1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1 Welsh Labour Conference 2016 agreed (Appendix 1) that the WEC consult CLPs and affiliates on the policy review process. This follows the established practice of ‘taking stock’ and then setting out a timeline for the policy work programme leading to the Assembly elections of 2021.

1.2 It is an opportunity to deliver a ‘health check’ on the robustness of our policy making process in Wales and to adapt our work programme to changing circumstances and expectations. It also provides space for members in Wales to contribute to the UK manifesto process and the discussions being undertaken in the National Policy Forum (NPF).

2. THE INITIAL PROPOSALS

2.1 The proposals set out below follow the pattern of previous policy cycles by providing for two stages of policy debate with the final stage of consultation focussed on the year before the Assembly elections in May 2021 (and after the fixed-term General Election in May 2020).

2.2 In line with existing Welsh Labour rules (Appendix 2) the initial proposals retain the ‘Welsh Policy Forum’ as the focus for the policy debates. The Forum is the opportunity to scrutinise policy delivery and to ensure Welsh Ministers are in discussion and debate with members of the Policy Forum. (the process can of course be reviewed should Welsh Labour rules be changed at any point in this cycle e.g. the relationship to any future ‘Convention’ as being explored by the WEC).

2.3 The process allows for Commissions and Working Parties to be established by the WEC or Welsh Policy Forum as necessary.

3. TAKING STOCK - QUESTIONS

3.1 The forthcoming consultation is however an opportunity to take stock of the whole process and ensure it remains fit for purpose and meets the needs of members, affiliates and Welsh Labour in the next cycle. Questions to be asked of CLPs and affiliates include:

a) Structure - Is the Welsh Policy Forum still the best structure for policy debate and development? If not, what alternative would you suggest would be more effective?
b) **Scrutiny** - Do you have any suggestions on how members and party units can better scrutinise the record of our Welsh Labour Government?

c) **Knowledge and experience** - How is the knowledge and experience of members, affiliates and affiliated supporters best drawn in to the policy making process in Wales?

d) **Responsibilities** - What responsibility should be placed on those members appointed as delegates to the Welsh Policy Forum to ensure debate within their respective CLPs / regions? How can their role as ‘local champions’ of policy debates be supported? What role do we expect of Ministers and other elected representatives in the process?

e) **Outward looking** – How can we make the policy process outward looking and an opportunity for strengthening links between CLPs and local community groups while debating policy?

f) **Evidence base** - What sources of evidence would you recommend for our policy review?

g) **Digital** - How can digital technology be used to enhance our policy consultation work? Can digital technology be used as a better alternative to ‘meetings’ or are meetings and debate essential to policy development?

h) **Other changes** - What other changes would you recommend to improve our preparations for Welsh Labour’s manifesto to the 2021 Assembly elections?

3.2 Responses to these questions should be invited by January 31st 2017 so changes can be considered by the WEC prior to Welsh Labour Conference 2017.

3.3 Depending on the response to these questions the following provisional timeline is suggested for the policy cycle in Wales.

4. **PROVISIONAL TIMELINE**

- **Nov 2016** – start consulting CLPs and affiliates on proposals with responses and a revised paper to the pre-conference WEC in February 2017.

- **March 2017** - Report to Welsh Labour Conference 2017 with agreement to forward work programme and the structure of the process.

- **Throughout 2017** - Agree focus should be on NPF discussions and responses and work for UK election manifesto.
• **November 2017** – WPF meets to elect WPF officers and to receive reports on progress of the ‘Programme for Government’ and the implementation of our 2016 manifesto. The WPF can then also identify any issues requiring additional work during 2018 as part of stage one consultation papers.

• **Spring 2018** – WPF report to Welsh Labour Conference and we release **stage one consultation papers** at conference. This will formally mark the start of policy preparations for the next Assembly elections.

• **November 2018** – WPF meets to consider responses to stage one reports and help to prepare advice for the stage two consultation documents.

• **Spring 2019** – WPF report to Welsh Labour conference and the release of stage two consultation papers.

• **Autumn 2019** – WPF meeting on the ‘Programme for Government’. Identify any working groups or commissions required to inform Welsh Labour manifesto. Consider feedback on stage two consultation papers. However recognise that focus is likely to be UK General Election.

• **Spring 2020** – General Election year, if fixed Term Parliament. Short WPF report to Welsh Labour Conference but focus policy work on period June-September 2020.

• **September 2020** – WPF to meet and consider line by line amendments to the stage two consultation reports.

• **November 2020** – Special Policy Conference if required to resolve outstanding issues.

• **Early 2021** – WPF/Special Policy Conference reports to Welsh Labour conference.

• **Spring 2021** – Completion of policy cycle and publish manifesto.

The timeline and activities can be reviewed in light of the consultation responses.

**WELSH POLICY OFFICER**

**OCTOBER 2016**
Appendix 1

Welsh Labour Conference 2016 agreed as follows:

Policy Review

Conference also notes that the Welsh Labour Conference 2016 concludes the current cycle of policy making in Wales. Conference agrees that the WEC consult with CLPs and affiliates about the policy process required for the next Assembly term and brings forward proposals for the future to Welsh Labour Conference 2017.

Appendix 2

Welsh Labour rules state:

Welsh Labour Policy Forum

I. The WEC shall establish and oversee a Welsh Labour Policy Forum, Policy Commissions and a Welsh Joint Policy Committee to produce a rolling programme relating to matters within the competence of the National Assembly for Wales for submission to the Annual Welsh Labour Conference.

II. The Welsh Labour Policy Forum shall consist of:

a) 2 representatives, of whom at least one shall be a woman, appointed by each Welsh CLP.

b) 2 representatives, of whom at least one shall be a woman, appointed by each affiliated Welsh/Regional or district body of a Trade Union.

c) 2 representatives from the Welsh Young Labour Committee

d) 2 representatives, of whom at least 1 shall be a woman, appointed by the Labour Group of the Welsh Local Government Association.

e) 2 representatives of whom at least one shall be a woman appointed by the Co-operative Party.

f) 1 representative appointed by each affiliated Socialist Society (providing that this position shall be held by a person of the opposite gender to the previous term’s holder).

g) 6 representatives (of whom at least 3 shall be women) appointed by the WEC.

h) 4 representatives to be elected by Welsh Labour Conference (two by affiliated organisations, two by party units), which shall be subject to gender balance within each section.

i) 2 representatives, of whom at least 1 shall be a woman, appointed by the Welsh Group of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

j) 1 representative appointed by the Welsh Group of the European Parliamentary Labour Party (providing that, unless the Group consists wholly of one gender, this position shall be held by a person of the opposite gender to the previous term’s holder).

k) The Secretary of State for Wales, or Shadow Secretary of State for Wales in opposition, ex-officio.
I) The Leader of the National Assembly Labour Party *ex-officio*.

m) 2 representatives, of whom at least 1 shall be a woman, appointed by the National Assembly Labour Party.

n) National Policy Forum members representing the Wales Labour Party and CLPs in Wales *ex-officio*.

III. The term of office for members of the WPF (excepting *ex-officio* members) shall normally be two years. The WEC shall determine the dates by which organisations shall be invited to appoint their representatives, by which notice of appointment must be received by the General Secretary and on which newly appointed WPF members shall assume office.

IV. A Chair and a Vice-Chair of the Welsh Labour Policy Forum and Welsh Joint Policy Committee shall be elected by all voting members of the Welsh Labour Policy Forum. Both shall be ordinary delegates to the Welsh Policy Forum. *Ex-officio* members shall not be entitled to either stand for election or to vote in the election. The term of office shall be co-terminus with that for members of the Welsh Labour Policy Forum, as determined by the WEC.

V. WPF representatives shall be subject to the same requirements as those set out in 'Qualification of Delegates'.

VI. Representatives of affiliated organisations may serve only if their appointing organisation has paid its affiliation fee for the previous year.