

Amendments to F16

Submitted by LD4SOS, supported by Stockton, Wigan, Leigh & Makerfield, and Bromsgrove as well as individual members.

Section 1

Changes considered to be drafting amendments supported by Policy Unit

Delete lines 2-3 and insert:

United Kingdom – its culture, economy and standing in the world – throughout history.

Lines 50-52

Delete existing iii) and insert ‘iii)

A right to work for seekers of sanctuary in any employment for which they are suited if their claim for asylum has not been determined after 3 months, in order both to treat them more humanely and to save the taxpayer tens of millions

Delete line 58 and insert:

irregular immigration, including a focus on organised crime gangs

Delete lines 74-76 and insert:

a) For spouse and legal partner settlements, replace the crude and arbitrary income threshold with the pre-2012 rules and, for a time-limited period of not more than two years and subject to individual assessment, the ‘no recourse to public funds’ test.

Delete lines 113-116 and insert:

d) Review and reform all aspects of current asylum rules and operations that offend basic fairness and justice, doing away with the culture of disbelief, and with an initial focus on how the rules affect LBGT+ applicants, child-led family reunification applications and those who fled because of their religious or non-religious beliefs, or who are at risk if returned because they have since converted to another faith or belief.

Delete line 117 and insert:

6. To address irregular immigration:

Delete lines 118-121 and insert:

a) Invest in the accountable Border Force and Immigration Enforcement agencies, ensuring that they have appropriate training and information systems in place to enable a compassionate and intelligence-led approach.

Section 2

Changes to the motion, many of which Policy Unit will support

Delete lines 10-19 and insert:

I. Liberal Democrats should continue to champion migration policies that benefit the United Kingdom, treat migrants and seekers of sanctuary with dignity and courtesy and address the issues which affect social cohesion, including the prevalence of low wages and the shortage of affordable homes.

II. Our goal should be a positive, liberal consensus on immigration, through a generally acceptable and fully enforced policy meeting international standards, which will allow families to be reunited, students to study here, those with skills to offer to work here, and seekers of sanctuary to be protected and integrated.

After line 34 insert:

E. Compromising, through their harsh and ineffective management of the asylum system, the UK's moral and legal obligation to help those seeking sanctuary from persecution and conflict.

Delete lines 35-39 and insert:

Conference notes the result of the referendum on EU membership and reaffirms the Liberal Democrats' commitment to give the UK electorate the final say on the Brexit deal, with the option of remaining in the EU and preserving the freedom of movement of people, goods, services, and capital.

Delete lines 40-42 and insert:

Conference regards the recommendations of policy paper 131, *A Fair Deal for Everyone: Prosperity and Dignity in Migration*, as a good basis for Liberal Democrat policy to meet these challenges.

Delete lines 44-45 and insert:

i) The abolition of the net migration target, the hostile environment policy and using civil society as border guards.”

Lines 53-56

Delete conference particularly calls for (iv) and replace it with:

A new policy for irregular migrants of “detention as last resort”, using community alternatives to detention such as more case-work in the community, thus allowing the closure of eight of the UK's ten immigration detention centres; using the estimated £100m per year saved to invest in an accountable Border Force and to reduce fees for visa and nationality applications to the cost of administration.

Delete lines 64-67 and insert:

a) Establish a national strategy in England to promote the teaching of English as a second language (ESOL) and develop a migrants' languages strategy to reap social and economic benefits from the diasporas living in the UK.

Delete lines 71-72 and insert:

c) Support the Schools for Sanctuary programme, and projects in schools that educate students about the history of migration into the UK.

Insert below line 72:

d) Double the number of Minimum Wage checks on firms to stop them undercutting others and exploiting workers.”

Insert below line 105 a new ‘a)’ and reletter the rest of section 5:

a) Retain, alongside refugee status, humanitarian protection status, and reiterate our commitment to the principle of *non-refoulement* as applied in international and European human rights law.

Delete lines 106-108 and insert:

b) Establish a dedicated unit for asylum applications, independent of central Government, to improve speed and quality of decision-making, working with local authorities on dispersal and settlement issues.

Delete lines 109-112 and insert:

c) Provide free basic English lessons to any seeker of sanctuary, to include conversational English and way of life in the UK and scrap the financial support 16 hours-per-week rule for asylum-seekers and refugees unable to work due to insufficient English.

Insert below line 116:

e) Ensure an effective review and arbitration process to allow any decision apparently taken outside the rules to be rectified before reaching appeal.

f) Improve the appeals process by transferring the cost from the Ministry of Justice to the new dedicated unit for asylum applications, thereby incentivising getting it ‘right first time’.

g) Endorse *The Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill* and support restoring the arrangements for legal aid for seekers of sanctuary that existed before *The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act 2012*.

h) Ensure that interpreting to nationally recognised standards to and from the language of the asylum seeker is available at every asylum interview, in order to ensure a common understanding of the issues, and to enable the correct decision to be arrived at more quickly and cost-effectively.

i) Offer safe and legal routes to the UK for at least 10,000 refugees each year by expanding the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, both to help a greater number of people from that region and to cover other conflict zones such as Myanmar.

j) Provide an effective mechanism to implement in full Section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 that commits the UK to welcoming unaccompanied refugee children, this scheme to be expanded to welcome 10,000 such children over a period of 10 years.

k) Support those who arrived in the UK as unaccompanied minors to enable them to apply on their 18th birthday or shortly after for refugee status, and not returning them to countries where they may no longer have any living relatives but allow them to apply for family reunion in the UK until the age of 25.

l) Rewrite all future government-tendered contracts for asylum-seekers’ housing, to ensure that a local authority or group of local authorities can compete for them, that housing conditions which compromise human dignity, such as forced bedroom sharing for unrelated adults, will be grounds for termination, and that existing specific laws on rental housing

standards will be fully applicable, while making every effort to terminate any current contracts that do not meet these last two conditions.

Lines 122-124

Delete point (b) in its entirety and replace it with:

Ensure vulnerable people, such as pregnant women and those who have mental health problems or been subject to torture, are not detained, that no one is detained more than 72 hours without judicial oversight, and that no one is detained longer than 28 days in any circumstances.

Insert below line 126:

d) Ensure that those who are refused entry on arrival and cannot immediately be returned to their country of origin are subject to the same rules on detention as other detainees, and that the recommendations of the Independent Monitoring Boards on conditions at Heathrow and Gatwick are implemented.

e) Ensure that victims of trafficking are supported so that they can give evidence against their traffickers and never be returned against their will to their country of origin where their traffickers would have access to them all over again.