for.

All ballot papers should have security features. This applies especially where postal ballots are used or when voters have possession of ballot papers for a period before the vote. Security features could include a 'punched' watermark, different coloured ink/paper, signatures of returning officers and/or other features that make them difficult to reproduce.

The system of distribution of ballot papers must also ensure that only those eligible to vote receive ballot papers, and that nobody can receive more than one ballot paper. The ballot papers should be placed in a sealed box, which is stored safely until the count. Postal ballots received should be placed on arrival in the count center in a sealed container. It is essential that the ballot paper cannot identify the voter.

Returning Officer

A Returning Officer, preferably agreed, should be appointed in every case as decisions may be required in relation to:

- The validity of ballots;
- The order of distribution of surpluses; or
- The elimination of candidates; or
- In relation to requests for recounts.

While the Returning Officer may be assisted by various scrutineers (vote counters), only the Returning Officer can make decisions. Everyone else is there to assist only.

Valid ballot papers

One of the first jobs of the Returning Officer is to identify any spoiled or invalid ballot papers. The latter includes 'forgeries' or any ballot paper that does not carry the security marks. All photocopies of ballot papers are considered to be invalid.

Spoiled votes are those where the ballot paper either does not contain any votes (but might include uncomplimentary remarks) or does not clearly indicate a preference (e.g. more than one candidate with the same preference or 'X' etc. marked against them). A ballot paper may be deemed valid for the first or second preferences but invalid for subsequent counts (e.g. ballot paper marked 1, 2, 3, 3, 3. This identifies the first two preferences but not subsequent preferences).

First count

All of the valid ballot papers are sorted into parcels according to first preference vote. Each ballot paper is given a value of 1,000.

The quota

The quota is calculated by adding all of the valid first preference votes and dividing that number by the number of places to be filled plus one (ignoring any fractions), and then by adding one to the result. For example, if the number of valid votes was 100,000 (100 votes at value of 1,000 each) and the number of seats to be filled was 4, the quota is 20,001 i.e. $[100,000 \div (4+1) + 1]$.

Once a candidate reaches or exceeds the quota, on the first or subsequent counts, that candidate is elected. It is not possible, using this quota system, for more candidates to be elected than the number of places to be filled.

Distribute or eliminate?

The biggest causes of confusion in the PR system are:

- To decide whether to distribute one or more surpluses or to eliminate the lowest candidate(s); and
- If a surplus is to be distributed, how to calculate this and which votes, physically, are transferred.

In one-seat elections, (e.g. union president, treasurer, chairperson of division), this is easy. If one candidate exceeds the quota (50% plus 1 in this case) he/she is elected. If no candidate reaches the quota, then the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated. More than one candidate may be eliminated at the same time; if for example, the total of the bottom two candidates does not exceed the votes of the next highest candidate.

In the single seat election, the lowest placed candidates are eliminated in order and their second preferences (or third preferences etc., if their second preference candidates are already eliminated) are transferred until one candidate either reaches the quota or only two candidates remain in the race. In the latter situation the candidate with the highest vote is deemed to be elected without reaching the quota. The ballot papers to be physically transferred in the case of eliminated candidates are the actual ballot papers showing the next highest preference. Where there is no remaining preference, then the vote is non-transferable.

However, where there is more than one position to be filled, the position becomes more complex.

In multi-seat elections (e.g. union vice president, 'ordinary' DEC members), the likelihood is that a number of candidates will exceed the quota on the first count. The surpluses in these cases may be very small in each case. The issue for the Returning Officer is to decide whether to eliminate one or more candidates or whether to distribute the surplus(es).

The Returning Officer will distribute the surplus(es) where the total value of all surpluses to be distributed exceeds the difference in votes between the lowest two candidates. This may alter the order of these lowest candidates and in particular the order in they might be eliminated or moved up the list. The Returning Officer will ordinarily distribute all surplus(es), (where available) before anybody is eliminated. When each surplus is distributed the lowest candidate will be eliminated.

The order in which surpluses are distributed is as follows:

- The greatest surplus is distributed first;
- If there are two or more surpluses that are equal the first to be distributed is the surplus that arose on the earliest count;
- Where this is also equal the surplus to be first distributed is that of the candidate with the highest first preferences;
- If all of these are still equal, the first surplus to be distributed is that of the candidate who was first ahead of the other candidate at the first count at which they were unequal;
- If there was no such count (e.g. first count surplus only to be distributed) then the Returning Officer shall decide by lot* which surplus to distribute first.

The order in which candidates are eliminated is as follows:

- The candidate with the lowest vote (total original and transferred) is first eliminated;
- Where two or more candidates equally have the lowest vote, the candidate who is first eliminated is that who received the lowest first preference votes;
- Where these are equal, the first candidate to be eliminated is that which was lowest at the first count at which they were unequal;
- Where these are equal (or cannot arise, as in the first count) the Returning Officer can exercise judgement based on a scrutiny of the preferences cast, however if the judgement of the Returning Officer is that they are still equal he/she shall decide by lot* which of them is to be eliminated first.

Where the votes of the lowest two or more candidates together with the total surpluses to be distributed does not exceed the votes of the next highest candidate, these may all be eliminated together.

*For the avoidance of any doubt "by lot" means a first preference paper of each equal candidate is placed in a hat and one is drawn out. The remaining paper (NOT the paper that has been drawn out) is the candidate to remain in the election.

Physical transfer of ballot papers

Where a surplus is to be distributed, the number of second preference (or next highest preference votes if the second preference is already elected or eliminated and so on) is calculated and the ballot papers are placed in bundles by reference to the second (or next highest preference vote as the case may be). Non-transferable votes (if such exists) are placed in a separate bundle. A ballot paper is non-transferable if it does not indicate a preference for a remaining candidate (e.g. there may not be any second or later preference indicated or any such candidate(s) may be already elected or eliminated).

The value of each bundle of votes is calculated by assigning a value to each vote by reference to the proportion of the surplus votes (of the elected candidate whose surplus is being distributed). These bundles (of ballot papers) with the 'adjusted' value written on the top are then physically transferred to the bundle of the appropriate candidate's first and any other transferred votes.

Where a candidate is eliminated, their second preference votes (or remaining preferences as appropriate) are transferred to the remaining candidate who is named next highest on their list of preferences. Each of these transferred votes (if original votes or votes already valued at 1,000 from other eliminated candidates) is valued at 1,000 each, exactly the value as if they were first preference votes. This does not apply where the eliminated candidates' votes contain original and transferred "surplus" votes.

The value of each of the transferred “surplus” votes in this case is based on the value allocated at the time of the transfer. The other original votes and preference votes (but not those not containing “surplus” votes- see last paragraph) transferred from other eliminated candidates are valued at 1,000 each.

Elected without reaching the quota

Where at the end of any count the number of remaining candidates equals the number of vacancies remaining to be filled, they are deemed to be elected even if they have not reached the quota.

Where there is only one vacancy remaining, and the highest placed candidate cannot be overtaken by any other remaining candidate (even if the next highest placed candidate were to receive the total value of any undistributed surpluses and the votes of all candidates to be eliminated), then that candidate is deemed to be elected.

Result sheet

The Returning Officer should complete the result sheet as the election proceeds showing:

- (1) The total number of votes cast;
- (2) The number of spoiled votes;
- (3) The total valid poll;
- (4) The number of seats to be filled;
- (5) The quota;
- (6) The list of candidates and their votes, showing transferred votes etc., at each count.

This result sheet should be made available to all candidates and everyone else with an interest in the outcome of the election e.g. a copy could be posted in the count center, conference hall, etc. The Returning Officer will make the result sheet available to the candidates, and respond to any queries they may have, prior to making it available to others with an interest in the election.

Re-count

The conference election procedures do not specifically provide for re-counts.

However, the Returning Officer may at any time during the count require a re-count or re-check of some or all of the ballot papers if he/she has any reason to be concerned that an error may have been made.

There is no specific provision for candidates to seek a re-count either in part or in total. However, a Returning Officer would be required to have regard to any points made by candidates as to why a full or partial re-count should take place when deciding whether to order such a recount, e.g. if a clear error was spotted, where in the judgement of the Returning Officer the votes are close enough for any possible error to have a material effect on any outcome.

It would generally be useful to agree the timescale within which candidates could seek a re-count. This is required for very practical reasons, including that the conduct or outcome of later elections may be dependent on the outcome of the election in dispute, e.g. at union conference the vice president elections are not held until the presidential and treasurer election results are known. The security of the ballot papers is also an important factor if there were delays in holding a recount. As such, any requests for re-counts should preferably be made before the declaration of the results.

Fórsa conference election procedures

Rule 19 covers the Divisional Executive and its officers.

The election of the Chairperson or Cathaoirleach is straightforward. A standard PR STV election is conducted, and the winner is elected.

Following that election, any candidates from the winner's constituency for the positions of Vice Chairperson or Leas-Cathaoirleach are excluded from the election and any preferences voted for any such candidate move to the next preference.

April 2023

Standing Orders Report No.2

This report is a consolidated report including Standing Orders Committee Report No. 1.

1. Conference timetable

The foregoing timetable for conference is recommended.

2. General standing orders

The foregoing General Standing Orders are recommended.

Where branches or the DEC have queries or wish to seek changes to General Standing Orders or to SOC Reports they are asked to raise these in writing (soc@forsa.ie) with the SOC as soon as possible and in any event not later than one week prior to conference.

3. Motions received

Forty two (42) motions were received by the deadline and thirty nine (39) are included on the agenda for debate.

4. Motions considered out of order

One motion is considered to be out of order, as such, at this stage. The SOC has adjusted the union terminology in some to make them in order. A number of motions were considered by the SOC to be more appropriate to the national conference and this is indicated on the agenda.

5. Advisory motions

In accordance with the rule, and until otherwise determined by national conference, each divisional conference shall determine policy on pay, conditions and other matters affecting only the members in the division. However, divisional conferences may also consider other matters provided that they are not matters which are of sole concern to the members of another division or which conflict with policy as previously determined by the union conference.

Decisions of divisional conference in relation to such matters have the status of recommendations to the National Executive who shall decide on any action to be taken.

Where a motion covers a matter that has, or could have, both divisional and central (i.e more than one division) dimensions, it is recommended that unless the substance or text of that motion clearly requires otherwise, it should be presumed that it is intended by the proposers as a matter for action at divisional and not at central level within the union. As such, motions in this category would not be deemed to fall into the category of advice to the NEC. However, such motions cannot be portrayed as deciding anything other than divisional policy on the issues covered.

6. Amendments received

One (1) amendment has been received and no amendments were received late. Motion 29 with proposed amendment is included on the agenda.

7. Composite motions/amendments

There are no composite motions included on the agenda.

8. Common debates

There are no motions for common debate.

9. Guillotined motions

These will be taken during conference at the end of other sections if time permits, with the balance, if any, of guillotined motions being taken at the end of conference.

It is recommended that guillotined motions be taken in the order they were guillotined, with all guillotined motions in a section being completed before moving to the next set of guillotined motions.

10. Emergency motions

Branches are asked to advise the SOC of any emergency motions as soon as possible so that these might be included in a Standing Orders Committee report to conference.

11. Withdrawal of motions

Branches are asked to advise the SOC of any motions that they wish to withdraw so that these can be included in a Standing Orders Committee report to conference. Forms are appended to withdraw motions and nominations at the rear of this booklet.

12. Officer elections and votes

The outcome of the elections held during the course of Conference will be declared to Conference by Returning Officer Siobhán Daly.

13. Standing Orders Committee

The Standing Orders Committee for the Local Government and Local Services Division are Rose Marie Conroy (Chairperson) and Audrey Warren. Also in attendance from the National Standing Orders Committee will be Siobhán Daly (Returning Officer), Helen Lundy (Secretary), Tommy Kavanagh and Don Meskell.

14. Corrections

Correction - Paragraph 4 of SOC Report No. 1. The deadline for nominations and motions is under Rule 17(v) being the correct Rule for Divisional Conferences.

15. Legend on acronyms

As above, in order to preserve the integrity of what was submitted, acronyms and abbreviations are not amended and have been left as was submitted. To assist delegates and branches, a legend of acronyms that may be unfamiliar to them, is submitted below.

DEC	Divisional Executive Committee
HR	Human Resources
HSE	Health Service Executive
ICTU	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
LA	Local Authority
LAPO	Local Authority Professional Officers
LGMA	Local Government Management Agency
LG&LS	Local Government & Local Services
NEC	National Executive Committee
SIPTU	Services Industrial Professional & Technical Union
SOC	Standing orders Committee
WRC	Workplace Relations Commission

Rose Marie Conroy
 Chairperson
 Standing Orders Committee

April 2023

Motions

Social policy

Motion 1: Divisional Executive Committee

Conference notes the ongoing protests in various locations staged by a small number of people attempting to stoke fear and hatred in our communities - in particular, the intimidation of people in direct provision and refugee centres. The statements from Fórsa supporting policies to end direct provision and calls to make it easier for refugees to access employment. The union support for refugees to live with dignity, in peace, and free from harassment and intimidation.

Conference believes:-

That far-right agitators are exploiting the cost of living and housing crisis to divide people.

That racism has no place in Irish society, and the trade union movement must continue to stand in solidarity with those who have escaped conflict, oppression, climate and economic catastrophe to come to Ireland in search of safety and a better life.

Conference calls on the Divisional Executive Committee to:-

Work with branches to promote positive relations between communities and people living in direct provision and asylum centres,

Engage with the Department of Local Government, Housing and Heritage to ensure that local authorities are promoting an inclusive and harmonious approach to community integration with refugees and asylum seekers,

Stand in solidarity with refugees and asylum seekers and against the right-wing reactionary forces whipping up hysteria and hatred. The Divisional Executive Committee to review and recommend solidarity measures that local government branches can proactively participate in.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Housing and homelessness

Motion 2: Divisional Executive Committee

Successive governments have consistently deprived local authorities of the resources to build public housing. Conference believes that local authorities must have a central role in the initiation, development and management of housing. Conference instructs the Divisional Executive Committee to campaign for the establishment of a cost rental public housing model, with a renewed focus on local authority provision.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 3: Galway Health and Local Government Branch

The Local Government sector is best placed – if given the resources – to deliver the necessary increases in social and affordable housing which society demands. That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to seek discussions with the appropriate Minister(s), LGMA, Housing Agency and other players to enhance the role of local government in housing delivery in this national crisis.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 4: Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Local Government Branch

This Conference

1. Supports the Raise the Roof “*New Deal for Housing*” document which includes calls for the delivery of
 - (a) a State-led housing programme with a mandate to deliver affordable homes for all
 - (b) a new State body with responsibility for housing delivery
 - (c) emergency measures to reduce homelessness and shorten the time spent in emergency accommodation
 - (d) an end to ‘no fault’ evictions, a freeze on rents and long-term security for renters
 - (e) a legal right to housing
2. Instructs the Divisional Executive to continue to promote the Raise the Roof local and national campaign among members.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 5: Donegal Local Government Branch

That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to engage with Government to take whatever actions are necessary to progress the “Simon Homeless Prevention Bill” through the Houses of the Oireachtas without any further delay. This bill passed the second stage in December 2021 and urgently needs to be signed into law to prevent further families falling into homelessness.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Union power and strength

Motion 6: Divisional Executive Committee

Conference notes the policy of Fórsa to grow to 100,000 members during the lifetime of the current strategic plan 2020 – 2025. The Local Government and Local Services Division believes that it is necessary to build high levels of density and participation at branch level to ensure that we grow Fórsa in the sector.

Conference endorses the decision of the Divisional Executive Committee to ensure that all industrial priorities are underpinned by the growth strategy. The Divisional Executive Committee agrees to support and work with branches in the division on organising, recruitment and density.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Staffing and operational

Motion 7: Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Local Government Branch

This Delegate Conference notes ongoing difficulties with both the recruitment and retention of staff within the Local Government sector.

That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to establish a subcommittee as a matter of urgency to establish the particular issues within the Local Government sector that are giving rise to these difficulties, and to explore how these issues can be addressed.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 8: Cavan Health and Local Government Branch

That this Conference directs the incoming Executive Committee to seek to have income earned by employees, working on the compilation of the Register of Electors, treated as core earnings, noting that they are at present taxable and pensionable, so that they are not treated as merely an allowance, or subject to removal or buy out.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 9: Cavan Health and Local Government Branch

That Conference notes that some local authorities are using graduate recruits as replacements for clerical officers, in roles unrelated to their qualifications. Therefore this Delegate Conference mandates the Local Government and Local Services DEC to liaise with local government employers, to seek that oversight mechanisms are put in place, to ensure that interns, working under the Graduate Recruitment Programmes, are placed only into roles best suited to their career prospects and which are fully compliant with the terms of the programme.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 10: Cavan Health and Local Government Branch

That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to liaise with Local Government employers, to ensure that duties of the Social Worker Housing are covered only by appropriately qualified, insured and indemnified personnel, appropriate to the duties involved. This Conference notes with concern that clerical grades are currently rostered to cover homeless service duties, assigned to the Social Worker Housing, at some local authorities. This means that the employers are replacing qualified officers with unqualified ones, leading to concern. This conference also notes that no agreement has been sought with the employees or their union, in relation to the assignment of these duties.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 11: Longford Health and Local Government Branch

That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to ensure that opportunities for promotion for our scientific members are maximised to the greatest extent possible addressing the current lack of access to a professional career structure.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Empowering local government

Motion 12: Divisional Executive Committee

Conference reaffirms our commitment to the 'More Power to You' campaign which seeks to strengthen local government as an effective force to improve local services and public provision for our communities.

Austerity, privatisation, executive direction and centralisation have hollowed out our public services and stripped local authorities and local communities of their democratic power. Ireland now has the worst level of local representation and the weakest local government of any country in Europe. Local government presents the greatest interrelationship between the citizen and the state and must be protected, promoted and strengthened.

Today our local government is actively being degraded. Essential public services like housing, water, energy and waste are being undermined and trust in our system of government is being eroded day by day.

Conference calls on the Divisional Executive Committee to scope out opportunities for new and renewed local service provision, including insourcing models based on local need and international best practice.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Water services

Motion 13: Divisional Executive Committee

Conference notes the "Framework on Future Delivery of Water Services" issued by the Workplace Relations Commission in June 2022. Longstanding union policy has been secured by Fórsa to protect members working in local authority water services.

The framework will ensure that:-

- There will be no compulsory transfer of staff to Irish Water,
- Local authority water workers will have the option of transferring to Irish Water on a voluntary basis,
- Local authority water workers can opt to remain in local authority employment on their existing terms and conditions,
- There will be no compulsory redundancies,
- Existing pay is protected, with the chance to earn more through individual or collective Irish Water performance rewards,
- Existing pension benefits are legally protected, with all local authority service taken into account for pension purposes,
- Other working conditions, including hours of work, annual leave, sick pay, allowances, overtime, and work location will also remain the same or be enhanced,
- Staff who transfer to Irish Water will receive a €3,000 incentive payment,
- There is a voluntary redundancy option for local authority water workers,
- Collective bargaining rights will remain in place.

Conference notes with concern attempts by Irish Water to intervene in the day-to-day employment relationship of local authority water workers, over and above the Framework.

Conference instructs the DEC to ensure:-

- The Local Government Management Agency, Irish Water and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, honour their obligations contained in the Framework. If employers fail to discharge their responsibilities and the spirit of the Framework, adopt the most appropriate and necessary strategy to protect Fórsa members working in local authority water services.
- That any Master Agreement replacing the Service Level Agreement does not negate or undermine the employment status of local authority water service workers or their terms and conditions. Local authorities must be compelled by the union to ensure that they adhere to their responsibilities.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 14: Divisional Executive Committee

Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to engage with Government to honour their commitment to hold a referendum on the public ownership of water. We demand Government name the date for a referendum to forever enshrine the public ownership of water in the constitution.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 15: Sligo Health and Local Government Branch

Conference calls for the DEC to ensure that Water Services employees who opt to remain within the local authority system shall in the first instance continue to report to the HR section of the local authority on HR matters in line with existing contractual and industrial norms.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 16: Sligo Health and Local Government Branch

That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to request the Government to confirm a date for a constitutional referendum on the public ownership of water services and that Fórsa continues to campaign for keeping water in public ownership.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Policies

Motion 17: Cavan Health and Local Government Branch

That this conference directs the incoming Executive Committee seek to establish a national policy and protocols, across Local Government regarding "Status Quo" in work roles, where there are industrial relation issues ongoing. This motion seeks to have protections put in place to ensure that local government employees are not transferred to a new section, without their agreement, whilst they are the subject of an ongoing workplace dispute.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 18: Divisional Executive Committee

Conference notes that grievance and disciplinary procedures in the local government sector have never been agreed with trade unions. Successive national agreements allow for standardisation of such policies and procedures.

Conference instructs the Divisional Executive Committee to progress negotiations with employers to establish agreed sector-wide grievance and disciplinary procedures, including a dignity at work policy.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 19: Roscommon Health and Local Government Branch

That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to request that each local authority develop a policy to assist employees going through menopause. With over 80% of our workforce being female as well as members of this Union, we request that this Division lead the way in developing a policy that will assist every female within this sector at some stage of their lives.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 20: Cork Health and Local Government Branch

As Covid continues to impact our colleagues and co-workers this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to engage with the employer on the introduction of a Long Covid Sick Leave Scheme. As long Covid is an ongoing condition the current Sick Leave arrangements are no longer tenable for those who have contracted it.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 21: Cork Health and Local Government Branch

That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to start a discussion with Local Authority employers around pension entitlements for those who, in the course of their career, have adjusted their work patterns by taking unpaid leave to care for family and who do not qualify for a carer's allowance. As this is mostly women this issue has a bearing on gender inequality.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Job evaluation scheme

Motion 22: Divisional Executive Committee

Conference notes the refusal of the LGMA to engage in discussions to address the union claim for job evaluation or to even conciliate on this matter under the auspices of the Workplace Relations Commission.

Conference believes that job evaluation is necessary to work out the relative worth of posts in the sector based on what a post-holder is doing or expected to do. Job evaluation is the most appropriate mechanism to decide fair levels of pay for different jobs based on an agreed methodology and is underpinned in openness, fairness and transparency.

Conference affirms the division's longstanding commitment to achieve job evaluation in the local government sector.

The Divisional Executive Committee is instructed to prioritise the campaign to deliver a job evaluation scheme in the local government sector.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 23: Dublin City Local Government Branch

We call on this Delegate Conference to commend the work already done and acknowledge the commitment and continued efforts of the Local Government and Local Services Division in its bid to secure a job evaluation scheme for Local Government employees.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 24: Tipperary Local Government Branch

That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to explore every possible avenue to expedite the introduction of a job evaluation scheme for the Local Authority sector where pay disparity between local Authorities continues to exist for roles of a similar nature.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Blended working and flexible working

Motion 25: Divisional Executive Committee

Conference welcomes the 'Blended Working Framework' introduced in the local government sector following the intense pursuit of the policy from Fórsa. Most local authorities are now operating a blended working model with varying degrees of application and uptake. Where it is granted, most local authorities have implemented no more than two days available for blended working – although it may be less in some employments.

Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to trigger the review clause contained in the agreement in order to:-

- Establish blended working across all local authorities
- Embed blended working into the sector
- Ensure that it is available to members to the greatest extent possible
- Underpin any agreed policy with a fair, transparent and equitable appeals mechanism.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 26: Kildare Local Government Branch

That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to negotiate the removal of the number of day restrictions currently imposed on members, under the Blended Working Policy, working in the LA Sector.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 27: Kerry Health and Local Government Branch

That this Conference congratulates the Divisional Executive for the great achievement of securing the roll out of the Blended Working Framework pilot which is now operational in all Local Authorities.

Conference notes that although it is not encompassed in the framework, most Local Authorities have imposed a limit of two days per week. Conference instructs the incoming Divisional Executive to trigger the review clause, contained in the Agreement, in order to:-

1. Ensure blended working is embedded as the norm in the sector.
2. Ensure it is available to the greatest extent possible for all members.
3. Ensure that the policy is underpinned by an appeal mechanism that is transparent, fair and equitable.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 28: Tipperary Local Government Branch

That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to review a standardised flexi-time arrangement for all members working in local authority branch libraries, to ensure that these members have the same access that is currently available to colleagues based in Library Headquarters and the wider public sector.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 29: Laois Health and Local Government Branch

That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to continue to work to maximise access for members to the full range of family friendly measures - in particular the restoration of a minimum of one day flexi-time for members across all local authorities.

Amendment to Motion 29: Fingal Branch

Amend by deleting the section: "- in particular the restoration of a minimum of one day flexi-time for members across all local authorities".

Amended Motion to read: "That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to continue to work to maximise access for members to the full range of family friendly measures."

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 30: Divisional Executive Committee

Conference notes:

1. The four-day week local authority pilot in South Cambridgeshire District Council.
2. That several Irish companies have undertaken successful trials of the four-day week with results being made available to the public. These trials have proved to be hugely successful for both workers and their employers.
3. Global trials have also concluded that there are significant benefits to reducing the working week.
4. The four-day week can also contribute to the overall actions in respect of the climate emergency.

Conference mandates the Divisional Executive Committee to:-

1. Support trials for a reduced working week for local authorities without a corresponding loss of pay.
 - a. These trials should be developed in collaboration with workers, their respective trade unions, and their employer.
2. Seek to initiate these trials in local authorities across Ireland and to engage with appropriate stakeholders to secure them.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

APPENDIX 1

Motions deemed to be Out of Order

Motion 31 - Roscommon Health and Local Government Branch

Fórsa HQ to create short introductory video for new and existing members. That Fórsa HQ create a short video that branches can use to circulate information, to both existing members and new staff to generate new members, on the recent achievements of Fórsa and what Fórsa are continuing to do on an ongoing basis.

This video should be used to briefly outline the benefits of being a member of Fórsa and should also include details on the role of the activist to include reference to representations made to Fórsa activists on the ground by members and that Fórsa activists may represent these members in discussions with HR either on a collective or individual basis. Members should be informed so that they feel that their subscriptions are worthwhile paying.

APPENDIX 2

Motions advisory to the National Executive Committee

Motion 32 – Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Local Government Branch

This Conference welcomes the strong statement by Fórsa standing in solidarity with refugees and asylum seekers, and condemning protests and intimidation of asylum seekers and refugees.

This Conference acknowledges the role that this union can play in campaigning against racism and resolves to support broad campaigns that will address the growing threat of the far right.

This Conference strongly asserts that refugees are welcome and are not in any way responsible for the housing crisis.

This Conference calls for the ending of the Direct Provision system and the urgent establishment of a new International Protection Support Service for all applicants.

Motion 33 – Cavan Health and Local Government Branch

That this Conference directs the incoming Executive Committee to seek to have legislation enacted, which ensures that Local Authorities and any organisations in receipt of public monies, are held accountable to the Public Accounts Committee. This motion refers in particular, but not exclusively, to holding to account, as appropriate, Chief Executives of Local Authorities or heads of approved housing bodies.

Motion 34 – Cavan Health and Local Government Branch

That this Conference notes that the European directive on adequate minimum wages, adopted in October 2022, asks 'each Member State with a collective bargaining coverage rate below 80% to provide a framework of enabling conditions for collective bargaining, and establish an action plan to promote collective bargaining to progressively increase the collective bargaining coverage rate.' Relating to this, this Conference notes with concern that Government has declined to provide for the restoration of tax relief on union fees for members. This Conference requests that the DEC redouble efforts to ensure that the matter is further addressed, as an essential element of seeking to ensure growth in trade union membership and an increase in the percentage of the workforce covered by collective bargaining mechanisms.

Motion 35 – Cavan Health and Local Government Branch

That this conference directs the incoming National Executive to work to provide dedicated and specialised resources, to support members that make protected disclosures relating to their workplace.

Motion 36 – Cavan Health and Local Government Branch

That this conference directs the incoming National Executive to take a position on findings from media investigations, particularly where such findings highlight mismanagement or greed, relating to public representatives and/or senior management. Such findings and reports reflect badly on innocent rank and file Fórsa members and this motions mandates the union to respond accordingly.

Motion 37 – Cavan Health and Local Government Branch

That this conference notes with concern the lack of progress by Government, on enacting legislation to grant negotiating rights to unions for retired members and calls on the NEC to campaign in support of action on this issue.

Motion 38 – Donegal Local Government Branch

That this conference calls on the Local Government Division of Fórsa to proactively seek that Central Government grant a 100% redress to mica-affected home owners thus ensuring that they are given equal treatment to home owners affected by pyrite and those apartment owners who will now benefit from a €2.5bn package to repair fire safety and structural defects in their properties.

Motion 39 – Cork Health and Local Government Branch

That this Delegate Conference calls on the Local Government and Local Services DEC to request that Fórsa publicly support local campaign groups who are challenging the recent spate of racist, far-right instigated protests against immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers. All branches must be supported to get behind and support local groups who are challenging the far-right propaganda that blames refugees and asylum seekers for the crisis in access to public services rather than the failure by successive governments to invest in their delivery. Fórsa members must also run an information campaign that debunks the far-right blaming of migrants to Ireland. Finally, Fórsa must call on ICTU to lead a campaign that speaks of the solidarity of all trade union members with immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers and a rejection of those who wish to divide workers on the basis of skin colour or ethnicity.

APPENDIX 3

Nominations received by the deadline of mid-day Wednesday 15th February 2023, in accordance with Rule 17(v)

Cathaoirleach/Chairperson (1)

WHYMS, Michael
Fingal

Nominating Branch

Cavan Health & Local Government
Cork Health & Local Government
Donegal Local Government
Dublin City Local Government
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown LG
Fingal
Galway Health & Local Government
Kerry Health & Local Government
Kildare Local Government
Leitrim Health & Local Government
Offaly Health & Local Government
Roscommon Health & Local Government
Sligo Health & Local Government
South Dublin

Leas-Cathaoirleach/ Vice-Chairperson (1)

McGIVNEY, Padraig
Cavan Health & Local Government

Nominating Branch

Cavan Health & Local Government
Cork Health & Local Government
Donegal Local Government
Dublin City Local Government
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown LG
Fingal
Leitrim Health & Local Government
Meath Health & Local Government
Roscommon Health & Local Government
Sligo Health & Local Government
South Dublin

Divisional Executive Committee (13)

CONSIDINE, Pat
 Clare Health & Local Government

HICKEY, Florence
 Roscommon Health & Local Government

KEANEY, Finbarr
 Leitrim Health & Local Government

KENNEDY, Ray
 Offaly Health & Local Government

LAMBERT, Audrey
 Dublin City Local Government

McCARTHY, Noel
 South Dublin

McGIVNEY, Padraig
 Cavan Health & Local Government

McNEELY, Bernard
 Donegal Local Government

MADDEN, Brian
 Galway Health & Local Government

Nominating Branch

Clare Health & Local Government

Donegal Local Government
 Dublin City Local Government
 Fingal
 Leitrim Health & Local Government
 Roscommon Health & Local Government
 Sligo Health & Local Government

Donegal Local Government
 Fingal
 Leitrim Health & Local Government
 Sligo Health & Local Government

Longford Health & Local Government
 Offaly Health & Local Government

Cavan Health & Local Government
 Cork Health & Local Government
 Donegal Local Government
 Dublin City Local Government
 Dun Laoghaire Rathdown LG
 Fingal
 Kildare Local Government
 Roscommon Health & Local Government
 South Dublin

Donegal Local Government
 Dublin City Local Government
 Dun Laoghaire Rathdown LG
 Fingal
 South Dublin

Cavan Health & Local Government
 Meath Health & Local Government

Cavan Health & Local Government
 Cork Health & Local Government
 Donegal Local Government
 Dublin City Local Government
 Dun Laoghaire Rathdown LG
 Fingal
 Leitrim Health & Local Government
 Roscommon Health & Local Government
 Sligo Health & Local Government
 South Dublin

Galway Health & Local Government

Divisional Executive Committee (13)

(continued)

MAHER, Ann Marie
Laois Health & Local Government

O'BRIAIN, Liam
Cork Health & Local Government

O'DWYER, Margaret
Kildare Local Government

O'MALLEY, Kevin
Kerry Health & Local Government

O'QUIGLEY, Gerry
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown

SAVAGE, Vincent
Tipperary Local Government

SWEENEY, Sinead
Wicklow Local Government

WHYMS, Michael
Fingal

Nominating Branch

Laois Health & Local Government

Cork Health & Local Government
Donegal Local Government
Dublin City Local Government
Fingal
South Dublin

Donegal Local Government
Dublin City Local Government
Fingal
Kildare Local Government

Kerry Health & Local Government

Donegal Local Government
Dublin City Local Government
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown LG
Fingal
South Dublin

Tipperary Local Government

Wicklow Local Government

Cavan Health & Local Government

Third Divisional Representative on NEC (1)

McNEELY, Bernard
Donegal Local Government

Nominating Branch

Cavan Health & Local Government
Cork Health & Local Government
Donegal Local Government
Dublin City Local Government
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown LG
Fingal
Kildare Local Government
Leitrim Health & Local Government
Roscommon Health & Local Government
Sligo Health & Local Government
South Dublin

Standing Orders Committee (2)

BARRY, Michael
Cork Health & Local Government

CONROY, Rose Marie
Fingal

WARREN, Audrey
Kildare Local Government

Nominating Branch

Cork Health & Local Government

Dublin City Local Government
Fingal
Kildare Local Government
South Dublin

Kildare Local Government

Appendix 4: Motion, amendment, and nomination withdrawal form

Fórsa local government and local services conference 2023

Motion, amendment and nomination withdrawal form

.....Branch wishes to withdraw:

[Please use BLOCK capitals]

Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>
Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>
Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>
Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>
Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>

Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination

Name of principal delegate

Signature of principal delegate

Date Time

SOC signature Date Time





CORK

Father Matthew Quay, Cork,
T12 EWV0
Phone: 021-425-5210
Email: forsacork@forsa.ie

DUBLIN

Nerney's Court, Dublin,
D01 R2C5
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Email: forsagalway@forsa.ie

LIMERICK

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Phone: 061-319-177
Email: forsalimerick@forsa.ie

SLIGO

Ice House, Fish Quay, Sligo,
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