

## MOTIONS 2021 UPDATE 29 September 2021

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The report of the Standing Orders Committee (“SOC”) and the Conference Final Agenda, which included the motions as vetted by SOC, were received and accepted by Council at a meeting on 28 July 2021. Brief comments were taken at the meeting with further comments invited by email.

A summary of the motions and a brief status update follows.

Motion 1 appeals to Trustees to instigate a plan of action to:

1. Make next year the Year of the Branch to celebrate our branches and volunteers.
2. Seek to create new thematic branches, such as History and Heritage, and Green Branches, and to share good practice on what can work wherever possible.
3. Ensure our funding systems for branch activity are simple, user-friendly, and encourage initiatives.
4. Acknowledge the positive effect the new Branch Innovation Fund has had, and seek to continue this as part of the Year of the Branch.
5. Review our on-line course registration technology, which currently acts as a barrier to learners, and make it more user-friendly, accessible and simple to use.

*Update – Council has referred this motion to Trustees and it has been supported, with the understanding that Local Associations in Scotland are included in all references to “Branches”. The recent Branch Survey has helped to identify specific systems and policies needing review and improvement, and has given a clearer picture of where Branches would like more support and guidance. The Finance & Capital Resources Committee of the Board of Trustees has been working together with Council on a much-needed review and redraft of the Branch Financial Regulations, and this work is now in progress. Trustees have also agreed to make a substantial investment in new systems and technology which will (among many other things) make online registration more user-friendly and accessible. Large-scale changes in systems take a significant amount of time to implement, and members are asked to be patient as these improvements are made. The updating and replacement of WEA’s systems will be overseen by the Finance & Capital Resources Committee of the Board.*

Motion 2 appeals to Trustees to instigate a plan of action to:

1. Carry out a comprehensive analysis of the present and future impact of the devolution of adult education and skills funding.
2. Carry out a thorough evaluation of the way in which the finance, management and influence of the WEA are presently deployed at national and regional level.
3. To consider, in the light of devolution, whether the resource allocation offers the best fit for the changing nature of funding allocation.

*Update – Council has referred this motion to Trustees and it has been actioned. Starting with the current financial year, WEA has reformed its business planning and budgeting process to better align curriculum planning at local level with the overall budget process. WEA’s Leadership Team has been restructured and is overall broader with greater depth of professional expertise in adult and further education. With the support of WEA’s communications team, WEA has increased its public profile and engagement with the sector and with government to promote and protect our interests.*

Motion 3 appeals to Trustees to agree that:

- (a) local fundraising should be ring-fenced for use in or by the branch concerned;
- (b) national guidance should be provided on what these monies could be used for, for example: the provision of free places, the subsidising of fees, venue costs, the laying on of free events; and
- (c) the specific purpose of the local fundraising should be stated in advance.

*Update – This motion has been referred to Trustees who have delegated action to Council and the Finance & Capital Resources Committee. With guidance from the Branch Financial Regulations Working Group (“BFRWG,” a working group constituted with representation from Council and the Finance & Capital Resources Committee of the Board of Trustees), WEA is seeking to clarify its treatment of income raised through the branch/local association network, and in particular the treatment of funds raised locally. WEA is seeking to loosen restrictions on the application of raised funds whilst remaining compliant with its responsibilities and obligations under applicable law and regulation, and in particular with the Charities Act 2011 and HMRC.*

No further motions have been received.