

Labour Party conference 2011 – Rules changed on Scottish Labour Leader

Plans to devolve the rules and structures on the Scottish Labour Leadership were formally agreed today by the Labour Party Conference.

The historic rule change creates the position of Scottish Labour Leader for the first time, and devolves all rules and procedures for how the election of the leadership is conducted to the Scottish Labour Party, which is holding a special conference in Glasgow next month to agree new rules on how the leader is elected.

The change comes following recommendations the review of the Labour Party in Scotland chaired by Edinburgh MSP, Sarah Boyack, and Jim Murphy.

Detailed rules and procedures on the election process will now be drawn up by the Scottish General Secretary for agreement by the Scottish Executive Committee and discussed and voted on by delegates at the Scottish Conference in Glasgow on 29 October.

Shadow Scots Secretary Ann McKechin said:

“The vote today is a clear message that the Labour Party is changing and devolving itself. The decision to devolve the Scottish Labour Party in this way will put us on a stronger path in Scotland. I would like to thank Sarah and Jim for the work they have done, but also thank the hundreds of party members who have made submissions to the review, attended meetings to discuss the ideas, and played their role in the greatest reshaping of the Scottish Labour Party in living memory. Procedural changes are not the most headline-grabbing thing we are talking about at this conference, but it is a

very important first step in rebuilding the party.”

Sarah Boyack MSP said:

“Labour devolved Scotland when we set up the Scottish Parliament in 1999, and we are proud of that. Labour used that Scottish Parliament to deliver important reforms for Scotland, but we didn’t reform ourselves. Now we need to make devolution a reality within our party too. We are doing to our party what we did for our country.”

Labour MP Jim Murphy said:

“This change is historic but it’s not the last change we are making to Scottish Labour. People want a strong Scottish Labour Party and that is exactly what this is all about.

“Structures in themselves don’t win us elections, but this is the biggest change for 90 years and marks a fresh start for the Scottish Labour Party. Scotland has changed and now our party is changing too.

“The Labour Party was founded here in Scotland and now we’re turning the Scottish Labour Party into Scotland’s Labour Party once again.”