
The Constitutions of the Liberal Democrats



The Federal Party
The Liberal Democrats in England
The Scottish Liberal Democrats
The Welsh Liberal
Democrats/Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol
Cymru

Revisions

The Constitution was last amended as follows:

Federal	March 2009
England	July 2009
Scotland	April 2002
Wales	October 2008

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PREAMBLE

The Liberal Democrats exist to build and safeguard a fair, free and open society, in which we seek to balance the fundamental values of liberty, equality and community, and in which no-one shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity. We champion the freedom, dignity and well-being of individuals, we acknowledge and respect their right to freedom of conscience and their right to develop their talents to the full. We aim to disperse power, to foster diversity and to nurture creativity. We believe that the role of the state is to enable all citizens to attain these ideals, to contribute fully to their communities and to take part in the decisions which affect their lives.

We look forward to a world in which all people share the same basic rights, in which they live together in peace and in which their different cultures will be able to develop freely. We believe that each generation is responsible for the fate of our planet and, by safeguarding the balance of nature and the environment, for the long term continuity of life in all its forms.

Upholding these values of individual and social justice, we reject all prejudice and discrimination based upon race, colour, religion, age, disability, sex or sexual orientation and oppose all forms of entrenched privilege and inequality. Recognising that the quest for freedom and justice can never end, we promote human rights and open government, a sustainable economy which serves genuine need, public services of the highest quality, international action based on a recognition of the interdependence of all the world's peoples and responsible stewardship of the earth and its resources. We believe that people should be involved in running their communities. We are determined to strengthen the democratic process and ensure that there is a just and representative system of government with effective Parliamentary institutions, freedom of information, decisions taken at the lowest practicable level and a fair voting system for all elections. We will at all times defend the right to speak, write, worship, associate and vote freely, and we will protect the right of citizens to enjoy privacy in their own lives and homes. We believe that sovereignty rests with the people and that authority in a democracy derives from the people. We therefore acknowledge their right to determine the form of government best suited to their needs and commit ourselves to the promotion of a democratic federal framework within which as much power as feasible is exercised by the nations and regions of the United Kingdom. We similarly commit ourselves to the promotion of a flourishing system of democratic local government in which decisions are taken and services delivered at the most local level which is viable.

We will foster a strong and sustainable economy which encourages the necessary wealth creating processes, develops and uses the skills of the people and works to the benefit of all, with a just distribution of the rewards of success. We want to see democracy, participation and the co-operative principle in industry and commerce within a competitive environment in which the state allows the market to operate freely where possible but intervenes where necessary. We will promote scientific research and innovation and will harness technological change to human advantage.

We will work for a sense of partnership and community in all areas of life. We recognise that the independence of individuals is safeguarded by their personal ownership of property, but that the market alone does not distribute wealth or income fairly. We support the widest possible distribution of wealth and promote the rights of all citizens to social provision and cultural activity. We seek to make public services responsive to the people they serve, to encourage variety and innovation within them and to make them available on equal terms to all.

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Our responsibility for justice and liberty cannot be confined by national boundaries; we are committed to fight poverty, oppression, hunger, ignorance, disease and aggression wherever they occur and to promote the free movement of ideas, people, goods and services. Setting aside national sovereignty when necessary, we will work with other countries towards an equitable and peaceful international order and a durable system of common security. Within the European Community we affirm the values of federalism and integration and work for unity based on these principles. We will contribute to the process of peace and disarmament, the elimination of world poverty and the collective safeguarding of democracy by playing a full and constructive role in international organisations which share similar aims and objectives. These are the conditions of liberty and social justice which it is the responsibility of each citizen and the duty of the state to protect and enlarge. The Liberal Democrats consist of women and men working together for the achievement of these aims.

ARTICLE 1: Name, Objects and Succession

- 1.1 The name of the Party shall be the Liberal Democrats. It may be additionally known in Welsh as Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol. It is referred to in this Constitution as “the Party”.
 - 1.2 The objectives of the Party shall be:
 - (a) to be the successor to the Liberal Party and the Social Democratic Party (“the Former Parties”);
 - (b) to seek to achieve the objects set forth in the Preamble to this Constitution; and
 - (c) in order to achieve such objects, to secure the election of Liberal Democrats as Members of Parliament, UK Members of the European Parliament and members of local and other elected public authorities.
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ARTICLE 2: Provisions Relating To The Constitution

2.1 The Party shall be a federation constituted by the Scottish Liberal Democrats, the Welsh Liberal Democrats/Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru and the Liberal Democrats in England (the State Parties).

Regional Parties in England may seek recognition as State Parties (any such recognition requiring a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the Conference).

The Federal Conference may, upon the recommendation of the Federal Executive, resolve to establish and/or recognise a State Party in Northern Ireland.

The Party shall also include individual members and Local Parties outside the United Kingdom and, pending the establishment or recognition of a State Party there, in Northern Ireland.

2.2 The federal institutions of the Party are together referred to in this Constitution as “the Federal Party”. This Constitution and any rules made thereunder bind the Federal Party and the State Parties. In all other regards a State Party shall be sovereign and shall be entitled to exercise any power not reserved to the Federal Party.

2.3 The following functions are reserved to the Federal Party (subject to the rights of consultation afforded to State parties and others by this Constitution):

- (a) the determination of policy in the areas specified in Article 5;
- (b) the Party’s overall strategy;
- (c) overall preparations for Parliamentary and European Parliamentary Elections;
- (d) the overall presentation, image and media relations of the Party; and
- (e) international relationships.

The Federal Party shall also promote campaigning throughout the United Kingdom, and may raise funds and do anything else which is incidental to its functions.

2.4 The provisions of this Constitution shall be implemented with regard to the principle that men and women shall have an equal opportunity of participating at every level of the Party.

Whenever this Constitution provides for the election by the same electorate of three or more persons to any committee or other body, not less than one-third or, if one-third is not a whole number, the whole number nearest to but not exceeding one-third (“the Specified Number”) shall be men and women respectively, provided that there is at least twice the Specified Number of male and female candidates respectively validly nominated by the close of nominations. Such elections shall take place from a common list and in accordance with the election rules made by the Federal Executive as from time to time in force.

2.5 No elected representative in any body in the Party shall be mandated.

- 2.6 Any candidate for election to public office standing as a representative of the Party must be a current member of the Party.
- 2.7 This Constitution may only be altered:
- (a) by a two-thirds majority of representatives present and voting at the Federal Conference;
 - (b) where any such alteration has been submitted in accordance with the Standing Orders of that Conference by the Federal Executive or any other persons or bodies entitled to submit motions or amendments under Article 5.6 and notified to Local Parties at least six weeks in advance; and
 - (c) in the case of any alteration to the relative powers and functions of the Federal Party and the State Parties or to this paragraph (c), it is passed by the internal procedures of each State Party.
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ARTICLE 3: Membership

3.1 Membership of the Party is open to all persons who agree with its fundamental values and objectives without discrimination as to age, ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation.

3.2 Membership shall be acquired through an enrolling body, being:

- (a) a Local Party in the area of which the member lives, works or studies (or, with its consent, another Local Party);
- (b) a Specified Associated Organisation representing youth and/or students; or
- (c) a State Party in accordance with its internal procedures (and so that any overseas member in a location where there is no Local Party may become a member via a State Party designated by the Federal Executive to act as agent for the Federal Party).

An applicant shall become a member on acceptance by the enrolling body, payment of the requisite subscription and registration. However, a State Party may, by its internal procedures, determine that eligibility of a member to vote in Local Party elections (including Parliamentary and local government selections, but excluding the appointment of representatives to Federal Conference) may be subject to a minimum requirement as to age (not being more than 10 years) and/or length of continuous membership (not being more than 15 months); and the provisions of this constitution as to members' voting rights shall be construed accordingly.

3.3 Responsibility for renewal of membership shall lie with State Parties but these may, by their internal procedures, provide for this function to be fulfilled by any other body or bodies within the Party. Membership will be automatically terminated if the renewal subscription is not received within three months following the due date.

3.4 All other matters relating to the admission or refusal of admission to membership of any person, or for the revocation or cessation of membership of any member, including the basis on which Local Parties may be involved in the recruitment and renewal of members, shall be governed by the Constitutions of the State Parties or by membership rules made under them, except that:

- (i) where, in any part of the United Kingdom, provision is not made in any of these respects by the State Party concerned, Articles 3.5 to 3.7 shall apply;
- (ii) a right of appeal pursuant to Article 14 of the Constitution, once any procedures internal to the State Party concerned have been exhausted, cannot be excluded in relation to the interpretation of Article 3.1 of the Constitution; and
- (iii) each state party shall give notice to the other state parties of any revocation of membership.

Subject to the conditions set out in the Constitution of or in the rules made by the State Party concerned, a member shall be a member of:

- (a) where the enrolling body is a Local Party, that Local Party or, where the enrolling body is not a Local Party, an appropriate Local Party in terms of Article 3.2 (a); and
- (b) any applicable State Party and/or Regional Party; and
- (c) the Federal Party.

3.5 No person may simultaneously be a member of more than one Local Party. A member may re-register as of right in a different Local Party under the terms of Article 3.2 (a), or may, with the consent of the member's previous Local Party where that Local Party has ceased to be appropriate in terms of Article 3.2 (a), retain membership of that Local Party. A member who is an MP, MEP, prospective parliamentary or European parliamentary candidate or member of a local authority may re-register as of right in a relevant Local Party.

3.6 Membership may be refused by an enrolling body on one or more of the following grounds:

- (a) material disagreement, evidenced by conduct, with the fundamental values and objectives of the Party;
- (b) the admission of the applicant would be likely to bring the Party into disrepute; or
- (c) membership of another political party in Great Britain.

Any person aggrieved by such a refusal shall, subject to having exhausted the internal procedures of the relevant State Party, have a right of appeal pursuant to Article 14 on any matter relating to the interpretation of this Constitution.

3.7 Membership may be revoked by a Local Party (or, where appropriate, a Specified Associated Organisation which acted as the enrolling body) or a State Party on one or more of the following grounds:

- (a) material disagreement, evidenced by conduct, with the fundamental values and objectives of the Party;
- (b) conduct which has brought, or is likely to bring, the Party into disrepute;
- (c) standing against the candidate of the Party in any Parliamentary or European Parliamentary election;
- (d) standing against the candidate of the Party in any local authority election; and
- (e) membership of or support for another political party in Great Britain.

Membership shall not be revoked unless the member has been notified of the grounds on which revocation is to be considered and has been given a reasonable opportunity to reply. Where paragraph (c), (d) or (e) of this Article 3.7 applies, membership shall be automatically and immediately suspended, and in other cases of urgency the body with powers of revocation may suspend membership while revocation is being considered. Any person aggrieved by such a revocation shall, subject to having exhausted the internal procedures of the relevant State Party, have a right of appeal pursuant to article 14 on any question relating to the interpretation of this Constitution.

- 3.8 A register of members shall be maintained by each State Party. A register of members resident outside Great Britain shall be maintained by a State Party designated by the Federal Executive to act as agent for the Federal Party. Any body entitled to maintain a list of members may use the list for its own internal purposes. The Federal Party shall have direct access to such lists. Any body holding or having access to such lists shall ensure that the information contained in them is not disclosed to any person other than for the proper purposes of the Party. Party bodies shall comply with the directives of the Federal Executive in relation to the Party's Data Protection Act registration.
- 3.9 The Federal Executive shall each autumn, after consultation with all State Parties and SAOs, recommend to the Federal Conference, and the Federal Conference shall determine the outline budget for the Federal Party in the forthcoming year (including the financing of the SAOs) which shall include:
- (a) the minimum rate or rates of subscription for the ensuing year;
 - (b) the proportion of subscription income which each State Party and overseas Local Party shall remit to the Federal Party;
 - (c) a statement agreed by the Federal and all State Parties about the organisation of fund-raising activities for the forthcoming year; and
 - (d) a statement of the strategic and political priorities upon which the proposals are based.

A higher recommended rate or rates of subscription may also be determined by the same procedure. Nothing in this Constitution shall prevent a State Party from setting a recommended rate or rates of subscription by its internal procedures which is higher than that agreed by the Federal Conference under this Article.

- 3.10 There shall be a Joint State Membership Committee which shall consist of two representatives from each of the State Parties. The Committee shall co-ordinate the promotion of membership throughout the United Kingdom.
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ARTICLE 4: Local Parties

- 4.1 There shall be Local Parties so far as possible throughout Great Britain. Local Parties may be formed in Northern Ireland or places outside the United Kingdom. Save as provided for in Articles 4.2, 4.3(b), 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12, 6.2 and 6.3, all matters relating to the formation, operation, suspension or dissolution of Local Parties shall be determined by the Constitutions of the State Parties or by rules made under them, except that where, anywhere in Great Britain, provision is not made in any of these respects by the State Party concerned the relevant parts of the following Articles 4.2 to 4.8 shall apply.
- 4.2 No Local Party shall be formed unless it will, on formation, have at least 30 members.
- 4.3 Save as hereinafter provided, each Local Party in Great Britain shall contain one parliamentary constituency. The members in each of two or more adjacent parliamentary constituencies may agree to combine into a single Local Party, in which case the combined Local Party shall be deemed for all the purposes of this Constitution to be a Local Party, save that:
- (a) the selection of a prospective parliamentary candidate and the adoption of a parliamentary candidate shall be made:
 - (i) where for any constituency in a Local Party there are 30 or more members, by those members; and
 - (ii) where for any constituency within a Local Party there are less than 30 members, the Local Party Constitution shall specify whether all the members of the Local Party shall participate or only those from the constituency concerned.
 - (b) the combined Local Party shall be entitled to send to the Federal Conference the higher of:
 - (i) the number of representatives which each component constituency with 30 members or more would be entitled to send if it formed a separate Local Party: and
 - (ii) the number of representatives which that Local Party would be entitled to send if it comprised a single constituency.
- 4.4 A Local Party containing two or more constituencies may divide into new Local Parties, provided that none of them will have less than 30 members.
- 4.5 The objects of a Local Party in Great Britain shall be to be the successor to the Former Parties in its area and to promote and support the values and objects of the Party in the constituency or constituencies which it contains and in particular, through its members:
- (a) to secure the election of Liberal Democrats as Members of Parliament, UK Members of the European Parliament and members of local and other elected public authorities;
 - (b) to admit and actively to recruit new members of the Party and encourage members to renew their membership;
 - (c) to participate in the formulation of the policy of the Party;
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- (d) to play a full part in the democratic processes of the Party;
 - (e) to play a full part in the campaigning activities of the Party at all levels;
 - (f) to campaign and work with local people to achieve the objectives set out in the Preamble to this Constitution; and
 - (g) to help all local people, without regard to party or any other factor, to secure their rights and to protect them against oppression.
- 4.6 Each Local Party shall have a constitution, which must comply with the following principles:
- (a) the objects shall include those set forth in Article 4.5 of this Constitution;
 - (b) it must give effect to the provisions of Article 3 of this Constitution;
 - (c) all elections shall be in accordance with the election rules made under Article 8.4 of this Constitution;
 - (d) there must be an annual general meeting, and provision for the calling of other general meetings by the executive committee and by requisition of the members;
 - (e) proper accounts and accounting records must be kept as required by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and must be audited and delivered to the Election Commission as required by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, and submitted with an independent report to the annual general meeting for approval; and
 - (f) it must ensure compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.
- 4.7 The constitution of a Local Party is subject to this Constitution and to the constitution of the relevant State Party and, in the event of any conflict between them, this Constitution or as the case may be the constitution of the relevant State Party shall prevail.
- 4.8 A Local Party shall be suspended if its membership has remained below 30 for a continuous period of six months, and shall remain suspended until its membership reaches 30. A Local Party which has been suspended on this ground shall be dealt with by the relevant State Party in accordance with its internal procedures, and shall not while suspended have the rights conferred upon Local Parties by this Constitution.
- 4.9 The rights of a Local Party under this Constitution may be suspended by the relevant State Party in accordance with its internal procedures (or, in the case of a Local Party outside Great Britain, by the Federal Executive), if it is not adhering to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, this (or its own) Constitution or if events have taken place or are about to take place which are or may be seriously detrimental to the Local Party or to the Party as a whole. A Local Party shall not while its rights are suspended be entitled to representation at the Federal Conference.
- 4.10 The constitution of a Local Party outside Great Britain and any amendment thereto shall be subject to approval by the Federal Executive. Such approval may be withheld if the constitution or amendment:
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- (a) contravenes the principles set out in Article 4.6 or in the Preamble to this Constitution or is otherwise in conflict with any of the provisions of this Constitution; or
- (b) is unworkable or defective, or omits or deletes provisions necessary to the proper functioning of the Local Party.

4.11 Before suspending a Local Party outside Great Britain, the Federal Executive shall draw the attention of the Local Party to the grounds on which it is proposed to take this action, and shall give the Local Party a reasonable time to answer any allegations and/or take any necessary corrective action. A Local Party outside Great Britain which is suspended under Article 4.9 may appeal from that decision as provided by Article 14.

4.12 The suspension of a Local Party outside Great Britain may be lifted if the Federal Executive is satisfied that corrective action has been taken. During the period of its suspension the powers and functions of the Local Party and its organs shall be exercised subject to and in accordance with the directions of the Federal Executive.

ARTICLE 5: The Policy-Making Process

- 5.1 The Federal Party shall determine the policy of the Party in those areas which might reasonably be expected to fall within the remit of the federal institutions in the context of a federal United Kingdom.
- 5.2 The State Parties shall by their respective internal procedures determine the policy of the Party on all other issues, except that any State Party may confer upon the Federal Party power to determine policy in any specified area or areas. Policy determined in this way by the Federal Party will not override the policy of those State Parties which have not conferred policy-making power in this area on the Federal Party. Where a State Party has conferred this power upon the Federal Party it shall not itself engage in the determination of policy in the specified area or areas until such time as the power has been revoked by it.
- 5.3 Any body that is not entitled to make policy on any specific issue may discuss and express its views upon it on a consultative basis.
- 5.4 The Federal Policy Committee (FPC), at its own decision or at the instruction of the Federal Conference, may undertake the commissioning, preparation, publication, circulation, and submission to Conference of policy papers, including options in cases where consultation has shown there to be substantial disagreement within the Party. Policy papers shall normally be preceded by consultation papers which shall set out policy options.
- 5.5 In the course of developing policy the FPC shall:
- (a) consider policy proposals submitted to it by State Parties, Regional Parties in England, Local Parties, Associated Organisations and individual members of the Party; together with the responses to the consultations carried out according to Article 5.5 (b); and
 - (b) ensure consultation generally with, including circulating consultation papers to, Federal Conference representatives, State Parties, Regional Parties in England, Local Parties and Associated Organisations. Such consultations shall include responses to references under Article 5.7.
- 5.6 Policy motions and amendments (including emergency motions and amendments) may be submitted for debate by Federal Conference (in accordance with its Standing Orders) by the Federal Policy Committee, members of the Federal Conference, State Parties in accordance with their internal procedures, Regional Parties in England, Local Parties and Specified Associated Organisations. Amendments to motions accompanying policy papers may be submitted in the same way.
- 5.7 In order to ensure that all aspects of a proposed policy are fully considered, the FPC may request any motion before a Federal Conference to be referred to the next meeting of the Conference. The FPC shall, before such meeting, circulate its reasons for acting under this Article and its comments on the relevant motion and any amendments thereto accepted for debate.
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- 5.8 Subject to the foregoing procedure, all Federal policy papers and motions approved by the Federal Conference shall thereby become the policy of the Federal Party.
- 5.9 The FPC shall prepare (and from time to time revise) statements as to the policy of the Party as produced by the foregoing process together with the provisions of Article 7.1.

ARTICLE 6: The Federal Conference

6.1 The Conference shall consist of

- (a) representatives of Local Parties (and the Specified Associated Organisations representing youth and/or students as provided by Article 13.8);
- (b) the Parliamentary Parties as defined by Article 9;
- (c) Members of the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales in receipt of the party's whip;
- (d) the Officers specified in Article 12;
- (e) prospective parliamentary and European parliamentary candidates who shall continue as members of the Conference until the end of the calendar year in which they stood for election, unless a new prospective candidate is selected for the constituency;
- (f) Elected Mayors who are members of the Party;
- (g) Elected members of regional assemblies in receipt of the Party's whip; and
- (h) Leaders of council groups of the Part on principal councils.

6.2 Local Parties shall be represented on the following basis, modified where applicable by Article 4.3(b):

Membership of Local Party	Number of Representatives
30 to 50	4
51 to 75	5
76 to 100	6
101 to 150	7
151 to 200	8
201 to 250	9
251 to 300	10
301 to 350	11
351 to 400	12
401 to 450	13

together with a further representative for every 100 members (or part thereof) in excess of 450.

6.3 Representatives of Local Parties shall be elected by all members of the Local Party concerned in accordance with election rules made under Article 8.4 for a term of one calendar year subject to the following provisions:

- (a) a representative shall cease to hold office upon:
 - (i) resignation in writing;
 - (ii) cessation of membership of the Party; or
 - (iii) unless the Local Party concerned determines otherwise, on ceasing to be a member of that Local Party or on failing to attend any meeting of the Conference without giving notice (so far as practicable) of inability to attend or without reasonable cause;

- (b) if a vacancy shall arise (or a Local Party shall become entitled to additional representation between elections), the additional representative(s) shall be chosen by procedures determined and published by the Local Party Executive Committee.
- (c) if a representative shall indicate inability to attend a forthcoming meeting of the Conference, a substitute may be elected by the Executive Committee of the Local Party concerned; and
- (d) if a Local Party is entitled to at least three representatives, and subject to there being sufficient nominations, at least one shall be a man and one a woman.

6.4 For the purpose of such elections:

- (a) each Local Party shall give reasonable notice of a closing date for nominations; and
- (b) if there are not more nominations than vacancies, a general meeting shall be invited to confirm each nominee: if it shall not do so in any particular case, there shall be a second call for nominations.

6.5 The Standing Orders of the Conference shall provide for consultative sessions of the Conference at which any member of the Party may speak, and for members who are not representatives to address other sessions of the Conference, but such provisions shall not prejudice the right of the chair of a session to select speakers.

6.6 The Conference shall normally meet twice a year, for a week in the early autumn and a weekend in the early spring; additional meetings may be summoned upon the requisition of the Federal Executive or the Federal Policy Committee or the Conference itself or 200 representatives entitled to attend the Conference. A meeting may be cancelled by the Federal Executive in exceptional circumstances.

6.7 Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the Conference shall be the sovereign representative body of the Party, and shall have power to determine the policy of the Party in accordance with and subject to the provisions of Article 5.

6.8 There shall be a business session at each Conference, to which the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons, the Parliamentary party in the House of Lords, the Parliamentary Party in the European Parliament, the Federal Executive, the Federal Policy Committee and the Federal Conference Committee shall report. The business session at the autumn meeting shall constitute the Annual General Meeting of the Party, before which the Annual Report and Accounts shall additionally be laid. The Conference shall have the right to approve or reject each such report, or to refer it back with recommendations. Business motions may be submitted to the Federal Conference by the Federal Executive, the Federal Conference Committee or any other persons or bodies entitled to submit motions or amendments under Article 5.6.

6.9 The Standing Orders of the Federal Conference shall allow for meetings of Conference or Council of the State Party within whose boundaries the Federal Conference is being held, at the request of that Party, either immediately prior to, or immediately after, the Federal Conference and in the same place as the Federal Conference.

- 6.10 The Conference shall be organised by the Federal Conference Committee, which shall be subject to the control of the Federal Executive in matters of financial and other resources. Standing Orders for the Conference shall be made by the Conference Committee subject to the approval of the Conference. The Conference Committee shall consist of:
- (a) the President;
 - (b) the Chief Whip (or nominee, who shall be a member of the Parliamentary Party as defined in Article 9.1);
 - (c) one representative of each State Party, elected by its internal procedures (State Parties may appoint a substitute member should the elected member be unable to attend a specific meeting of the FCC);
 - (d) two persons elected by the Federal Executive;
 - (e) two persons elected by the Federal Policy Committee;
 - (f) the Federal Chief Executive (who shall not be entitled to vote);
 - (g) a representative of the staff employed by the party at federal level or by or on behalf of either or both parliamentary parties in Westminster and elected by such staff (who shall not be entitled to vote); and
 - (h) 12 persons elected by the Federal Conference (causal vacancies shall be filled in accordance with the election regulations).

The persons elected in accordance with (d), (e), (g) and (h) above shall be elected in even-numbered years and shall serve for a term of two years from the date of election. The Conference Committee thus constituted may co-opt such persons and for such periods not exceeding two years as it thinks fit who shall be entitled to attend and speak but not vote (but so that there shall not be more than three persons co-opted at any time).

The Federal Conference Committee, in organising the Conference, shall have due regard to the balance of state and federal policy debates in the final agenda of the Conference and in particular shall as far as possible organise the Agenda so that all matters which relate to one or more state parties but not all state parties or the Federal Party shall be considered at either the beginning or the end of the Conference.

- 6.11 The Conference may resolve to conduct a ballot of all members of the Party on any fundamental question where, in its judgement, the values and objectives of the Party are in issue or it is otherwise in the essential interests of the Party, and shall at the same time as considering the related resolution consider also a statement from the Federal Executive as to the financial and administrative implications of such a ballot. Such a ballot shall be in a bilingual form for all members of the Welsh Liberal Democrats.
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ARTICLE 7: The Federal Policy Committee

- 7.1 There shall be a Federal Policy Committee (“FPC”), which shall be responsible to the Federal Conference and shall have the duty of researching and developing policy and of overseeing the policy-making process in accordance with and subject to the provisions of Article 5. It shall also be responsible for:
- (a) presenting the views of the Party to outside bodies, including political parties and groupings in the European Community and elsewhere;
 - (b) consulting outside bodies in relation to proposed policies of the Federal Party;
 - (c) approving official policy publications of the Federal Party;
 - (d) making interim policy on topical issues, subject always to this policy remaining the policy of the Federal Party only if it is approved by the first appropriate meeting of Conference on the basis of a motion to approve a report covering all such interim policy submitted to it by the FPC; and
 - (e) making detailed policy of the kind needed to implement the principles and broad policy outlines contained in a policy paper or motion that has already been adopted by Conference.

The FPC shall submit an annual report for approval or amendment to Conference at its autumn meeting on its programme of policy development.

- 7.2 The FPC shall consist of the following:
- (a) the Leader;
 - (b) one other MP elected by and from the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons;
 - (c) one MP each elected by and from members of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons representing constituencies in England, Scotland and Wales respectively;
 - (d) one Peer elected by and from the Parliamentary Party in the House of Lords;
 - (e) one MEP elected by and from the Parliamentary Party in the European Parliament;
 - (f) the President;
 - (g) three principal local authority councillors, elected by principal local authority councillors of the Party from among their own number;
 - (h) one Representative of each State Party, elected by its internal procedures (State Parties may appoint a substitute member should the elected member be unable to attend a specific meeting of the FPC); and
 - (i) one more person than the total number elected or appointed under paragraphs (a) to (h) above elected by the Federal Conference (which shall be filled in accordance with electoral regulations) except that persons who, at the date of close of nominations for election under this paragraph, are MPs shall not be eligible to be candidates for election under this paragraph.

The persons elected in accordance with (b), (c) (d), (e), (g), and (i) above shall be elected in even-numbered years and shall serve for a term for two years from the date of election and its chair shall be elected every two years by the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons from among those of its members who are members of the FPC by virtue of paragraphs (a) through (c) of this Article. The FPC thus constituted

may co-opt such persons and for such periods not exceeding two years as it thinks fit who shall be entitled to attend and speak but not vote (but so that there shall not be more than three persons co-opted at any time).

- 7.3 The FPC shall have the responsibility for preparing the Party's General Election manifesto for the UK and its manifesto for elections to the European Parliament in consultation with the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons and with the Parliamentary Party in the European Parliament. It shall have the right to be consulted upon, and in the case of a conflict (but after consultation with the State Party concerned) to over-ride any proposal to be contained in the General Election manifesto of any State or Regional Party unless the proposal relates solely to an issue which is the specific concern of the State or Regional Party.
- 7.4 The FPC shall have the power from time to time to set up policy working groups (whose members need not be members of the FPC) of which it shall appoint a chair and, in consultation with that chair, the membership, with such terms of reference as it may think fit (which shall include the like obligations of consultation as those set forth in Article 5.5(b)). The FPC shall be under similar obligations of consultation in relation to the composition of a proposed group.
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ARTICLE 8: The Federal Executive

8.1 There shall be a Federal Executive, which shall be responsible for directing, co-ordinating and implementing the work of the Federal Party. It shall consist of the following:

- (i) voting members:
 - (a) the President, who shall act as its chair;
 - (b) the Vice-Presidents;
 - (c) the Leader;
 - (d) two other MPs elected by and from the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons;
 - (e) one Peer elected by and from the Parliamentary Party in the House of Lords;
 - (f) one MEP elected by and from the Parliamentary Party in the European Parliament;
 - (g) two principal local authority councillors elected by principal local authority councillors of the Party from among their own number;
 - (h) one representative of each State Party, elected by its internal procedures (State Parties may appoint a substitute member should the elected member be unable to attend a specific meeting of the Federal Executive);
 - (i) one more person than the total number of voting members elected or appointed under paragraphs (a) to (h) above elected by the Federal Conference (casual vacancies shall be filled in accordance with the electoral regulations) except that persons who, at the date of close of nominations for election under this paragraph, are MPs shall not be eligible to be candidates for election under this paragraph.
- (ii) The persons elected in accordance with 8.1(i) (d), (e), (f), (g) and (i) above shall be elected in even-numbered years and shall serve for a term of two years from 1st January after the date of election
- (iii) non voting members:
 - (a) the Chief Whip (or his substitute from within the Parliamentary Party as defined in Article 9.1);
 - (b) the Chair of the Finance and Administration Committee and the Treasurer in accordance with Articles 12.4 and 12.5;
 - (c) the Federal chief executive and a representative of the staff employed by the Party at federal level or by the Parliamentary Parties elected by such staff; and
 - (d) the chair of the Federal Policy Committee.

The Federal Executive shall elect at its first meeting in every odd-numbered year and who shall serve for two years a deputy chair from amongst its members who shall chair meetings in the absence or at the request of the President. The Federal Executive thus constituted may co-opt such persons and for such periods not exceeding two years as it thinks fit who shall be entitled to attend and speak but not vote (but so that there shall not be more than three persons co-opted at any time).

- 8.2 The Federal Executive shall have power from time to time to establish, appoint and remove members of, and vary committees and sub-committees, which shall be responsible to it and which shall report regularly.

In particular, it shall establish a Finance and Administration Committee (“FAC”) whose members shall serve for a term of two years and which will be responsible to the Federal Executive for:

- (a) planning and administering the budget and finances of the Federal Party;
- (b) directing the administration of the Federal Party including its chief executive, headquarters and other staff; and
- (c) overseeing the role of the Party as an equal opportunities employer and the maintenance of grievance and disciplinary procedures,
- (d) ensuring the compliance of the Party at all levels with the provisions of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000

and shall consist of:

- (a) the Chair of the FAC;
- (b) the Treasurer;
- (c) the President;
- (d) one representative of each State elected by their internal procedures (State Parties may appoint a substitute member should the elected member be unable to attend a specific meeting of the FAC);
- (e) the Federal chief executive;
- (f) two representatives of the staff employed by the Federal Party or by the Parliamentary Parties and elected by such staff; and
- (g) five persons elected by the Federal Executive (casual vacancies shall be filled in accordance with the standing orders of the Federal Executive).

The FAC thus constituted may co-opt such persons and for such periods not exceeding two years as it thinks fit (but so that there shall not be more than three persons co-opted at any time) who shall be entitled to attend and speak but not vote. The FAC shall have the power to borrow money for the general purposes of the Federal Party and to secure any monies borrowed in such manner as it thinks fit upon the assets of the Federal Party: provided always that the total amount of monies borrowed shall not exceed such amount as may from time to time be determined by the Federal Executive and approved by the Federal Conference.

The Federal Executive shall also have regard to the desirability of establishing sub-committees responsible for publicity and broadcasting, campaigning and elections, and international relations. The members of such sub-committees shall be elected at the first meeting of the Federal Executive in every odd-numbered year and shall serve for a term of two years.

- 8.3 The Federal Executive shall have power to establish a company limited by guarantee to acquire, hold and dispose of such assets of the Federal Party as the Federal Executive may from time to time direct. The Federal Executive shall have power from time to time to appoint and remove the directors of such a company, who will include the Chair of the FAC ex-officio and will otherwise be appointed for a period of five years, provided always that the Federal Executive shall not so appoint any person holding any public office or office in the Party which may be incompatible therewith. The Directors
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shall present an Annual Report (including audited financial statements) to the Federal Conference.

- 8.4 The Federal Executive shall have power, after appropriate consultations and subject to ratification by the Federal Conference, to make and from time to time vary rules as to membership, criteria for Associated Organisation and Specified Associated Organisation status and for the regular review of bodies holding such status, elections and such other matters as it may consider necessary or desirable to give effect to or supplement the provisions of this Constitution or to ensure its compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. Any election rules must provide for elections to be by STV and secret ballot.
- 8.5 There shall be a Joint Employment Council (“JEC”) which shall constitute a forum for discussions and negotiations between management and staff. It shall consist of equal numbers of representatives of staff and management respectively; the number of representatives of each shall be determined from time to time by the Federal Executive in the light of the number of employing bodies within the Party which join the JEC (and agree that it shall constitute a negotiating forum). The Federal Party shall join the JEC. The right of staff to join, or not to join, an appropriate Trades Union shall be recognised.
- 8.6 The Federal Executive may, at the request of the Federal Policy Committee or of its own accord, and having considered the financial and administrative implications, resolve to conduct a consultative ballot of all members of the Party on any fundamental question where, in its judgement, the values and objectives of the Party are in issue or it is otherwise in the essential interests of the Party. Such a consultative ballot shall be in a bilingual form for all members of the Welsh Liberal Democrats.
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ARTICLE 9: The Parliamentary Parties

- 9.1 The Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons shall consist of all Members of that House in receipt of the Party's whip. Its Leader shall be the Leader of the Party elected as provided in Article 10. It shall be entitled to make such regulations (not being inconsistent with this Constitution) as it thinks fit for the conduct of its own proceedings. In particular, these regulations shall make provision for a Chief Whip and, if thought fit, a Deputy Leader of such Parliamentary Party.
- 9.2 The Parliamentary Party in the House of Lords shall consist of all members of that House in receipt of the Party's whip. It shall be entitled to make such regulations (not being inconsistent with this Constitution) as it thinks fit for the conduct of its own proceedings, which shall make provision for a Leader and a Chief Whip of such Parliamentary Party.
- 9.3 The Parliamentary Party in the European Parliament shall consist of all members of the European Parliament elected from constituencies from within the United Kingdom and in receipt of the UK Liberal Democrat Whip. It shall be entitled to make such regulations (not being inconsistent with this Constitution) as it thinks fit for the conduct of its own proceedings.
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ARTICLE 10: The Leader

- 10.1 The Leader of the Party shall be elected by the members of the Party in accordance with election rules made pursuant to Article 8.4.
- 10.2 An election for the Leader shall be called upon:
- (a) the Leader asking for an election;
 - (b) the death or incapacity of the Leader;
 - (c) the Leader ceasing to be a Member of the House of Commons (other than a temporary cessation by reason of a dissolution);
 - (d) the receipt by the President of the resignation of the Leader or of a declaration of intent to resign upon the election of a new Leader;
 - (e) a vote of no confidence in the Leader being passed by a majority of all Members of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons;
 - (f) the receipt by the President of a requisition submitted by at least 75 Local Parties (including for this purpose, the Specified Associated Organisation or Organisations representing youth and/or students) following the decision of a quorate general meeting; or
 - (g) the first anniversary of the preceding general election being reached without an election being called under any of paragraphs (a) through (f), provided that:
 - (i) the Federal Executive may postpone such an election for no more than one year by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting; and
 - (ii) this paragraph (g) shall not apply if the Leader is a member of the Government.
- 10.3 Upon election, the Leader shall hold office until death, incapacity or resignation or the completion of an election called under this Article.
- 10.4 Upon the calling of an election, the Federal Executive shall publish a timetable for nominations, withdrawals, despatch and receipt of ballot papers and the holding of ballots and shall appoint a disinterested person or body to receive and count the ballot papers.
- 10.5 Nominations must be of a Member of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons, who must be proposed by at least ten percent of other members of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons and supported by 200 members in aggregate in not less than 20 Local Parties (including, for this purpose, the Specified Associated Organisations representing youth and students as provided by Article 13.8) and must indicate acceptance of nomination.
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ARTICLE 11: Parliamentary Candidates

- 11.1 Each State Party shall establish a Candidates Committee or provide for some or all of its functions to be discharged by another unit or units (and every such unit shall be deemed to be a State Candidates Committee for the purposes of this Article 11). The functions of a State Candidates Committee shall be:
- (a) to make provision for there to be lists of approved candidates for Parliamentary and for European Parliamentary elections;
 - (b) to co-ordinate and regulate the procedure for the selection and adoption of candidates;
 - (c) to identify and publish criteria for the assessment of candidates in the course of the approval and selection processes and to ensure, so far as possible, their consistent application;
 - (d) to provide training for candidates; and
 - (e) to make and from time to time to vary rules for the selection and adoption of prospective Parliamentary and European Parliamentary candidates.
- 11.2 There shall be a Joint Candidates Committee, which shall consist of one representative, with a power of substitution, from each of the State Candidates Committees and shall be chaired by the Chief Whip or nominee from the Parliamentary Party as defined in Article 9.1. The Joint Candidates Committee shall co-ordinate the maintenance of standards and the performance of the functions specified in Article 11.1 and it shall meet at least once a year.
- 11.3 In deciding whether to enter an applicant on a list, each State Candidates Committee shall take into account:
- (a) the support shown by the applicant for the fundamental values and objectives of the Party;
 - (b) the previous participation by the applicant in the work of the Party or a former Party, both generally and within the relevant State;
 - (c) the need to ensure that the list contains a reasonable balance between both sexes and different age groups, and includes representatives of different social and economic groups and of ethnic minorities; and
 - (d) such other considerations as may be relevant in the circumstances.
- 11.4 The name of any person may be removed from a list by the relevant State Candidates Committee if:
- (a) the Committee has reason to believe that such person:
 - (i) no longer supports the fundamental values or objectives of the Party;
 - (ii) has behaved (whether personally or in connection with the affairs of the Party) in such a way as to be unsuitable to serve as an MP or MEP; or
 - (iii) is unfit, through ill health or otherwise, to conduct an election campaign or to serve as an MP or MEP; or
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- (b) the Committee is satisfied that it would for any other sufficient reason be contrary to the interests of the Party for that person to remain on the list.

11.5 The rules for the selection of Westminster candidates shall comply with the following requirements:

- (a) they shall provide for the appointment of a returning officer;
- (b) only persons whose names are on the list of approved candidates of that State Party can be selected;
- (c) adequate notice of the commencement of the selection process in each constituency must be given;
- (d) there must be a procedure for the short-listing of applicants;
- (e) short-listing shall be carried out by the executive committee of the Local Party or by a short listing sub-committee appointed by it;
- (f) except where a special reselection process is permitted for a sitting MP or the previous candidate, all short-lists must include a specified minimum number of candidates;
- (g) subject to there being a sufficient number of applicants of each sex, short lists of two to four must include at least one member of each sex and short lists of five or more must include at least two members of each sex; there must also be due regard for the representation of ethnic minorities;
- (h) the Local Party shall arrange one or more (having regard to the geography of the constituency) hustings meetings at which all short-listed applicants shall be invited to speak and answer questions;
- (i) the electorate for selection (“the eligible voters”) shall subject to the provisions of Article 4.3(a) be the members of the Local Party at a specified date not later than the closing date for submission of applications;
- (j) there shall be sent to each such member by a specified time (which must not be less than seven days) before the first hustings meeting:
 - i) the names of the short-listed applicants and such information about themselves as may be authorised by the rules;
 - ii) notice of the time and place of the hustings meetings;
 - iii) notice that ballot papers will be distributed to eligible voters present at hustings meetings and will also be delivered to eligible voters who submit a request, subject to such eligible voters being responsible for their return before or at the last hustings meeting, provided that a State Party by its internal procedures may direct that the provisions in this sub-paragraph iii) shall not apply and that instead ballot papers shall be sent to each eligible voter for return before or at the last hustings meeting.
- (k) a procedure shall be provided for the removal of a candidate who has lost the confidence of the Local Party concerned.

11.6 If, following the selection of a prospective Parliamentary candidate, there is an actual or prospective vacancy in the seat, such selection shall cease to have effect and a new selection process shall take place to select a prospective candidate for the by-election.

11.7 The rules shall provide that, if a sitting MP indicates a wish to stand at the next General Election:

- (a) a general meeting of the Local Party shall be called and, if the MP is endorsed at the meeting by a majority of those members present and voting by secret ballot, the MP shall thereby be reselected; and
- (b) if the resolution is defeated, the MP may request a ballot of all members of the Local Party, and shall be reselected if the proposition is supported by a majority of those voting.

The Chair of the Local Party may (but not within the first two years of a Parliament unless there is a serious possibility of an early election) require the MP to indicate within one month whether or not the MP wishes to stand at the next General Election.

11.8 The requirements of Article 11.5 may be modified so far as necessary to accelerate selection if a general or by-election has been called or appears likely to be called in the immediate future.

11.9 The rules for selecting the lists of candidates for European Parliamentary Electoral Regions shall comply with the following requirements:

- (a) they shall provide for the appointment of a returning officer.
 - (b) only persons whose names are on the list of approved candidates of that State Party can be selected.
 - (c) adequate notice of the commencement of the selection process in each region must be given.
 - (d) there must be a procedure for the short-listing of applicants.
 - (e) short-listing shall be carried out by a sub-committee approved by the Regional / State (in Wales & Scotland) Executive(s) of the Euro Region(s), known as the Selection Committee.
 - (f) all short-lists must include more than enough applicants to fill all the vacancies on the list.
 - (g) subject to there being a sufficient number of applicants of each sex, at least one third of all applicants on each short-list shall be male and at least one third shall be female; there must also be due regard for the representation of ethnic minorities.
 - (h) the Selection Committee shall arrange one or more (having regard to the geography of the region(s)) hustings meetings at which all short-listed applicants shall be invited to speak and answer questions.
 - (i) the electorate for the selection (“the eligible voters”) shall be members of the Local Parties which make up the European Parliamentary Electoral Region at a specified date not later than the closing date for submission of applications.
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- (j) the candidates to be included on each list will be determined using STV, as provided in the current edition of “How to conduct an election by the Single Transferable Vote”, published by the Electoral Reform Society. The order in which the candidates will appear on the list will be determined by selection rules which supplement the Electoral Reform Society’s STV rules. The makeup and ordering of the list may be constrained to accommodate gender balance requirements specified by the selection rules of the State Party.

- (k) a provision shall be provided for the removal of a candidate who has lost the confidence of the Regional/State Party/Parties concerned and also the replacement of a candidate who has withdrawn, after the list has been announced.

ARTICLE 12: Officers

- 12.1 The President shall be the principal public representative of the Party and shall chair the Federal Executive. The President shall be elected by the members of the Party for a term of two years starting from 1st January in the year immediately following the election and shall hold office until death, incapacity, resignation or the election of a successor; the President shall be eligible for re-election once only. A candidate for the office of President shall require the nomination of not less than 50 representatives entitled to attend the Federal Conference. The President shall report to the annual meeting of the Conference and may make reports to any other meetings of Conference. The Federal Executive shall have the power, in the event of a casual vacancy, to elect an Acting President from any of the Vice-Presidents and to determine a convenient date for a ballot to elect a successor who shall serve for the remainder of the term, except that if the remainder of the term is less than twelve months, the successor shall serve for the remainder of the term plus a period of two years thereafter.
- 12.2 Each of the State Parties shall, by its internal procedures, designate one of its officers to be a Federal Vice-President.
- 12.3 The Chair of the FAC, who shall be responsible for the overall budget and finances of the Party, shall be its treasurer for the purposes of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and shall be responsible for its compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, shall be elected for a term of two years by the Federal Executive and shall, upon election, become (if not already a member) a non-voting member of the Federal Executive and a member of any fund-raising committee established by the Federal Executive.
- 12.4 The Treasurer, who shall be responsible for fund-raising, shall be elected by the Federal Executive at its first meeting in every odd-numbered year and shall serve for a term of two years and shall, upon election, become (if not already a member) a non-voting member of the Federal Executive, a member of the FAC and chair of any fund-raising committee established by the Federal Executive.
- 12.5 The Federal Executive shall appoint a salaried chief executive.
- 12.6 The Federal Executive shall appoint a nominating officer for the purposes of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.
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ARTICLE 13: Associated Organisations

- 13.1 Any organisation of persons having a common link of interest which satisfies the following criteria:
- (a) its membership is limited to members of the Party or non-members who support the fundamental values and objectives of the Party;
 - (b) its objects are consistent with those fundamental values and objectives;
 - (c) its internal procedures conform with the basic democratic principles set forth in Article 4.6;
- may, subject to any criteria established pursuant to Article 8.4, be recognised as an Associated Organisation (“AO”) at federal level by the Federal Executive or at state level by the internal procedures of a State Party.
- 13.2 Any such organisation which, in addition to satisfying the criteria set forth in Article 13.1, consists solely (except in the case of youth and/or students) of members of the Party and is listed in the Annexe to this Constitution shall be recognised as a Specified Associated Organisation (“SAO”) at federal level by the Federal Executive or at state level by the internal procedures of a State Party. Other organisations may, subject to any criteria established pursuant to Article 8.4, qualify for status as a Specified Associated Organisation following a proposal from the Federal Executive and a two-thirds majority of Conference. Once so approved, an SAO shall be subject to the provisions of this constitution in the same way as those SAOs which are specified herein. A list of such added SAOs shall be appended to the constitution. The Annexe shall expire at the end of every fourth autumn conference from 2006 (although the Federal Executive shall have the power to delay this each time by a further twelve months on a two-thirds majority) and must be renewed by means of an amendable motion from the Federal Executive to the Federal Conference.
- 13.3 An AO shall have the rights conferred upon AOs by this Constitution, and an SAO shall have the rights so conferred upon AOs and SAOs. The Federal Executive shall from time to time review the operation of AOs and SAOs in the light of the principles and practices established by and pursuant to this Constitution and shall report to the Conference on such reviews.
- 13.4 If an AO or an SAO is in breach of the criteria set forth in Article 13 or established pursuant to Article 8.4, it may be suspended from the exercise of its rights under this Constitution by the Federal Party or (as the case may be) the relevant State Party in accordance with its internal procedures. Before exercising any powers under this Article, the body proposing to suspend or recommend the suspension of the rights of the AO or SAO shall draw the attention of the AO or SAO concerned to the grounds on which it is proposed to take this action, and the AO or SAO shall be given a reasonable time to answer any allegations and/or take any necessary corrective action.
- 13.5 The suspension of an AO or an SAO at federal level may be effected by the Federal Executive and shall be reported to the next meeting of the Federal Conference, which may revoke such suspension or, by a two-thirds majority, remove from an organisation
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the status of an AO or SAO.

- 13.6 Any suspension of an AO or SAO may be lifted by the suspending body if it is satisfied that corrective action has been taken.
- 13.7 For the purposes of exercising the rights conferred on SAOs by this Constitution, an SAO representing youth and/or students shall have the same rights as a Local Party.
- 13.8 A member of an SAO shall not be counted as a member for the purpose of Article 6.2 or participate in exercising the rights of the SAO under Articles 6 and 10 of this Constitution:
- (a) if such member is not a member of the Party;
 - (b) in the case of the Youth and/ or Student Organisation, if such member has reached the age of 26 and is not a student;
 - (c) if such member, having been originally enrolled by an SAO, has elected to exercise the related constitutional rights through a Local Party; or
 - (d) if such member, having been originally enrolled by a Local Party, has not elected to exercise the related constitutional rights through an SAO: no person may exercise the related constitutional rights concurrently as a member of more than one SAO or as a member of both an SAO and a Local Party.
- 13.9 The recognition by the Party of Associated Organisations, and the conferring by this Constitution of rights upon Specified Associated Organisations, shall not prejudice the independence of such organisations.
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ARTICLE 14: Resolution of Conflicts

14.1 There shall be a Federal Appeals Panel, which shall consist of 18 members elected as follows:

- (a) Nine (of whom at least three shall be men and at least three shall be women) elected by the Federal Executive subject to confirmation by the Federal Conference. Each name shall be presented individually to Conference for confirmation. If any name is rejected by Conference, that name may not be re-presented to Conference for confirmation until at least eighteen months have elapsed; and
- (b) three elected by each State Party according to its internal procedures.

The Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel shall be elected by the Panel from amongst the members elected to it by the Federal Executive. The Chair upon ceasing to be a member of the Panel shall also cease to be Chair of the Panel but if re-appointed as a member of the Panel shall be eligible for re-election as the Chair.

14.2 Each member of the Panel shall hold office for five years, and shall be eligible for re-appointment provided that no person shall be entitled to hold office for more than ten years in aggregate. No person shall be eligible for appointment if (and any member shall forthwith vacate office upon becoming) an MP, MEP or prospective parliamentary candidate (save that the Chief Whip may be a federal appointee) or a member of the Federal Executive or the Federal Policy Committee. The body making the original appointment may terminate the appointment because the appointee is no longer able to carry out his or her duties as a member of the Panel on account of ill health or for other good cause. Any casual vacancy on the Panel may be filled by the body making the original appointment for the residue of the term of that appointment.

14.3 The Panel shall adjudicate upon:

- (a) any dispute over the interpretation of this Constitution;
- (b) any claim that the rights under this Constitution of a member or of an organ of the Federal Party or of an AO or SAO recognised by the Federal Party have been infringed;
- (c) any dispute, except one as to policy jurisdiction, between the Federal Party and a State Party;
- (d) any matter expressly so provided by this Constitution or by rules made thereunder;
- (e) any appeal from a like body in a State Party relating to an issue under this Constitution, except that no adjudication under this Article shall take place until any appropriate appeals procedures established within a relevant State Party have been exhausted; and
- (f) any dispute or issue which shall be referred to it by a State Appeals Panel for adjudication.

14.4 The members of the Panel to hear a particular case shall be selected by the Chair, who shall if appropriate consult with the applicant, subject to the following provisos:

THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

- (a) any dispute between a State Party and the Federal Party or between State Parties shall be heard by the Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel, three State appointees (one of whom, other than the Chair, being from the State or each of the States concerned) and three Federal appointees;
 - (b) at least three members shall be appointed to hear any other case (and an applicant may refuse to proceed unless at least three members are present), of whom at least one shall be an appointee of the State Party of which the applicant is a member and at least one shall be a Federal appointee;
 - (c) so far as practicable these members shall include at least one man and at least one woman;
 - (d) the members hearing any dispute relating to the composition of the Approved Candidates list shall if practicable include a former parliamentary candidate;
 - (e) the members shall not include any member of the Executive of a State Party in any case where the dispute is one in which the State Party is involved; and
 - (f) no member who heard the case at first instance shall hear the appeal therefrom.
- 14.5 The Panel shall decide whether or not a dispute or matter for adjudication falls within the jurisdiction conferred on it by Article 14.
- 14.6 The Panel shall determine and publish its own procedures (provided that the same are not inconsistent with this Constitution and subject to confirmation by Conference). It shall also publish its decisions on its interpretation of this Constitution.
- 14.7 Any decision of the Panel shall be final and binding upon all those concerned.
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ANNEXE¹: Specified Associated Organisations

The organisations recognised as SAOs in accordance with Article 13 are:

- 1 Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors,
- 2 Association of Liberal Democrat Engineers and Scientists,
- 3 DELGA (Liberal Democrats for Lesbian and Gay Action),
- 4 Ethnic Minority Liberal Democrats,
- 5 Liberal Democrat Agents and Organisers Association,
- 6 Liberal Democrat Youth and Students,
- 7 Parliamentary Candidates' Association,
- 8 Women Liberal Democrats
- 9 Liberal Democrat Lawyers.

¹ Annexe agreed at Federal Conference, Brighton, September 2006 – in force until Autumn Conference 2010. Liberal Democrat Lawyers added, March 2008

FEDERAL CONFERENCE STANDING ORDERS²

Glossary of terms

Business motion

A proposal to conduct the affairs of the Party in a particular way or to express an opinion on the way affairs have been conducted.

Business amendment

A proposal to change a business motion. *Any such proposal should be significant, should be within the scope of the original motion and must not be a direct negative.*

Committee

Throughout these standing orders, Committee means the Federal Conference Committee unless otherwise qualified.

Constitutional amendment

A proposal to change the constitution of the Party.

Secondary constitutional amendment

An amendment to a constitutional amendment. *This must not introduce new material.*

Consultative session

A meeting where selected areas of policy or strategy are considered in greater depth than is possible in full debates.

Day visitor

Someone who has paid the appropriate day visitor fee. Day visitors are not entitled to speak or vote in full sessions of conference.

Elected representative

A person elected by a local party or an SAO to represent them at conference. This term does not include substitutes appointed to replace an elected representative at a particular meeting of conference. It does include elected representatives who have not registered for a particular meeting of conference.

Emergency motion

A proposal which relates to a *specific recent development which occurred after the deadline for submission of motions. **Emergency motions must be brief.***

² As amended September 2008

Emergency amendment

An amendment to a motion which relates to a specific event which occurred after the deadline for the submission of amendments. *It must be brief and uncontentious.*

Full session

Any part of the conference agenda during which debates, topical issue discussions or discussion of business, including formal reports, takes place. This specifically excludes formal speeches such as those by the Leader or Party Officers.

Non-voting member

A party member who has paid the appropriate registration fee, but, because they are not an elected representative, is not entitled to vote at conference. A non-voting member is, however, entitled to submit a speaker's card for any item on which voting members may submit a speaker's card.

Point of order

A suggestion to the chair of a debate that the conduct of the debate, as laid down in the standing orders, has not been followed correctly.

Policy motion

A proposal to adopt a new policy or reaffirm an existing one. This includes motions accompanying policy papers.

Policy amendment

A proposal to change a policy motion. *Any proposal should be of significant importance, should be within the scope of the original motion and must not be a direct negative.*

Policy paper

A paper prepared by the Federal Policy Committee and submitted to conference for debate under the terms of Article 5.4 of the Federal Party constitution.

Procedural motion

A proposal that the conduct of a debate should be changed in a specific way.
Procedural motions are:

Move to next business

A proposal that the conference should cease to consider an item of business and immediately move to the next item on the agenda.

Reference back

A proposal to refer a motion or amendment to a named body of the Party for further consideration.

Request for a count

A request to the chair that a specific vote be counted and recorded rather than decided on the chair's assessment of a show of voting cards.

Separate vote

A request to the chair of a debate that a part or parts of a motion or amendment should be voted on separately.

Suspension of standing orders

A proposal to relax specific standing orders for a stated purpose.

Special conference

An additional meeting of the conference requisitioned by the Federal Executive, Federal Policy Committee, conference itself or 200 conference representatives under the provisions of Article 6.6 of the Federal constitution.

Standing order amendment

A proposal to change these standing orders.

Secondary standing order amendment

An amendment to a standing order amendment. This must not introduce new material.

Topical issue discussion

A discussion on a policy issue of significant and topical relevance, conducted without a vote

Voting member

A person who is entitled to vote at conference. This term includes substitutes replacing conference representatives for a particular meeting of conference. It does not include conference representatives who have not paid any registration fee that may be in force nor does it include day visitors or observers who are not conference representatives.

Standing Orders for the Federal Conference

1. The Conference Agenda

1.1 What is on the agenda

The agenda for each meeting of conference, other than a special conference, shall include time for:

- a) One or more consultative sessions; save that the Committee may decide not to hold any consultative sessions at a spring conference.
- b) A business session or sessions for the consideration of reports from the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons, the Parliamentary Party in the House of Lords, the Parliamentary Party in the European Parliament, the Federal Executive, the Federal Finance and Administration Committee, the Federal Policy Committee and the Federal Conference Committee together with, when appropriate, reports from any other body the Committee considers appropriate, accounts, the annual report, business motions, constitutional amendments and standing order amendments.
- c) Policy motions (including motions accompanying policy papers).
- d) Emergency motions.
- e) Topical issue discussions.
- f) Any other business which the Committee thinks appropriate.

The time to be allocated to each type of business and the order of that business shall be decided by the Committee provided that conference may decide not to take any particular item on the agenda.

1.2 Conference or council of state parties

In addition, time before or after any meeting may be agreed with the relevant state party for a meeting of the conference or council of that party.

1.3 Right to submit agenda items

- a) Reports to conference may be submitted only by the bodies listed in paragraph 1.1(b).
 - b) Business motions (including amendments and emergency business motions and amendments), constitutional amendments and secondary constitutional amendments, standing order amendments and secondary standing order amendments may be submitted by the Federal Executive, Federal Policy Committee, state parties, regional parties in England, local parties, Specified Associated Organisations and 10 conference representatives. Business motions, standing order amendments and secondary standing order amendments may also be submitted by the Federal Conference Committee.
 - c) Motions accompanying policy papers may only be submitted by the Federal Policy Committee.
 - d) Policy motions (including amendments, emergency policy motions and amendments) may be submitted by the Federal Policy Committee, state parties, regional parties in England, local parties, Specified Associated Organisations and 10 conference representatives.
-

e) Proposals for topical issue discussions may be submitted by any voting member.

1.4 How motions and amendments are submitted

All motions and amendments must be submitted to the Committee. They must be typed clearly and accompanied by the name, address and telephone number(s) of a person authorised to agree to their being composited or redrafted. Motions submitted by conference representatives must be accompanied by all their signatures, names and addresses.

1.5 The deadlines by which motions, amendments, reports and questions to reports must be submitted

The Committee shall specify:

- a) The closing date for the receipt of policy motions (including motions accompanying policy papers), business motions, constitutional amendments and amendments to standing orders, which shall be at least eight weeks before the start of conference.
- b) The closing date for the receipt of amendments to motions published in the Agenda and emergency motions, which shall be at least two days before the start of conference.
- c) The closing date for the submission of written reports from the bodies listed in paragraph 1.1(b), which will be set so as to enable their distribution with the Agenda. Any supplementary report submitted later than this deadline may only be tabled at conference with the permission of the Committee.
- d) The closing date for the submission of questions to any of the reports listed in the Agenda, which shall be at least two days before the start of conference.
- e) Notwithstanding 1.5(e), questions may always be submitted to any of the reports listed in the Agenda arising from events occurring after the deadline specified in 1.5(e). The deadline for these questions shall be one hour before the start of the business session at which the report is due to be considered.
- f) The closing date for proposals for topical issue discussions, which shall be at least two days before the start of conference

1.6 Notification of deadlines

All dates specified under Standing Order 1.5 shall be notified to conference representatives and bodies entitled to submit motions. Publication in the party newspaper may be treated as notice for this purpose.

1.7 Later deadlines in special circumstances

In special circumstances the Committee may specify later dates than those indicated above. In particular, where developments which, in the opinion of the Committee, are of great importance have taken place after the closing date for emergency motions and questions to reports, the Committee may make time available for an additional emergency motion or for a statement to be made on behalf of the Party or for additional questions to be submitted to reports.

2. Consultative Sessions

2.1 The subjects for consultative sessions

The subjects for debate at consultative sessions shall be chosen by the Committee on the advice of the Federal Policy Committee and, where appropriate, the Federal Executive, and published in the Agenda. Two or more such sessions may be held simultaneously.

2.2 Speaking at consultative sessions

Any member of the Party may be called to speak at a consultative session and, with the approval of the chair, non-members with relevant expertise may also be called.

2.3 Voting at consultative sessions

At the discretion of the chair a vote by show of hands may be taken to indicate the weight of opinion among members present on any issue that has been debated.

3. The Agenda

3.1 The shortlisting of motions

The Committee shall draw up the Agenda and shall decide which of the motions duly submitted shall be included in it. The Committee may allocate time for one or more policy or business motions to be selected by ballot. Copies of motions not selected shall be available for inspection and will be supplied to any conference representative on payment of a copying charge and postage.

3.2 Motions for the amendment of the constitution or standing orders

Save as detailed below in Standing Order 4.3, all proposed amendments to the constitution or standing orders must be either selected for debate or included in a ballot to allow conference representatives to determine an order of priority for allocating time.

3.3 Balance between State and Federal policy debates

The Committee shall, in drawing up the Agenda, have due regard to the balance of State and Federal policy debates and in particular shall as far as possible organise the agenda so that all matters which relate solely to one or more state parties but not all State Parties or the Federal Party shall be considered at either the beginning or the end of the conference.

4. Selection of Motions and Amendments

4.1 Compositing or otherwise altering motions

In drawing up the Agenda the Committee shall seek to reflect the range of views in the Party as indicated by the motions and amendments submitted. The Committee may:

- a) Treat any severable part of a motion or amendment as a separate motion or amendment.
- b) Redraft a motion or amendment so as to improve expression, remove inaccuracy or superfluity or take account of new developments.
- c) Composite similar motions or amendments.

4.2 Selection of amendments

The Committee shall decide which of the amendments duly submitted to each motion shall be selected. No amendment shall be selected if, in the opinion of the Committee it is insubstantial, outside the scope of the motion, or tantamount to a direct negative of the motion.

4.3 Motions for the amendment of the constitution or standing orders

The Committee may refuse to select a motion for amendment of the constitution or standing orders if, in their opinion, it is:

- a) Similar in effect to another motion which has been selected for debate or ballot at the same meeting of conference.
- b) Similar in effect to a motion that has been rejected at either of the last two meetings of conference.
- c) In the case of amendments to the constitution, incomplete in that it leaves unamended some other part of the constitution which contradicts the meaning of the amendment.
- d) In the case of amendments to standing orders, incomplete in that it leaves unamended some other part of standing orders which contradicts the meaning of the amendment.
- e) Ambiguous.

4.4 Emergency motions

The Committee may reject an emergency motion if:

- a) It is similar in effect to another motion that has been selected for debate or ballot.
- b) It is similar in effect to a subject chosen for a topical issue discussion.
- c) It is unclear as to its meaning or intent or is, in the opinion of the Committee, too poorly drafted to provide a sensible basis for debate.
- d) It falls outside the definition of emergency motions.

No amendment shall be taken to any motion selected under this Standing Order.

4.5 Ballots for emergency motions

All emergency motions, except those rejected under Standing Order 4.4, must be placed either on the agenda for debate or in a ballot for selection by Conference. The Committee may hold separate ballots to select which of a range of emergency policy motions and which of a range of emergency business motions to debate. If one or more ballots is held the Committee shall circulate the text of all balloted motions to the Representatives attending Conference as soon as practicable and shall specify a closing

time for the ballot. Following the counting of any ballots the Committee shall decide how many motions shall be debated in the time available.

4.6 Emergency amendments

The Committee shall have complete discretion whether to select emergency amendments for debate.

4.7 Topical issue discussions

The choice of subjects for topical issue discussions shall be made by the Officers of the Committee in consultation with the Officers of the Federal Policy Committee. In choosing the subjects, the Officers shall have regard to the significance and topicality of the subjects proposed and whether they are likely to provoke a lively discussion.

5. Special Meetings

5.1 Timetabling of special meetings

The Committee shall, as soon as practicable after the requisitioning of a special meeting of the conference, fix a date for the meeting, draw up the Agenda and, if appropriate, specify a date for the submission of amendments. The meeting shall deal only with the business stated in the notice of requisition save that the Committee may allow time for emergency motions and for business which is formal or, in its opinion, uncontentious.

5.2 Preferred timescales for special meetings

In setting dates for the submission of motions and amendments and giving notice thereof and of the conference itself the Committee shall endeavour to follow the timescales laid down elsewhere in these standing orders but, where this is not practicable, the Committee shall set such dates as it sees fit.

6. Appeals

6.1 Appeals against rejection of motions

The Committee shall provide written reasoning to the nominee of the proposers for the rejection of any motion or amendment. The proposers may appeal, in writing, to the next meeting of the Committee. Any such appeal shall provide reasons why, in the opinion of the proposers, the expressed reasons for rejection are not valid. If the appeal is allowed, the motion or amendment shall be treated as an emergency motion or amendment according to the stage of the agenda-setting process at which the appeal has been allowed.

6.2 Appeals against exclusion from conference

Any person excluded from conference by a decision of the Chief Steward shall have the right of appeal to the Committee at the next of its regular meetings. The exclusion shall

remain in force pending the appeal. If the person who is excluded is a voting member of conference, their local party or SAO shall be contacted immediately and invited to appoint a substitute for the remainder of the conference.

7. The Chair

7.1 Who chairs conference

The President, if present, shall normally take the chair at the formal opening and closing of conference and when the Party Leader is making a formal speech from the platform. At all other sessions the chair shall be appointed by the Committee. Normally no person shall chair more than one session at any meeting.

7.2 The chair's aide

The Committee may appoint an aide or aides to assist the chair of each session.

8. Conduct of Debate

8.1 Variation in the order of business

The Committee may propose to the conference a variation in the order of business as set out in the Agenda. Such variation shall be put to the vote and shall take effect if approved by a majority of those voting.

8.2 Withdrawal of motions and amendments

Once the Committee has included a motion or amendment, or part of a motion or amendment, in the Agenda, may not be withdrawn except by leave of conference.

8.3 The order of debate

The Committee shall direct the order of debate. Generally, however, a motion will be moved and immediately thereafter the amendments and options will be moved in the order directed by the Committee. There will then be a general debate. The movers of amendments and options (or their nominees) shall have the right of reply in the same order, after which the mover of the motion (or the mover's nominee) shall have the right of reply. Votes shall then be taken on the amendments and options in the order in which they have been moved and, finally, on the substantive motion. The Committee may direct that part of any motion or amendment or groups or amendments may be the subject of a separate debate.

8.4 Topical issue discussions

The Committee shall direct the order of the discussion. Normally the proposer of the subject shall speak first, and a representative of the Federal Policy Committee shall speak last.

8.5 Who may speak

Only voting or non-voting members may speak at a full session of conference, save that other persons may speak in the following circumstances:

- a) As a member of the Federal Policy Committee representing that committee in a policy debate.
- b) As a member of the Federal Conference Committee representing that committee in debates on standing orders and matters of conference procedure.
- c) As a member of the Federal Executive representing that committee on matters of party business.
- d) If called by the chair of the session, after the Committee has given permission. Such permission shall only be given exceptionally.

Additionally the Committee may invite any person to address the conference as a guest.

8.6 The special rights of the Federal Committees

Provided that the Federal Policy Committee is not proposing the motion or any of the amendments to be taken in a debate on a policy motion or on motions relating to the policy-making processes of the Party it shall have the right to nominate a person to report its views on the subject before the conference. The Federal Executive shall have similar rights on business motions or motions to amend the constitution, as shall the Federal Conference Committee on motions relating to the proceeding and procedures of the conference and to amend standing orders. Such a person shall be called to speak for the same length of time as the person replying on behalf of the mover of the motion.

8.7 The selection of speakers

Voting and non-voting members wishing to speak in any debate shall submit a speaker's card, prior to the commencement of the debate in which they wish to speak, stating whether they wish to speak for or against an amendment, the motion or part of the motion. The chair shall be responsible for the choice of the speakers and shall attempt to provide a balanced debate between the different viewpoints in the conference, but may announce a departure from this rule if there is an overwhelming preponderance of members wishing to speak on the same side. The chair shall have the discretion to accept speakers' cards after the start of the debate. Save as provided for in these standing orders, no person may speak more than once in any debate.

8.8 The length of speeches

The Committee shall set out in the Agenda time limits for speeches.

8.9 Where to speak from

All speeches shall be made from the rostrum, save that speeches by the President or Leader of the Party, except when participating in debate, or by a guest invited by the

Committee, or on the occasion of the opening or the closing of the meeting, may be made from the platform.

9. Voting at Conference

9.1 The method of voting

Voting cards shall be issued at each meeting to voting members. (The Committee may direct that voting on any issue be by ballot.) Subject thereto all votes at full sessions shall be taken by show of voting cards.

9.2 Counting of votes

A vote by show of voting cards shall be counted:

- a) If the Committee has so directed.
- b) If the chair so directs.
- c) As the result of a procedural motion under Standing Order 12.5 below.

A recount will only be held if the chair is not satisfied that the first count was accurate.

9.3 Separate votes

A separate vote may be taken on a part of a motion or amendment:

- a) On the direction of the Committee.
- b) At the discretion of the chair.
- c) As a result of a procedural motion under Standing Order 12.4 below.

10. Points of Order

10.1 Making a point of order

Any voting member may rise on a point of order which shall be taken immediately except that, during a vote, no point of order shall be taken that does not refer to the conduct of the vote. The chair's decision on all points of order shall be final.

11. Procedural Motions

11.1 Next business

- a) A voting member may, during any full conference session, submit, in writing, a request that conference move to next business, giving the reasons to do so. The submission shall not exceed 75 words.
 - b) The chair may either take the request immediately upon receipt, or at the end of any speech currently being made. If more than one request is received the chair shall decide which to take. No more than one request may be taken in respect to any motion or report.
 - c) When the request is to be taken, the chair shall read the statement of reasons and ask conference whether it wishes to consider the request to move to next business. If conference decides, by a simple majority of those voting, to do so, the person who
-

made the request may speak. The chair may allow other speakers. All speeches under this standing order shall be limited to two minutes. If conference decides not to debate the proposal, it falls.

d) The proposal shall require a two-thirds majority of those voting being to be passed. If it is carried the current agenda item shall be abandoned without any further debate or vote and, at the discretion of the chair, either the next agenda item shall be taken or there shall be an adjournment until the time at which the next agenda item was due to be taken.

11.2 Reference back (moved by a representative)

a) A voting member, who has not already spoken in the debate, may, at any time before the chair has asked the first speaker in reply to stand by, submit, in writing, a request to refer back the motion under debate. The submission shall state to whom the motion is to be referred and shall include a statement of the reasons, including reasons why voting against the motion would not achieve a similar result, not exceeding 75 words.

b) The chair may take the request to refer back at whatever stage of the debate they consider appropriate. If more than one request is received, the chair shall decide which to take. No more than one request may be taken with respect to any motion.

c) When the request is to be taken, the chair shall read the statement of reasons and ask conference whether it wishes to consider the request to refer. If conference decides, by a simple majority of those voting, to do so, the person who made the request may speak and the mover of the substantive motion, or their nominee, may reply. The chair may allow other speakers. All speeches under this standing order shall be limited to two minutes. If conference decides not to debate the reference back, it falls.

d) The reference back shall require a simple majority of those voting to be passed. If it is carried the current agenda item shall be abandoned without any further debate or vote and, at the discretion of the chair, either the next agenda item shall be taken or there shall be an adjournment until the time at which the next agenda item was due to be taken.

e) If the substantive motion is referred to the Federal Executive, the Federal Policy Committee or the Federal Conference Committee that body shall, in its report to the next meeting of the conference, state what action it has taken on the reference.

11.3 Reference back (moved by the Federal Policy Committee)

a) The Federal Policy Committee may, at any time before the beginning of the debate on a motion, submit, in writing, a request to refer that motion to the next meeting of the conference. The chair shall announce the existence of such a request at the start of the debate.

b) The chair may take the request to refer back at whatever stage of the debate they consider appropriate. A nominee of the Federal Policy Committee will speak and the mover of the substantive motion, or their nominee, may reply. The chair shall have discretion whether to allow other speakers on the request.

c) The reference back shall require a simple majority of those voting to be passed. If it is carried the current agenda item shall be abandoned without any further debate or vote and, at the discretion of the chair, either the next agenda item shall be taken or

there shall be an adjournment until the time at which the next agenda item was due to be taken.

d) If passed, the Federal Policy Committee shall, before the next meeting of the conference, circulate its reasons for acting under this section and its comments on the motion and any amendments thereto accepted for debate.

11.4 Separate vote

A voting member of conference may request that the chair take a separate vote on a part of a motion or amendment provided that such a request is in writing and received by the commencement of the first conference session on the day before the debate is scheduled. If the debate is scheduled for the first day of conference, the request must be received in writing by the same deadline as that for emergency motions. The Committee shall have complete discretion whether to take a separate vote. In exceptional circumstances, the Chair of the debate shall have discretion to accept a request for a separate vote if it is received in writing after this deadline.

11.5 Counted vote

Any voting member may ask for a counted vote, which shall be taken if the request is supported by 50 members rising in their places and showing their voting cards.

11.6 Suspension of standing orders

a) A voting conference member may, during any full conference session, move a motion for the suspension of standing orders. The mover shall submit the motion together with a written statement of its purpose, not exceeding 75 words, to the chair, who shall read them to the meeting. The chair may either take the request immediately upon receipt, or at the end of the speech currently being made.

b) No motion to suspend standing orders may suspend any requirement of the constitution, nor any part of these standing orders which govern:

i) The rights of, or timetable for, submission of motions and amendments.

ii) Consultative sessions.

iii) Procedural motions for next business or suspension of standing orders.

c) No motion to suspend standing orders to introduce a motion or amendment on to the agenda can be taken unless the motion or amendment has been submitted to the Committee in accordance with the published timetable and, where a right of appeal against non-selection exists, the right has been exercised.

d) The chair shall read the statement of purpose and, if the suspension is allowable in the terms of this standing order, ask the conference whether it wishes to debate the request for suspension. If the conference decides not to debate the request, it falls. If the conference decides, by a majority of those present and voting, to hear the request the mover may speak and a representative of the Committee may reply. The chair shall have the discretion to allow other speakers. All speeches on the motion to suspend standing orders will be limited to two minutes.

e) A motion to suspend standing orders shall only be carried if supported by at least two-thirds of the conference members voting. If the procedural motion is carried all standing orders shall remain in force except only for the purposes set out in the motion.

11.7 No procedural motions during votes

No procedural motion can be moved during a vote.

12. Reports

12.1 Which reports are tabled

The business session or sessions of the conference must include consideration of reports from the bodies listed in Standing Order 1.1(b).

12.2 Submission and selection of questions

A voting member may submit questions to any report tabled for consideration, by the deadlines set under Standing Orders 1.5 (e) and (f). The Committee shall publish in advance of the report session all the questions submitted under Standing Order 1.5 (e) which are in order, compositing similar questions where appropriate.

12.3 Whether questions are in order or not

A question shall be ruled out of order if it asks the body submitting the report about issues which are outside its duties and responsibilities. If the question could be answered by another body reporting to the same conference, the Committee may transfer the question to that body.

12.4 How questions and supplementary questions are put and answered

After the report is moved, the mover, or their nominee, shall answer the questions in turn. After each question has been answered, the voting member who submitted the question will be given the opportunity to put a supplementary question, speaking for a maximum of two minutes, and the mover, or their nominee, will be given an opportunity to respond. The chair shall determine the time given to the mover in moving the report and replying to questions. The chair shall also determine how many of the published questions, and how many of the questions submitted under Standing Order 1.5 (f), can be taken. After the conference the Committee shall publish the answers to all questions submitted under Standing Orders 1.5 (e) and (f) which are in order, and to all supplementary questions asked.

12.5 Approval or rejection of reports from Federal Party committees or sub-committees

Any report tabled by a Federal Party committee or sub-committee must be submitted for approval by the conference and must be voted upon accordingly. A voting member may move the rejection of any part of the report or of the report as a whole. A voting member wishing to move a rejection shall submit a speaker's card prior to the commencement of the consideration of the report, stating the section(s) which they wish to have rejected. All moves to reject a report must be debated (except that the chair shall have discretion to choose between moves to reject the same part of the report), at the conclusion of the question session. The person who made the request shall speak and the mover of the report, or their nominee, shall reply. The chair may allow other speakers, and shall determine the time given to all speakers.

12.6 Receipt of reports from other bodies

Any report tabled by a body other than a Federal Party committee or sub-committee must be submitted for receipt by the conference and must be voted upon accordingly. A voting member may move not to receive the report, by submitting a speaker's card prior to the commencement of the consideration of the report. A move not to receive a report must be debated (except that the chair shall have discretion to choose between more than one move not to receive the same report), at the conclusion of the question session. The person who made the request shall speak and the mover of the report, or their nominee, shall reply. The chair may allow other speakers, and shall determine the time given to all speakers.

13. Amendment of Standing Orders

13.1 Amendment of standing orders

These standing orders may be amended by a two-thirds majority of members of conference voting on a motion duly submitted and selected in accordance with standing orders. Subject to any amendment they shall remain in force from meeting to meeting.

14. The Chair and Vice Chairs of the Committee

14.1 Chair and Vice Chairs

At its first meeting after a new election the Committee shall elect a Chair, who must be a member of the Committee directly elected by conference, and at least one Vice Chair, who must be members of the Committee either directly elected by conference or elected by one of the State Parties.

COMMITTEE ELECTION REGULATIONS³

1. The Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel shall be the Returning Officer. The Chief Executive shall be the Acting Returning Officer. The Deputy Acting Returning Officer will be the Head of Compliance and Constitutional Support. Other Deputy Acting Returning Officers may be appointed if required.
2. The Federal Executive shall draw up a timetable for each year's receipts of nominations, dispatch and return of ballot papers and the counting of the votes for each election covered by these regulations.
3. Nominations may be submitted by:
 - a) Any Local Party;
 - b) Any Regional Party;
 - c) Any State Party;
 - d) Any Specified Associated Organisations; or
 - e) Any two Voting Conference Representatives with valid membership.

and **must** be accompanied by the written consent of the candidate. For the election of Councillor Reps see rule 14(b).

4. (a) Each candidate shall be entitled to include in the mailing of ballot papers for each election in which he or she is a candidate a personal election address covering up to one side of A5 paper, printed by and at the expense of the Federal Party. Election address artwork in camera ready form must reach the Acting Returning Officer at an address and by a date to be notified.

(b) Each candidate shall be responsible for supplying material that verifies, to the satisfaction of the Acting Returning Officer, any statement in his or her personal election address claiming that he or she is endorsed by any individual or organisation. Such material must accompany the candidate's personal election address artwork.

(c) No candidate may incur, or directly or indirectly authorise or cause to be incurred any further expenses on campaigning at any time before or after the close of nominations.

(d) Candidates or their supporters must not use e-mail, e-groups, cix conferencing or websites during these elections to promote their candidacy,

(e) Candidates must not carry out any activities during the election period, which may be viewed as treating.
5. The names and addresses of conference representatives are confidential and shall not be released for the purposes of the election.
6. (a) No party publication, including the Conference Gazette, may accept advertisements in support of or in opposition to candidates.

(b) Candidates may not use Liberal Democrat News to specifically promote their candidacy but all other articles are permissible.

³ As amended March 2006

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7. No material published or circulated by or on behalf of a candidate shall defame by name or implication any other candidate and no candidate shall so defame any other candidate in the course of personal canvassing.
 8. The Returning Officer shall have the power to disqualify before declaration of the result, or unseat if declared elected, any candidate who is found to be in breach of regulations 4 or 7, but shall not exercise such power without first offering any such candidate the right to make representation, and having regard thereto.
 9. All contested elections shall be conducted by secret ballot and the single transferable vote. Counts shall be conducted in accordance with the current edition of the Electoral Reform Society's publication *How to Conduct an Election by the Single Transferable Vote*. If the Specified Proportions of men and women are not elected by the operation of the above rules, the Returning Officer shall conduct such further counts as he or she considers necessary and declare elected those members of the under-represented sex and declare not elected those members of the over-represented sex who would or would not have been elected to committees with such larger and smaller numbers of members as would cause the correct number of that sex to be elected.
 10. Casual vacancies occurring shall be filled by recounting the original ballot papers in the election, passing over any preferences for any candidate causing a vacancy. If necessary, further counts shall be conducted using the principles set out in regulation 9 to ensure that all candidates originally elected so remain and that the Specified Proportions of men and women are maintained.
 11. Any Party member may lodge, in writing, a formal complaint of infringement of election regulations forthwith upon becoming aware of any alleged infringement and not more than 21 days after the declaration. The written complaint should be addressed to the Acting Returning Officer and specify in detail the nature of the infringement. The Returning Officer shall then decide, in full consultation with the Acting Returning Officer, whether there is sufficient evidence and grounds to uphold the complaint, but shall not do so without offering any candidate concerned the right to make representations, and having regard thereto.
 12. Appeals against decisions of the Returning Officer must be referred to the Federal Appeals Panel within 14 days of the decision. For the purposes of appeals under these regulations the Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel shall not act as a member of the Federal Appeals Panel, and other Panel members shall appoint one of their number as Acting Chair.
 13. If a complaint is made prior to the declaration of the result, the Returning Officer shall have the power to postpone such declaration until the determination of such complaint or, where an appeal is made against his decision, until the determination of such appeal.
 14. (a) These Regulations shall be used for the biennial elections to the Federal Executive, Federal Conference Committee, Federal Policy Committee, International Relations Committee and ELDR Delegation.

(b) They shall also be used for the election of Principal Councilor Representatives on the Federal Executive and the Federal Policy Committee except section three shall read:
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Nominations shall be submitted by any two Principal Councillors with valid membership and must be accompanied by the written consent of the candidate

LEADERSHIP ELECTION REGULATIONS⁴

1. The Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel shall be the Returning Officer. The Chief Executive shall be Acting Returning Officer.
2. The electorate for the purpose of the election shall be those members with current membership of the Liberal Democrats on the closing date for nominations, including those members whose subscriptions were due not more than three months before the closing date.
3. The sections of the membership register containing the names, addresses and telephone numbers of members will be released in electronic version to each candidate subject to the candidate signing a data protection statement.
4. (a) The timetable for the election shall be no shorter than 8 weeks and no longer than 13 weeks. It shall contain a minimum of 15 days for nominations to be collected which must be on the official forms provided by the Acting Returning Officer for the specific election and available from the day following the setting of the timetable by the Federal Executive. It shall provide for at least 21 days between the close of nominations and the despatch of ballot papers and at least 21 days for the return of ballot papers.

(b) The Acting Returning Officer should co-ordinate arrangements for party member hustings events via the states and regions with a view to balancing the competing demands for media coverage of the campaign, parliamentary and other duties. Other party bodies may only hold events inviting candidates (or their representatives) for hustings type events with the prior agreement of the Acting Returning Officer. Official party communications channels may only be used to promote hustings events approved by the Acting Returning Officer. Responsibility for organising and paying for any hustings event shall lie with the hosting organisation, but the Acting Returning Officer will assist in publicising official hustings events via the party's web-site, e.mail communications, Liberal Democrat News etc.
5. After acquiring the necessary nominations for candidacy, each candidate may nominate an agent for his or her campaign. A candidate who fails to nominate an agent will be deemed his or her own agent.
6. Nominations from the Parliamentary Party shall not include the candidate themselves and no member of the Parliamentary Party may sign more than one nomination paper. A nomination will be rejected if it depends upon the signature of an MP who has signed a previously submitted nomination form for another candidate standing in the election.
7. Federal Party employees shall maintain strict neutrality from the opening date for declaration of candidacy. It is recommended that employees of state parties, SAO's and any other relevant employing bodies shall also maintain such neutrality.

⁴ As amended September 2006

8. Party Officers, acting in their capacity as officers at federal, state, regional and local level, are expected, as far as possible, to give equal opportunities and fair balance to all candidates.
 9. The provision of food, drink or entertainment by or on behalf of the candidates, and any other form of treating, will not be allowed.
 10. The Federal Executive shall set a spending limit for election expenses, not including travel or subsistence, for each leadership candidate, when they set the timetable for the election. No candidate, or his agent, shall exceed this limit in the production of publicity material and all other expenditures connected with the campaign. All donations above £200 must comply with the provisions of Schedule 7 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.
 11.
 - (a) All publicity material produced in paper or electronic form for or on behalf of a candidate shall bear his or her agent's imprint including a full postal address. Any email messages sent out for or on behalf of a candidate for the purposes of publicising their candidacy shall also include a standard form of words provided by the Returning Officer specifying how the recipient of the message may opt out of future messages.
 - (b) Each candidate shall be responsible for supplying material that verifies, to the satisfaction of the Acting Returning Officer, any statement in his or her personal election address claiming that he or she is endorsed by any individual or organisation. Such material must accompany the candidate's personal election address artwork.
 - (c) Each candidate shall be entitled to include in the mailing of ballot papers a personal election address covering up to two sides of A4 paper, or A5 in the event of there being more than three candidates, printed by and at the expense of the Federal Party. Election address artwork in camera ready form must reach the Acting Returning Officer at an address and by a date to be notified.
 - (d) The published personal election address may be reproduced in whatever format is decided by the Returning Officer so long as the minimum coverage provided for in regulation 11(b) is met.
 - (e) The Returning Officer may carry out electronic communications to facilitate the election and send out e-mail communications on behalf of the candidates in the election.
 12. No material published or circulated in paper or electronic form under regulations 10, 11 or 12 shall defame by name or implication any other candidate and no candidate shall so defame any other candidate in the course of personal canvassing.
 13. Any party publication whether in paper or electronic form shall give, as far as possible, equal coverage and a fair balance to all candidates.
 14. The election shall be conducted by secret ballot and the single transferable vote. Counts shall be conducted in accordance with the current edition of the Electoral Reform Society's publication 'How to conduct an election by the single transferable
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vote'. The election count may be scrutinised by the candidate, their agents and one other personal representative and shall be open to any party member, subject to capacity of the venue.

15. Each candidate and their agent shall complete and lodge with the Acting Returning Officer an election expenses return form. The form must have attached receipts or invoices for all expenditure and must be lodged with the Acting Returning Officer by midday on the 35th day after the declaration of the election result. The Acting Returning Officer will hold the expenses returns of each candidate on file and these may be examined by any party member. The expenses form shall also contain the necessary information to prove compliance with schedule 7 of the PPERA 2000.
 16. At the completion of the Election any candidate who needs to make a report to the Electoral Commission shall do so in consultation with the Party's PPERA Compliance Officer.
 17. The Returning Officer shall have the power to disqualify before declaration of the result, or unseat if declared elected, any candidate who:
 - (a) has brought the party into disrepute during the campaign or where the Returning Officer has clear evidence (e.g. from bankruptcy or financial embarrassment) of this happening in the near future; or
 - (b) is found to be in breach of regulations 3, 9, 10, 12 or 15.
 18. Any party member may lodge, in writing, a formal complaint of infringement of election regulations at any time up to 21 days after the declaration. The written complaint should be addressed to the Acting Returning Officer and specify in detail the nature of the infringement. The Returning Officer shall then decide, in full consultation with the Acting Returning Officer, whether there is sufficient evidence and grounds to uphold the complaint.
 19. Appeals against decisions of the Returning Officer must be referred to the Federal Appeals Panel within 14 days of the decision. For the purposes of Appeals under these regulations the Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel shall not act as a member of the Federal Appeals Panel, and the other Panel members shall appoint one of their number as Acting Chair.
 20. These regulations will be reviewed by the Federal Executive no later than six months after any Leadership Election.
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PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS REGULATIONS⁵

1. The Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel shall be the Returning Officer. The Chief Executive shall be Acting Returning Officer.
2. The electorate for the purpose of the election shall be those members with current membership of the Liberal Democrats on the closing date for nominations, including those members whose subscriptions were due not more than three months before the closing date.
3. The membership registers, locally and nationally, are confidential and will not be released for the purposes of the election.
4. The timetable for the election shall be no shorter than 7 weeks and no longer than 12 weeks. It shall contain a minimum of 15 days for nominations to be collected and at least 14 days between the close of nominations and the despatch of ballot papers.
5. After acquiring the necessary nominations for candidacy, each candidate may nominate an agent for his or her campaign. A candidate who fails to nominate an agent will be deemed his or her own agent.
6. Federal Party employees shall maintain strict neutrality from the opening date for declaration of candidacy. It is recommended that employees of state parties, SAOs and any other relevant employing bodies shall also maintain such neutrality.
7. Party Officers, acting in their capacity as officers at federal, state, regional and local level, are expected, as far as possible, to give equal opportunities and fair balance to all candidates.
8. The provision of food, drink or entertainment by or on behalf of the candidates, and any other form of treating, will not be allowed.
9. The Federal Executive shall agree a spending limit for election expenses, not including travel or subsistence expenses, when setting the timetable for the election for each presidential candidate. No candidate, or his agent, shall exceed this limit in the production of publicity material and all other expenditures connected with the campaign. All donations above £200 must comply with the provisions of Schedule 7 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.
10. (a) All publicity material produced in paper or electronic form for or on behalf of a candidate shall bear his or her agent's imprint including a full postal address. Any email messages sent out for or on behalf of a candidate for the purposes of publicising their candidacy shall also include a standard form of words provided by the Returning Officer specifying how the recipient of the message may opt out of future messages.

(b) Each candidate shall be responsible for supplying material that verifies, to the satisfaction of the Acting Returning Officer, any statement in his or her personal election address claiming that he or she is endorsed by any individual or organisation. Such material must accompany the candidate's personal election address artwork.

⁵ As amended September 2006

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- (c) Each candidate shall be entitled to include in the mailing of ballot papers a personal election address covering up to two sides of A4 paper, or A5 in the event of there being more than three candidates, printed by and at the expense of the Federal Party. Election address artwork in camera ready form must reach the Acting Returning Officer at an address and by a date to be notified.
- (d) The published personal election address may be reproduced in whatever format is decided by the Returning Officer so long as the minimum coverage provided in regulation 10(c) is met.
- (e) The Returning Officer may carry out electronic communications to facilitate the election and send out electronic communications on behalf of the candidates in the election.
11. No material published or circulated in paper or electronic form under regulations 8 or 9 shall defame by name or implication any other candidate and no candidate shall so defame any other candidate in the course of personal canvassing.
12. Any party publication whether in paper or electronic form shall give, as far as possible, equal coverage and a fair balance to all candidates.
13. The election shall be conducted by secret ballot and the single transferable vote. Counts shall be conducted in accordance with the current edition of the Electoral Reform Society's publication 'How to conduct an election by the single transferable vote'. The election count may be scrutinised by the candidate, their agents and one other personal representative and shall be open to any party member, subject to capacity of the venue.
14. Each candidate and their agent shall complete and lodge with the Acting Returning Officer an election expenses return form. The form must have attached receipts or invoices for all expenditure and must be lodged with the Acting Returning Officer by midday on the 35th day after the declaration of the election result. The Acting Returning Officer will hold the expenses returns of each candidate on file and these may be examined by any party member. The expenses form shall also contain the necessary information to prove compliance with schedule 7 of the PPERA 2000.
15. At the Completion of the Election any candidate who needs to make a report to the Electoral Commission shall do so in consultation with the Party's PPERA Compliance Officer
16. The Returning Officer shall have the power to disqualify before declaration of the result, or unseat if declared elected, any candidate who:
- (a) has brought the party into disrepute during the campaign or where the Returning Officer has clear evidence (e.g. from bankruptcy or financial embarrassment) of this happening in the near future; or
- (b) is found to be in breach of regulations 3, 7, 8, 11 or 14.
17. Any party member may lodge, in writing, a formal complaint of infringement of election regulations at any time up to 21 days after the declaration. The written complaint should be addressed to the Acting Returning Officer and specify in detail the nature of the infringement.
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The Returning Officer shall then decide, in full consultation with the Acting Returning Officer, whether there is sufficient evidence and grounds to uphold the complaint.

18. Appeals against decisions of the Returning Officer must be referred to the Federal Appeals Panel within 14 days of the decision. For the purposes of Appeals under these regulations the Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel shall not act as a member of the Federal Appeals Panel, and the other Panel members shall appoint one of their number as Acting Chair.
 19. These regulations will be reviewed by the Federal Executive no later than six months after any Presidential Election.
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The Constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England

As amended, English Council, 11 July 2009

The Constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England

1. Nature and Objects
 2. Membership
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 4. Regional Parties
 5. The English Council and the English Council Executive
 6. Functions of the English Council and the English Council Executive
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 9. Resolution of Conflicts
- English Council Standing Orders
- Membership Rules
- Model Constitution for Local Parties
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- Rules for the Selection of Parliamentary Candidates
- Appendices
- A. Rules for the Conduct of Appeals to Panels of the English Candidates Committee
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 - F. Rules for the Conduct of Appeals to Panels of the English Candidates' Committee: appeal against an assessment panel grading
 - G. Protocols agreed by English Candidates Committee
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ARTICLE 1: Nature and Objects

- 1.1 The Liberal Democrats in England are part of the federal structure of the Liberal Democrats as set forth in Article 2 of the Party's Constitution ("the Federal Constitution"). The Liberal Democrats in England shall be a federation of the Regional Parties in England and shall be governed both by these Articles and by the Federal Constitution.
- 1.2 The objects of the Liberal Democrats in England shall be:
- (a) to seek to achieve the objects set forth in the Preamble to the Federal Constitution; and
 - (b) for that purpose, to secure the election of Members of Parliament and the European Parliament from constituencies in England and of members of local and other elected public authorities in England.
- 1.3 The functions of the Liberal Democrats in England shall be:
- (a) to exercise and perform the specific powers and duties conferred upon them by these Articles;
 - (b) to act as a co-ordinating and representative body on behalf of the Regional Parties in England; and
 - (c) to do such other things as may help to achieve their objects.
- 1.4 These Articles may only be altered, and consent may only be given to any alteration to the relative powers and functions of the federal institutions of the Party and the State Parties, by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting at a meeting of the English Council and any such alteration must have been submitted in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council and notified to Regional and Local Parties at least eight weeks in advance. Alterations to these Articles may be proposed by the English Council Executive and by any other body or persons authorised by Standing Orders to propose motions for debate at meetings of the English Council.
- 1.5 Subject to Article 1.6 the Liberal Democrats in England shall determine the policy of the Party on matters affecting England which fall outside the remit of the Federal Party under the Federal Constitution and are not of merely local or regional concern.
- 1.6 The English Council may, by amendment to these Articles, establish a structure for the determination of policy. Until such a structure is established the Liberal Democrats in England shall confer their powers under Article 1.5 on the Federal Party.
- 1.7 The provisions of Articles 2.4 and 2.5 of the Federal Constitution and the election rules made under that Constitution shall apply to all elections within the English Party.
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ARTICLE 2: Membership

- 2.1 Membership of the Liberal Democrats in England shall be acquired through an enrolling body, being:
- (a) an English Local Party in the place in which the applicant lives, works or studies (or, with its consent, another Local Party); or
 - (b) a Specified Associated Organisation representing youth and/or students in England.

An applicant shall become a member on acceptance by the enrolling body, payment of the requisite subscription and registration.

- 2.2 A member shall, in addition to being a member of the Liberal Democrats in England,
- (a) if enrolled under Article 2.1 (a), be a member of the enrolling Local Party;
 - (b) if enrolled under Article 2.1 (b), be entitled to join the Local Party in a place in England in which the member lives, works or studies (or, with its consent, another Local Party);
 - (c) be a member of the Regional Party of the region in which the relevant Local Party is situated;
 - (d) subject to the Federal Constitution, be a member of the Federal Party.

- 2.3 No person may simultaneously be a member of more than one Local Party. A member may re-register as of right in a different Local Party which would be an appropriate enrolling body under Article 2.1 (a). A member who ceases to live, work or study within the area of a Local Party may retain membership of that Local Party with its consent. A member who is an MP, MEP, prospective Westminster or European parliamentary candidate or member of a local authority may re-register as of right in a relevant Local Party.

- 2.4 A person who is a member of another State Party or is on the register of members resident outside Great Britain maintained by the Federal Party may re-register as of right under Article 2.3 on surrendering membership of any State or Local Party outside England.

- 2.5 Membership may be refused by an enrolling body in accordance with the procedure laid out in the Membership Rules on one or more of the following grounds:
- (a) material disagreement, evidenced by conduct, with the fundamental values and objectives of the Party;
 - (b) the admission of the applicant would be likely to bring the Party into disrepute;
 - (c) membership of another political party in Great Britain.

- 2.6 Membership may be revoked in accordance with the procedure laid out in the Membership Rules by the Liberal Democrats in England or a Regional Party or Local Party (or, where appropriate, a Specified Associated Organisation which acted as the enrolling body) on one or more of the following grounds:
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- (a) material disagreement, evidenced by conduct, with the fundamental values and objectives of the Party;
- (b) conduct which has brought, or is likely to bring, the Party into disrepute;
- (c) standing against the candidate of the Party in any election to public office;
- (d) membership of or support for another political party in Great Britain.

The member shall be notified of the reasons why revocation is to be considered.

- 2.7 In the event that one or more of the grounds for membership revocation are established under Article 2.6 above, the Liberal Democrats in England or a Regional Party or Local Party (or where appropriate, the Specified Associated Organisation through which the member holds his or her membership of the Party) may, in accordance with the procedure laid out in the Membership Rules, impose any one or more of the following sanctions,
- (i) Barring the individual concerned from holding or standing for election to any specified Party office or role either permanently, for a specified period, or until satisfactory training has been undertaken by the individual concerned,
 - (ii) Barring the individual concerned from holding or seeking to be elected to any or any specified public office on behalf of the Party either permanently, for a specified period, or until satisfactory training has been undertaken by the individual concerned,
 - (iii) Barring the individual concerned from having access to data from Membership Services either permanently, for a specified period, or until satisfactory training has been undertaken by the individual concerned,
 - (iv) Reprimanding the individual concerned.
- 2.8 Where revocation of membership is being considered, the body considering it may in accordance with the procedure laid out in the Membership Rules suspend membership if there are urgent reasons for doing so or if Article 2.6 (c) applies.
- 2.9 A person whose membership has been refused or revoked under these Articles or under the Federal Constitution or the constitution of another State Party shall not be admitted or readmitted to membership without the consent of the Regional Party and Local Party of which that person would then become a member.
- 2.10 The Membership Rules shall provide that there shall be a right of appeal against any decision to refuse or revoke membership to the English Appeals Panel.
- 2.11 The Liberal Democrats in England shall maintain a register of its members and shall be responsible for the renewal of membership, but the English Council may make arrangements with the Federal Party for the performance of these functions by the Federal Party. Subject to any such arrangements, membership subscriptions shall be remitted to the Liberal Democrats in England and shall be divided in accordance with Article 6. Membership will automatically lapse if the renewal subscription is three months in arrears.
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- 2.12 The Liberal Democrats in England shall make available to the Federal Party all information on its register of members. The Liberal Democrats in England shall make available to Regional and Local Parties and the Specified Associated Organisation representing youth and/or students all information on its register relating to persons who appear to be members of that Regional or Local Party or the Specified Associated Organisation representing youth and/or students (including lapsed members) and may make further information available to them. The Liberal Democrats in England may make any information on its register available to any other body for the proper purposes of the Party. The Liberal Democrats in England and Regional and Local Parties and the Specified Associated Organisation representing youth and/or students shall not use any such information except for the proper purposes of the Party.
- 2.13 The English Council may make and vary Membership Rules to give effect to or supplement the provisions of this Article.

ARTICLE 3: Local Parties

- 3.1 The Regional Parties shall ensure that Local Parties are formed throughout England.
 - 3.2 The minimum membership of a Local Party shall be 30. If the membership remains below that level for a continuous period of six months, the Local Party shall be suspended and Article 4.9 shall apply until its membership reaches 30.
 - 3.3 Each Local Party shall contain one parliamentary constituency, save that the Local Parties or (where there is no Local Party or the Local Party is suspended) the members in two or more adjacent parliamentary constituencies within the area of the same Regional Party or the members in a London borough may combine to form a single Local Party. Such a combination requires the consent of general meetings of the existing Local Parties or (where there is no Local Party or the Local Party is suspended) a general meeting of the registered members in the relevant constituency summoned by the Regional Party.
 - 3.4 All members of a Local Party which contains more than one constituency may vote on the selection of a prospective candidate for any constituency within the Local Party, except that the Constitution of a Local Party containing more than one parliamentary constituency all of which have more than 30 members may provide for the selection of prospective parliamentary candidates to be by the members registered in each individual constituency.
 - 3.5 A Local Party containing more than one constituencies may divide into new Local Parties, provided that none of them will have less than 30 members. Such division shall require the consent of separate general meetings of the members registered in the area of each proposed new Local Party.
 - 3.6 Regional Parties shall ensure that new Local Parties are formed whenever it is necessary to replace the existing structure of Local Parties in consequence of changes to the boundaries of parliamentary constituencies and shall decide on any consequential disputes.
 - 3.7 A Regional Party may direct that a proposal to form a combined Local Party under Article 3.3 or to divide one under Article 3.5 shall take effect despite the failure of one of the general meetings to approve it if in the opinion of the Regional Party this is necessary in the interests of the Party as a whole. There shall be a right of appeal to the English Council against any such direction.
 - 3.8 For the purpose of (a) Parliamentary elections in a parliamentary constituency divided between Local Parties and (b) elections for a local authority divided between more than one Local Party, the Local Parties concerned shall form appropriate joint arrangements to co-ordinate candidate approval and selection, campaigning and publicity and to be responsible for the formulation of policy on local issues for that election. In the case of Parliamentary elections the joint committee shall have the power to raise a levy from the relevant Local Parties. Where the Local Parties fail to
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form appropriate joint arrangements, the Regional Party or the English State Party shall have the power to investigate and impose any arrangements that it sees fit.

- 3.9 Each Local Party or Local Parties making joint arrangements under 3.8 above shall adopt a procedure for the approval of candidates for local authority elections. That procedure shall be uniform across the area of the local authority. It shall apply to those seeking election and re-election to the authority concerned. It shall apply to every election to every authority save for any parish or town council election that the relevant Regional Party agrees to exempt. It shall be also open to a Region to agree a blanket exemption for all parish and/or town councils or to stipulate the approvals process shall apply to one or more of them specifically. It shall comply with the following principles:
- (a) No candidate may be sanctioned by a Liberal Democrat Delegated Nominating Officer unless they s/he has been approved by a panel of Party members appointed for the purpose. The panel shall consist both of Liberal Democrat Party members who are not members of the local authority concerned, one of whom shall take the chair, and Liberal Democrat members of the local authority concerned, if any. The panel need not always comprise the same people,
 - (b) No person may be approved as a Liberal Democrat candidate unless they are a member of the Liberal Democrats,
 - (c) Approval shall be specific to each authority and shall last for a maximum of four years from the date of approval,
 - (d) As a condition precedent of approval, prospective candidates shall be required to agree to make a financial contribution towards Liberal Democrat Party activities in the event of their election to the relevant authority. The level of contribution shall be calculated in the same manner across the area of the authority concerned. No candidate shall be required to make a contribution where doing so would cause hardship and, for these purposes, hardship shall be widely construed. The procedure shall contain a mechanism by which cases of hardship are to be identified.

Where it appears to the relevant Regional Party or the English State Party that such a procedure has not been adopted or, having been adopted, is not being followed, then a procedure may be imposed and/or a Party member appointed to administer the procedure and ensure that it is followed.

- 3.10 Each Local Party or Local Parties making joint arrangements under 3.8 above shall adopt a procedure for the selection of candidates for local authority elections. The procedure shall comply with the following principles:
- (a) No person may be selected as a Liberal Democrat candidate for the purposes of any election to an authority to which the provisions at 3.9 above applies unless they have satisfied the procedure agreed under that clause,
 - (b) All selections carried out under the procedure shall be carried out in a fair, impartial, and democratic manner,
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- (c) Except where it is impossible because of there being insufficient time in the case of a by-election, the selection shall be by secret ballot in which all eligible members may vote.

Where it appears to the relevant Regional Party or the English State Party that such a procedure has not been adopted or, having been adopted, is not being followed, then a procedure may be imposed and/or a Party member appointed to administer the procedure and ensure that it is followed.

- 3.11 Each Local Party shall take all reasonable and practicable steps to support the activities of Council Groups covering any or all of its geographical area and which have been recognised under Article 8.
- 3.12 The objects of a Local Party shall include to be the successor to the Former Parties (as defined by the Federal Constitution) in its area and to promote and support the values and objects of the Party in the constituency or constituencies which it contains and in particular, through its members:
- (a) to secure the election of Liberal Democrats as Members of Parliament, UK Members of the European Parliament and members of local and other elected public authorities;
 - (b) to admit and actively recruit new members of the Party and encourage members to renew their membership;
 - (c) to participate in the formulation of the policy of the Party;
 - (d) to play a full part in the democratic processes of the Party;
 - (e) to play a full part in the campaigning activities of the Party at all levels;
 - (f) to campaign and work with local people to achieve the objectives set out in the Preamble to the Federal Constitution; and
 - (g) to help all local people, without regard to party or any other factor, to secure their rights and to protect them against oppression.

Local Parties may adopt additional objects which are not inconsistent with the Federal Constitution or these Articles.

- 3.13 Each Local Party shall have a Constitution. The English Council shall publish and may from time to time vary a Model Constitution for Local Parties.
- 3.14 The Constitution of a Local Party must comply with the following principles:
- (a) all elections shall be in accordance with election rules made under the Federal Constitution;
 - (b) there must be an annual general meeting, and provision for the calling of other general meetings by the Executive Committee and by requisition of the members;
 - (c) proper accounts and accounting records must be kept as required by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, and must be audited and delivered to the Election Commission as required by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and submitted with an independent report to the annual general meeting for approval;
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- (d) there must be an executive committee, which should include both men and women and at least one person under the age of 26, and which must report to the annual general meeting on its activities;
- (e) there must be a democratic process for the selection of candidates for local authority elections;
- (f) the Constitution of the Local Party may be amended only by a properly convened and quorate general meeting by the vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting;
- (g) it must ensure compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.

3.15 A Local Party may adopt a Constitution which is not in the model form, or is in the model form subject to variations. Any Constitution not wholly in the model form and any amendment to a Constitution shall be subject to approval by the relevant Regional Party. Such approval shall be withheld if, in the opinion of the Regional Party, any provision of the Constitution or amendment conflicts with the Federal Constitution or these Articles or rules made thereunder, or is unworkable or defective, or omits or deletes provisions necessary to the proper functioning of the Local Party. There shall be a right of appeal to the English Appeals Panel against the withholding of approval on the ground that it was unreasonably withheld.

3.16 Any person who is employed by or provides services to a Local Party for payment shall be appointed only by the executive committee of the Local Party and paid only through the Local party's funds or out of funds provided for that purpose by the Liberal Democrats in England, a Regional Party or the Federal Party.

ARTICLE 4: Regional Parties

- 4.1 Regional Parties shall be constituted throughout England.
- 4.2 No principal local authority and no Local Party shall be divided between Regional Parties.
- 4.3 Subject to Article 4.2, Regional Parties may be divided or merged or the areas of Regional Parties may be altered with the consent of the relevant Regional Conferences.

The English Council may direct that a proposal to divide, merge or alter the areas of Regional Parties shall take effect despite the failure of one of the Regional Conferences to approve it if in the opinion of the English Council this is necessary in the interests of the Party as a whole. There shall be a right of appeal to the Appeals Panel for England against any such direction.

- 4.4 The objects of Regional Parties shall include:
- (a) to seek to achieve the objects set forth in the Preamble to the Federal Constitution;
 - (b) for that purpose, to secure the election of Members of Parliament and the European Parliament from constituencies in the Region and of members of local and other elected public authorities in the Region;
 - (c) to participate in the formulation of party policy and to play a full part in the democratic processes of the Party;
 - (d) to play a full part in the campaigning activity of the Party at all levels; and
 - (e) to assist Local Parties within the Region.
- 4.5 Regional Parties shall have the power and the duty:
- (a) to make policy on issues which relate exclusively to the Region at meetings of the Regional Conference;
 - (b) to discuss other policy issues on a consultative basis at such conference;
 - (c) if thought fit, to prepare and publish a regional manifesto for General Elections, provided that the contents of that manifesto are consistent with the manifesto of the Federal Party;
 - (d) to work with other relevant bodies in the Party, including the SAOs, to encourage Local Parties to co-ordinate campaigning, publicity and policy-making for elections to local authorities and the Westminster and European Parliaments and between elections;
 - (e) to promote the political image of the Party within the Region;
 - (f) to stimulate and co-ordinate Party activities within the Region and to undertake regional campaigns;
 - (g) to be responsible for European Parliamentary elections within the Region;
 - (h) to make rules for the approval and selection of candidates for Regional Assemblies, which shall provide for the selection to be by a ballot in which all members of the Party in the relevant electoral area have the opportunity of voting;
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- (i) to develop, maintain and implement a strategic plan for the Region; and
- (j) to undertake such other functions as may be appropriate or the Local Parties in the Region may vest in the Regional Party.

4.6 Regional Parties shall have the following powers and duties in relation to Local Parties within the Region:

- (a) to ensure the adherence of Local Parties to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, these Articles and the Federal Constitution, and to their own respective constitutions;
- (b) to review any proposed new constitution for a Local Party or any proposed amendment to its existing constitution to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the Federal Constitution and these Articles;
- (c) to investigate the affairs of a Local Party if there is reason to believe that the Local Party is not adhering to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, these Articles or the Federal (or its own) Constitution or that events in connection with the affairs of the Local Party which are or may be seriously detrimental to the Party have taken place or are likely to take place or if the Regional Party is requested by the Local Party itself to carry out such an investigation;
- (d) to implement so far as may be thought fit any recommendations resulting from the investigation and for such purpose to act on behalf and in the name of any Local Party (or any organ thereof);
- (e) to suspend a Local Party if the Regional Party is satisfied that the Local Party is not adhering to these Articles or the Federal (or its own) Constitution or that events in connection with the affairs of the Local Party which are or may be seriously detrimental to the Party have taken place or are likely to take place if preventive action is not taken; and
- (f) to order that a specified Local Party officer vacate his or her post if it is satisfied that the officer concerned is not adhering to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, these Articles, the Federal Constitution or to their own respective constitution, or that by their actions, events are occurring or about to occur in connection with the affairs of the Local Party which are or may be seriously detrimental to the Party. The Regional Party may direct either that there is to be a by-election for that post, in which case the previous incumbent would be ineligible to stand and the Region must nominate a Returning Officer, or it may appoint a suitably qualified member of the Party (but not necessarily the Local Party) to the role. Such power shall not be exercised without the Local Party and the affected Local Party officer being informed of what is proposed and offered a reasonable opportunity to reply or to take corrective action.

4.7 For the purpose of any investigation under Article 4.6:

- (a) the Regional Party may appoint one or more persons to act as investigators, provided that at least one of such persons shall be a member of the Regional Executive Committee (who shall not take part in any subsequent proceedings of the Committee relating to action to be taken in consequence of the investigation) and none shall be a member of the Local Party concerned;
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- (b) the Regional Party shall have such access as it requires to the books and records of the Local Party concerned; and
 - (c) the Local Party concerned shall be informed of any allegations against it and given a reasonable opportunity to reply or to take corrective action.
- 4.8 There shall be a right of appeal to the English Appeals Panel against the suspension of a Local Party or the ordering of a Local Party Officer to vacate his or her post on the ground that the suspension was unreasonable. The suspension or order to vacate post shall take effect pending the appeal.
- 4.9 During the suspension of a Local Party, the Regional Party shall:
- (a) ensure, in consultation with local members, that a prospective candidate is in place for any parliamentary election, unless the Regional Party is satisfied that this is not appropriate for the time being;
 - (b) take such steps as may be appropriate, in consultation with local members, to organise the contesting of local authority elections;
 - (c) exercise the functions of the Local Party under Article 3;
 - (d) summon and supervise meetings of members to form a new Local Party or reconstitute the Local Party as soon as possible; and
 - (e) hold and manage the assets of the Local Party for the benefit of the members of the Local Party.
- 4.10 A Regional Party shall be financed by the share of subscription income to which it is entitled under Article 6 and any other funds which it raises for its own purposes.
- 4.11 A Regional Conference shall be held in each Region at least once in each year, subject to postponement in the event of conflict with a General Election.
- 4.12 The constitution of a Regional Party shall provide, in relation to their Regional Conference:
- (a) for the composition of the Conference to be representative;
 - (b) for representatives of Local Parties to be elected simultaneously with and by the same method as their representatives at the Federal Conference, and to be not less in number;
 - (c) for the election of representatives of the Specified Associated Organisations representing youth and/or students, on a basis comparable with that of the Federal Conference;
 - (d) for provision to be made for the representation of both sexes on the same basis as the Federal Conference;
 - (e) for the representation of members of Liberal Democrat Groups on principal local authorities in the Region;
 - (f) that all members in the Region who are not representatives shall be encouraged to attend as observers and, subject to a power for the Regional Conference Committee to impose restrictions, shall be entitled to speak;
 - (g) for the election by the representatives of a Chair, other Officers and members of the Executive of the Region, a Candidates Committee, which shall include persons who have contested a Parliamentary or European Parliamentary
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- election on behalf of the Party within the previous ten years, and a Chair of the Region's Candidates Committee (who shall be one of the Officers of the Region);
- (h) for the election of representatives of the Region on the English Council by the representatives; and
 - (i) for the Region to be represented on the English Council Executive by one of its Officers or Executive Committee members or by a person elected by the Regional Conference representatives (who must be a member of the English Council).
- 4.13 The Regional Conference shall determine the division of subscription income remitted by the Liberal Democrats in England (as determined under Article 6) between Local Parties and the Regional Party.
- 4.14 Each Regional Party shall adopt and may from time to time amend a constitution. Such constitution shall comply with the requirements of the Federal Constitution and these Articles.
- 4.15 The constitution of a Regional Party shall comply with the following rules:
- (a) the Party shall have an Executive Committee, of which the Chair of the Region shall be chair ex-officio;
 - (b) proper accounts and accounting records must be kept as required by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, and must be audited and delivered to the Election Commission as required by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and submitted with an independent report to the annual general meeting for approval;
 - (c) the Constitution may be amended only by the vote of at least two-thirds of those voting on a motion for amendment at a Regional Conference; and
 - (d) it must ensure compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.
- 4.16 A Regional Executive Committee shall be responsible, subject to the authority of the Regional Conference, for directing, co-ordinating and implementing the work of the Regional Party. A Regional Executive Committee may express the initial views of the Regional Party on topical issues but such views shall not constitute the policy of the Regional Party.
- 4.17 A Regional Party may seek recognition as a State Party for the purposes of the Federal Constitution. Such process shall be treated as an alteration to the constitution of the Regional Party and to these Articles.
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ARTICLE 5: The English Council and the English Council Executive

- 5.1 The English Council (EC) shall consist of:
- (a) the Chair of each Regional Party and the Specified Associated Organisation representing youth and/or students in England; and
 - (b) members elected annually by each Region and by the Specified Associated Organisations representing youth and/or students in England on the basis of one member of the EC for each 500 members or part thereof of the relevant Region or Organisation.
- 5.2 Subject to the provision of these Articles and the Federal Constitution, the EC shall be the sovereign body of the Liberal Democrats in England.
- 5.3 The EC shall normally meet at least twice a year. One such meeting shall constitute the Annual General Meeting of the Liberal Democrats in England to which an annual report and the accounts of the Liberal Democrats in England shall be presented. Meetings may be summoned on the requisition of the English Council Executive, the Council itself or 30 members of the EC. A meeting may be cancelled by the English Council Executive in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.4 The EC shall elect its Chair annually from its members. The Chair shall be the English Vice-President of the Federal Party and the Liberal Democrats in England's representative on the Finance and Administration Committee of the Federal Executive. The Chair shall be eligible for re-election, save that the Chair shall not serve for more than three terms in any five-year period.
- 5.5 The EC shall make standing orders for its proceedings.
- 5.6 There shall be an English Council Executive (ECE), which shall consist of:
- (a) the Chair of the EC, who shall be the Chair of the ECE;
 - (b) one representative of each Region and each Specified Associated Organisation representing youth and/or students in England to be elected or appointed by each Region or organisation in accordance with its constitution;
 - (c) members elected annually by and from the EC, the number of whom shall be equal to the number elected under (b) above;
 - (d) the Treasurer of the EC, who shall be appointed by the ECE (and need not be a member of the EC);
 - (e) the Chair of the English Candidates Committee elected by the EC (but who need not be a member of the EC);
 - (f) one representative of the staff employed by the Liberal Democrats in England elected from time to time by such staff (who shall be entitled to vote only on financial and administrative matters);
 - (g) not more than three further non-voting members as the ECE may co-opt on an annual basis.
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ARTICLE 6: Functions of the English Council and the English Council Executive

6.1 Subject to Article 6.2 (b), the functions of the EC shall be:

- (a) to co-ordinate the activities of the Regional Parties;
- (b) with the agreement of a Regional Party to exercise or provide for the exercise of any of the functions of that Regional Party;
- (c) to act as a mediator in disputes between Regional Parties or between a Local Party and a Regional Party;
- (d) to manage the finances of the Liberal Democrats in England and, as part of that function,
 - i) to negotiate financial arrangements with the Federal Party;
 - ii) to determine the amount of membership income to be remitted to the Regional Parties;
 - iii) to determine service fees to be paid to Local Parties for recruitment and collection of renewal subscriptions;
 - iv) to determine the level of grants to SAOs and other bodies in the Party to carry out work in England;
 - v) if thought fit, to borrow money for the purposes of the Liberal Democrats in England and give security for borrowings;
 - vi) if thought fit, to guarantee and give security for borrowings by any Regional or Local Party in England;
 - vii) to raise funds by such means as may be thought fit, but so that no funds may be raised in ways which may conflict with fund-raising by the Federal Party without consultation with the Federal Treasurer;
- (e) to elect the representatives of the Liberal Democrats in England to any committee or other body established by or under the Federal Constitution which includes such representatives or to any Joint State Committee;
- (f) to receive reports from the Federal Executive and any other such bodies as are appropriate;
- (g) to receive reports from the English Candidates Committee, which shall include any revisions to the rules for selection and adoption of candidates;
- (h) to discharge other functions of the EC or the Liberal Democrats in England under these Articles;
- (i) to do anything else which may enable the EC to discharge its functions more effectively.

6.2 The functions of the ECE shall be:

- (a) to organise meetings of the EC;
 - (b) subject to Article 6.3, to discharge the functions of the EC between meetings of the EC;
 - (c) to make proposals to the EC for the discharge of functions of the EC;
 - (d) to discharge any functions of the EC which the EC has directed or authorised the ECE to carry out;
 - (e) to keep proper accounts and accounting records of the Liberal Democrats in England in accordance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums
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Act 2000, to audit and deliver them to the Election Commission as required by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Acts 2000 and to present them to the EC;

- (f) to be responsible for the employment of staff to carry out the functions of the EC and the ECE;
- (g) to report on its activities to each meeting of the EC.

6.3 The ECE shall not, without the express authority of the EC, at any time:

- (a) make a determination under Article 6.1 (d) (ii) or (iii);
- (b) elect representatives under Article 6.1 (e) except on an interim basis until the next meeting of the EC;
- (c) adopt membership rules under Article 2.12;
- (d) give any direction under Article 4.3;
- (e) express views on policy on behalf of the EC;
- (f) borrow or guarantee money in excess of a limit determined by the EC;
- (g) make standing orders for the EC;
- (h) exercise the powers of the EC under Article 6.4.

6.4 The ECE may, if it is satisfied that a Regional Party is not adhering to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Acts 2000, these Articles or the Federal (or its own Constitution) or that events in connection with the affairs of the Regional Party which are or may be seriously detrimental to the Party have taken place or are likely to take place if the power under this Article is not exercised, direct that all the Officers and members of the Executive Committee of that Regional Party shall forthwith vacate office. This power may only be exercised by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at a meeting of the EC on the proposal of the ECE. The ECE shall not make any such proposal without informing the Regional Party concerned that it is considering doing so and giving the Regional Party concerned a reasonable opportunity to reply or to take corrective action.

6.5 Where the EC exercises its power under Article 6.4:

- (a) the ECE shall forthwith convene a meeting of the Regional Conference of the Region concerned for the purpose of electing Officers and an Executive Committee;
 - (b) the ECE shall appoint a Returning Officer for such elections;
 - (c) subject to paragraph (b), such elections shall be conducted in accordance with the Constitution of the Regional Party;
 - (d) the Officers and members of the Executive Committee who have been directed to vacate office shall be eligible for re-election;
 - (e) the ECE shall exercise or provide for the exercise of the functions of the Regional Party pending the election of new Officers and Executive Committee members, and in particular shall hold and manage the assets of the Regional Party pending such elections.
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ARTICLE 7: Parliamentary Candidates

7.1 Each Regional Party shall have a Candidates Committee elected by the Regional Party by its internal procedures, which shall include persons who have contested a Parliamentary or European Parliamentary election on behalf of the Party within the previous ten years. Two or more Regional Parties may form a single Regional Candidates Committee.

7.2 There shall be an English Candidates Committee consisting of

- (a) the Chair, who shall be elected annually by the English Council;
- (b) the Chair of each Region's Candidates Committee;
- (c) five ordinary members, who shall be elected by and from the English Council;
- (d) the Chief Whip or one person appointed by the Chief Whip, being a Member of Parliament for a Constituency in England;
- (e) one person appointed by the Parliamentary Candidates Association.

The English Candidates Committee shall, subject to ratification by the English Council, make Standing Orders for the conduct of its business.

7.3 The English Candidates Committee and Regional Candidates Committees shall have the functions set out in Article 11.1 of the Federal Constitution, which they shall exercise under the co-ordination of the Joint States Candidates Committee established under Article 11.2 of the Federal Constitution.

7.4 The Chair of the English Candidates Committee shall be Liberal Democrats in England's representative on the Joint States Candidates Committee but he or she shall have the power to make a substitution if he or she cannot attend a particular meeting of the Joint States Candidates Committee.

7.5 There shall be separate Lists of Approved Candidates in England for Parliamentary and European Parliamentary elections. Applications for inclusion in the Lists shall normally be determined by English Candidates Committee but may be delegated by English Candidates Committee to Regions.

7.6 An applicant whose application is refused may request to be reassessed by the English Candidates Committee and may thereafter appeal to the Appeals Panel pursuant to Article 8, but such an appeal may only be on the grounds that the proper procedures have not been applied correctly and reasonably. On an appeal under Article 8 the reasonable and proper exercise of discretion within the powers of the English Candidates Committee shall not be open to review.

7.7 The English Candidates Committee or a Regional Candidates Committee may remove any person from a List on any of the grounds specified in Article 11 of the Federal Constitution subject to the appeal procedure set out in Article 7.6.

7.8 No person shall be removed from a List without being notified of the grounds upon which the Committee is considering such removal and being given:

- (a) a reasonable time within which to reply and make representations in writing;
and
- (b) a right upon request to a personal hearing before the Committee;

and such person may thereafter appeal to the Appeals Panel pursuant to Article 8.

- 7.9 There shall be rules for the selection and adoption of prospective Parliamentary and European Parliamentary candidates which shall be made and may from time to time be varied by the English Candidates Committee, subject to ratification by the English Council.
 - 7.10 If, after the selection of a prospective parliamentary candidate, boundary changes substantially affecting the related constituency come into force, a new selection shall be held if the Regional Candidates Committee so directs.
 - 7.11 Each Regional Party shall be responsible for ensuring the selection of candidates for elections to the European Parliament from constituencies within its area. If a European Parliamentary constituency covers more than one Region, the Regional Parties concerned shall agree appropriate arrangements to co-ordinate candidate selection, campaigning and publicity.
 - 7.12 Each Regional Party shall be responsible for making rules for the approval and selection of candidates for Regional Assemblies. The English Candidates Committee may make recommendations for procedures to be followed and shall, subject to appeal to the English Appeals Panel under Article 8, adjudicate on any disputes where a Regional Assembly includes areas within two or more Regions.
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ARTICLE 8: Councillors and Recognised Council Groups ⁶

8.1 Each Regional Party shall be responsible for the recognition of Council Groups subject to the provisions of this Article and according to its own internal procedures. A Regional Party may resolve, through its own internal procedures that this Article, or specific sections of it, shall not apply to any parish or town council or shall apply only to designated ones.

8.2 A Council Group of an authority;

- (a) wholly comprising members of the Liberal Democrats who are elected to the authority after having been sanctioned as Liberal Democrat candidates by a Delegated Nominating Officer and properly approved as such under Article 3 or admitted to membership in accordance with 8.13, and
- (b) operating according to written Standing Orders which are in conformity with the constitutions of the Liberal Democrats, and which include the requirement that all group offices shall be filled by open and democratic election by the members of the group,

shall be deemed to be recognised by the relevant Regional Party subject to the provisions of clause 8.12 below. The Regional Party shall maintain a register of such groups and satisfy itself as soon as practicable and in any event no later than 31st July of each year, that each group appearing on the register continues to conform to the definition in this clause.

8.3 Where a Council Group has been recognised under clause 8.2 above, but it becomes apparent to the Regional Party that it no longer meets the relevant definition and has not done so for a period of ten weeks, then the procedure in clause 8.4 below shall be followed.

8.4 Where it appears to a Regional Party that there is a Council Group that fails to meet the definition in clause 8.2 above but which contains one or more members of the Liberal Democrats, the following procedure shall be engaged. The Regional Party, by its internal procedures, shall ascertain the nature of the membership and administration of the relevant Council Group and shall recognise the Council Group if, in the light of those matters and all the circumstances, the Regional Party considers that the Liberal Democrats would not be brought into disrepute thereby. A Region recognising such a group may prohibit it from using solely, as its title, any one or more of the Party's registered names. The position of any Council Group recognised under this clause shall be reviewed by the Region no later than 31st July of each year. The Regional Party shall maintain a register of its decisions made under this clause.

8.5 Any Local Party covered by an authority or any Liberal Democrat member of an authority aggrieved by a decision of the Regional Party to recognise or not to recognise a Council Group (or the failure to reach a decision in respect of a Council

⁶ This Article 8 comes into force at the close of poll on the day of the local elections in May 2010

Group comprising one or more members of the Liberal Democrats) may refer the matter to the English Appeals Panel for a decision on recognition. The English Appeals Panel shall adopt the same test for recognition as that to be applied by a Regional Party under this Article.

- 8.6 The Regional Party shall maintain up-to-date copies of the Standing Orders of all recognised Council Groups which fall within its geographical area. The Regional Party, by its internal procedures, shall ensure that those Standing Orders,
- (a) are fair and democratic,
 - (b) include a mechanism whereby significant disputes which are likely to bring the Liberal Democrats into disrepute if they remain unresolved can be resolved either by the Regional Party or by its appointed delegated body in the first instance.
- 8.7 The English State Party or the relevant Regional Party may decide, by its internal procedures, to de-recognise a formerly recognised Council Group if;
- (a) There is persistent or serious non-adherence on the part of the Council Group either to the Liberal Democrat Federal Party Constitution, the constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England, or its own Standing Orders, or
 - (b) By the actions of the Council Group, events are occurring or about to occur in connection with the affairs of the Council Group which are, or may be, seriously detrimental to the Liberal Democrats.

Such power shall not be exercised without the Council Group being informed of what is proposed and offered a reasonable opportunity to reply or take corrective action. Any member of the Council Group concerned or any Local Party covered by the authority concerned may appeal to the English Appeals Panel against a decision to de-recognise.

- 8.8 Where a member of the Liberal Democrats suspects that matters are occurring that might justify the de-recognition of a Council Group under clause 8.7 above, that member shall report the matter to the relevant Regional Party. The Regional Party, through its own internal procedures, may then take the following action:
- (a) Appoint an investigator, who shall be impartial and neither a member of the authority concerned nor any Local Party within the area covered by the authority, to ascertain the circumstances, take statements from all relevant people, and make out a report to the Regional Party on whether there are grounds for de-recognising the Council Group concerned; and/or
 - (b) Where there appears to be conflict between members of the Council Group or between Liberal Democrat Party members on the authority, appoint a conciliator, who shall be impartial and neither a member of the authority concerned nor any Local Party within the area covered by the authority, to seek to mediate and resolve the conflict and/or,
 - (c) Consider whether to de-recognise the Council Group in accordance with clause 8.7 above.
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THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

- 8.9 Where a Council Group is de-recognised under 8.7 above and the relevant Regional Party, by its internal procedures, concludes that the actions of the Council Group have brought the Party into disrepute, then it may specify a time period after which the membership revocation procedure may be initiated against any member of the Liberal Democrats who remains a member of the de-recognised Council Group, in accordance with the procedure in the Membership Rules. For the purposes of the membership revocation procedure, there shall be a rebuttable presumption that the member concerned has brought the Party into disrepute.
- 8.10 Where a Liberal Democrat Party member joins a Council Group that exists in opposition to a recognised Liberal Democrat Council Group, or a Council Group that has been refused recognition under this Article or serves on an authority without being a member of a recognised Liberal Democrat Council Group where one exists, then the Regional Party or the English State Party shall have the power, through its own internal procedures, to set a time period after which the individual concerned shall be liable to the membership revocation procedure in accordance with the Membership Rules. For the purposes of that procedure, there shall be a rebuttable presumption that the individual concerned has brought the Party into disrepute. The power to set a time limit shall not be exercised without the member concerned being informed of what is proposed and offered a reasonable opportunity to reply.
- 8.11 Where it appears that there is or has been a conflict within a recognised Council Group as a result of which one or more members of that Council Group have resigned membership of the Group, whether or not they have formed another Council Group, then the relevant Regional Party or the English State Party may take the following action:
- (a) Appoint an investigator in accordance with clause 8.8(a) above, and/or,
 - (b) Appoint a conciliator in accordance with clause 8.8(b) above, and/or,
 - (c) Consider whether the recognised Council Group ought to continue to enjoy recognition subject to clause 8.7 above, and/or
 - (d) Consider whether any Council Group formed as a consequence of the dispute meets the definition in clause 8.2 above or ought to be recognised under 8.4 above.
- 8.12 In the event that there are two or more Council Groups of an authority which appear to meet the definition in clause 8.2 above, or which may justify recognition under clause 8.4 above, then the relevant Regional Party or the English State Party, shall have a discretion to recognise one of those Council Groups and not any of the others or, where there are exceptional circumstances, any or all of them. This power shall not be exercised without an investigator having been appointed in accordance with clause 8.8(a) above.
- 8.13 Any member of an authority who joins or seeks to join a recognised Council Group without having been elected with the sanction of a Liberal Democrat Delegated Nominating Officer shall subject themselves to the approval procedure established under Article 3 either before their admission to the relevant Council Group or within a period of ten weeks after it. Should they fail to be approved within that time period,
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then the relevant Regional Party or the English State Party may take the following action:

- (a) Require the individual to undertake training, or
- (b) Direct that the individual concerned is not eligible to be a member of the Council Group concerned and set a time period during which their membership of the Council Group must cease. If that membership is continued beyond the end of that time period, it shall amount to a breach of the Constitution and action may be taken under clause 8.7 above.

8.14 All recognised Council Groups shall, where practicable and reasonable,

- (a) Provide regular oral or written reports to those Local Parties and Regions covered by the authority concerned as appropriate and work to support their activities,
 - (b) Work to support the activities of any Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament or selected Parliamentary Candidate, Member of the European Parliament or selected European Parliamentary Candidate(s) or any other recognised Council Group on a different authority covering the same or a similar geographical area, through liaison, co-ordination and the exchange of information.
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ARTICLE 9: Resolution of Conflicts

- 9.1 There shall be an Appeals Panel for England, which shall consist of:
- (a) the current members of the Federal Appeals Panel elected by the English Council under Article 14.1 of the Federal Constitution, one of whom shall be designated as the Chair of the Appeals Panel for England by the English Council; and
 - (b) one person appointed by each Regional Party according to its internal procedures.
- 9.2 Each member of the Panel shall hold office for five years, and shall be eligible for re-appointment: provided that no person shall be entitled to hold office for more than ten years in aggregate. No person shall be eligible for appointment if (and any member shall forthwith vacate office upon becoming) an MP, MEP or prospective parliamentary candidate or a member of the English Council Executive or the English Candidates Committee or an employee of the Party. The body making the original appointment may terminate the appointment because the appointee is no longer able to carry out his or her duties as a member of the Panel on account of ill health or for other good cause. Any casual vacancy on the Panel may be filled by the body making the original appointment for the residue of the term of that appointment.
- 9.3 The Appeals Panel for England shall adjudicate on:
- (a) any dispute over the interpretation of these Articles;
 - (b) any claim that the rights under these Articles of a member or of a Party body have been infringed, provided that no appeal may be brought under this paragraph where there is another appropriate appeal procedure;
 - (c) any dispute between the Liberal Democrats in England and a Regional or Local Party, or between Regional Parties or between Local Parties in different Regions; and
 - (d) any matter expressly so provided by these Articles or by rules made hereunder.
- 9.4 The members of the Panel to hear a particular case shall be selected by the Chair, who shall if appropriate consult with the applicant, subject to the following provisos:
- (a) the Chair alone may determine any dispute over the interpretation of these Articles (other than a dispute over the respective powers of the Liberal Democrats in England and a Regional Party);
 - (b) the Chair shall select a chair for each Panel, who shall (other than in exceptional circumstances) be one of those holding office under Article 8.1(a);
 - (c) at least three members (at least one of whom shall be a man and at least one a woman) shall hear any other case;
 - (d) the members hearing a dispute under Article 7 shall if practicable include a former parliamentary or European parliamentary candidate; and
 - (e) no member shall be from the same Region as the appellant or have any direct knowledge of the matters in dispute.
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- 9.5 The Panel may make and publish rules for its own procedures, which shall include:
- (a) the initial processing of an appeal, including:
 - (i) a power to the Chair to determine whether or not an appeal is valid;
 - (ii) a power to the Chair to order a mediation process:
 - (iii) an indicative timetable, and a power to the Chair to impose deadlines (and so that any appeal must, unless the Chair extends this deadline in exceptional circumstances, be concluded within three months of being lodged, and may be dismissed if the appellant does not co-operate with the related timetable); and
 - (iv) an obligation on the EAP to identify the parties to an appeal hearing, and to notify all of them sufficiently in advance to enable them to submit documentary evidence and provide witnesses; and
 - (b) the conduct of an appeal.
- 9.6 Any decision of the Panel shall, subject to any right of appeal under the Federal Constitution, be final and binding on all concerned. The Panel shall publish any decisions which, in the opinion of the Chair, are likely to be of value as a precedent.
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English Council Standing Orders

1. Meetings

1.1 The Council shall hold two Ordinary Meetings a year. One meeting, the Annual General Meeting of the Party in England, shall be held in October or November. Both shall be held at a date and place agreed by the Council.

1.2 A Special Meeting of the Council shall be held if the Council or the Executive so decides or if requested by any 30 members of the Council.

1.3 A meeting may be cancelled by the Executive in exceptional circumstances.

2. Agendas, Motions and Amendments

2.1 The Agenda of every Ordinary Meeting shall include:

- (a) a report by the Chair on the activities of the Executive and of the Party in England's representatives on the Federal Executive and other Federal and Joint State Committees since the last Ordinary Meeting
- (b) any Motions duly submitted on matters falling within the functions of the Council

2.2 The Agenda of the Annual General Meeting shall also include:

- (a) a financial report by the Treasurer and the presentation of the audited accounts of the Party in England for the preceding year
- (b) the appointment of the auditors
- (c) the presentation of a budget for the following year
- (d) the determination of the amount of membership income to be remitted to the Regional Parties
- (e) the determination of service fees to be paid to Local Parties for recruitment and collection of renewal subscriptions

2.3 The Agenda for a Special Meeting of the Council shall be limited to the business specified in the resolution or request convening the meeting.

2.4 Motions (including Constitutional Amendments) and amendments may be submitted to the Council by the Executive, the English Candidates Committee, any Local Party, any Region, or any 3 Council members.

2.5 Motions shall be submitted not later than 6 weeks before the meeting but Constitutional Amendments shall be submitted not later than 9 weeks before the meeting.

2.6 Amendments, Motions on matters arising since the Deadline in 2.5 and Motions on matters arising from Reports circulated with the Preliminary Agenda shall be submitted not later than 3 weeks before the meeting.

2.7 Emergency Motions shall be submitted not later than 24 hours before the meeting. They must relate to a specific recent development which occurred after the deadline in 2.6, and they must be brief.

2.8 The Executive may composite similar motions or amendments and may treat any severable part of a motion or amendment as a separate motion or amendment. They shall exercise these powers only after consultation with a representative of the movers of the motion/amendment.

2.9 If time does not permit the debate of all motions/amendments, the Executive shall determine an order of priority for allocating time.

3. Notices

3.1 A calling notice shall be circulated not less than 12 weeks before the meeting, informing members of its date, venue and deadline.

3.2 A Preliminary Agenda with the minutes of the preceding meeting and any motions submitted shall be sent to all Council members and Regions not less than 5 weeks before the meeting.

3.3 A Final Agenda with written reports and all motions and amendments shall be sent to all Council members and all Regions not less than 2 weeks before the meeting.

4. Membership and attendance at Council Meetings

4.1 Membership of the Council shall be determined in accordance with Article 5.1 of the Constitution according to membership of the Party as at the preceding 30th September.

4.2 Subject to the availability of space, any member of the Party in England may attend any meeting of the Council and, at the discretion of the Chair, speak. Where the Council meets at a Federal Conference, details of its meeting and of this provision shall be published in the Final Agenda of the Federal Conference.

5. Amendments to the Constitution

5.1 Before any amendment to the Constitution, or any proposal that the Party in England agrees to an alteration to the relative powers and functions of the Federal Party and the State Parties, is debated it must have been notified to all Local and Regional Parties at least 8 weeks in advance and it shall only take effect if adopted by at least a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at a meeting of the Council.

6. Suspension of Standing Orders

6.1 A motion to suspend standing orders shall be debated forthwith if five members of the Council rise from their seats and so request. One speech supporting the suspension and one against shall be taken before a vote which will require only a simple majority of those present and voting to suspend standing orders for the duration of that item of business only.

7. Amendments of Standing Orders

7.1 These Standing Orders may be amended by a two-thirds majority at any meeting of the Council, but no such amendments shall come into force until immediately after the meeting at which it was passed.

8. Elections

8.1 The elections of the Chair, members of the Executive elected by and from the Council and the representatives of the Party in England to any committee or other body established by or under the Federal Constitution including any Joint State Committee, shall take place annually in the autumn. The persons thus elected shall hold office from 1st January after election for the ensuing calendar year. The Party in England's representatives on G8 shall be elected annually in the mailings for the summer meeting of the Council. The persons thus elected shall hold office from the date of their election until the election of their successors.

8.2 The Committee Election Regulations made by the Federal Executive and approved by the Federal Conference shall apply to such elections save that the Returning Officer shall be the Chair of the Appeals Panel for England. Nominations for election may be submitted by any Local Party, any Regional Party, or any two Council members. The Returning Officer shall draw up and publish the timetable for the elections. The timetable for the autumn elections shall follow as closely as possible the timetable for the Federal Committee elections.

9. Youth and Student SAO

9.1 Where these Standing Orders refer to a Region, they include the Specified Associated Organisation representing Youth and Students in England, which Organisation shall be treated for all purposes under these Standing Orders as if it were a Region.

10. Interpretation

10.1 Subject to the Constitution, the Executive shall be responsible for organising meetings of the Council, and they may give directions on any matter on which the Constitution and these Standing Orders are silent. During meetings of the Council, such discretion shall be vested in the Chair.

Membership Rules

(as revised by English Council, 21 June 2008)

1 Recruitment, Registration and Acceptance

- 1.1 All members of the Party are encouraged to recruit new members. Upon receipt of an individual's subscription of not less than the minimum, for which a receipt shall be issued, the individual's application shall be sent by the enrolling body without delay to Membership Services for registration.
- 1.2 New membership applicants shall be advised that their application is subject to acceptance by their Local Party. All applicants shall be registered and lists of new members shall be sent to Local Parties as regularly as possible and not less than every two months.
- 1.3 (i) New membership applicants shall give an address ("Registered Membership Address") which shall be the address where the applicant lives, works or studies. For this purpose:
- (a) "Lives" means is ordinarily resident;
 - (b) "Works" shall be defined in the same terms as for qualification for nomination as a candidate for a principal local authority election; and
 - (c) "Studies" means either the student's term time residential address as defined in Rule 1.3(i)(a) or the address of the Institution where the student studies.
- (ii) Subject to registration and approval the applicant shall become a member of the Local Party covering this Registered Membership Address.
- 1.4 A member with an overseas address may maintain membership of a UK Local Party as long as that member qualifies to register as an overseas elector for that area and is on the electoral roll.
- 1.5 A member who wishes to be a member of a Local Party other than that covering the Registered Membership Address may do so:
- (a) by completing the Prescribed Form available from Membership Services; and
 - (b) with the consent of the Executives of the proposed transferee Local Party and of the Regional Party.

If such consent is not granted, the process of refusal must be initiated within six weeks of notification of registration and must be completed within 14 weeks of initiation, and the procedure set out in Rules 6.3(ii) to 6.3(viii) shall be followed. If the process is not initiated or completed within these periods, the Local and Regional Parties shall be deemed to have consented and the member shall be a member of that Local Party. If there is any dispute about any such request Membership Services shall be able to request the minutes of the relevant Executive meeting as well as the Prescribed Form.

- 1.6 Where a person whose membership has previously been revoked or refused applies to join the Party again, his/her membership cannot be registered until this has been expressly agreed by resolution of the Executive Committee of the Local Party and by the Regional Party (acting by its Executive Committee unless its Constitution provides otherwise). Accordingly, if any application for membership is received from a person whose membership has previously been revoked or refused, the Membership Secretary shall immediately inform the Regional Party and Membership Services.
- 1.7 Local Parties may initiate refusal of membership in accordance with the Constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England (Article 2.5) within 6 weeks of receipt of the notification of registration. After that period, if membership is not refused the applicant shall be deemed to have been accepted and shall be a member of that Local Party.
- 1.8 Until membership has been registered the applicant shall not be a member of the Party and able to participate in the functions of membership, including voting in internal Federal, State and Regional elections. In internal Local Party elections all registered members must be accepted before they may participate.

2 Re-registration of Membership

- 2.1 A member who changes Registered Membership Address shall automatically be re-registered as a member of the Local Party covering the new Registered Membership Address, unless the member requests on the Prescribed Form to retain membership of the old Local Party in which case Rule 2.3 shall apply.
- 2.2 Subject to Rule 2.3, a member may re-register from one Local Party to another by applying to Membership Services on the Prescribed Form; but a member who is an MP, MEP, prospective Westminster or European parliamentary candidate or member of a local authority may re-register as of right in a relevant Local Party. However no person may simultaneously be a member of more than one Local Party.
- 2.3 A transferring member must, in relation to the transferee Local Party, satisfy one of the criteria listed in Rule 1.3(i). Rule 1.5 shall apply to any such transfer.

3 Issue of Membership Cards

- 3.1 Members shall receive a party membership card from Membership Services within five weeks of when the appropriate part of their subscription is received by Membership Services and their membership registered.
 - 3.2
 - (i) Members who are recruited by the Youth and Student SAO shall receive a party membership card and also become members of that SAO. Their names shall also be included as members of the Local Party in whose area they live or study.
 - (ii) Such members shall not vote in internal Local Party elections for Federal and Regional Conference representatives if they vote for these representatives through their SAO.
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- (iii) The Youth and Student SAO shall receive a service fee of a percentage of the subscription paid as agreed with the English Council on the recruitment and/or renewal of these members. The minimum subscription of the Party shall be as specified by resolution of Federal Conference or English Council.

4 Start Date for Membership and Dates for Renewal

- 4.1 Membership shall commence for new members on the date of receipt of the subscription and application by the enrolling body or Membership Services, whichever is the earlier, subject to acceptance by their Local Party.
- 4.2 Membership will be due for renewal:
 - (a) for new members on the quarter day (March 31, June 30, September 30 or December 31) one year after the quarter day immediately following the date of their first joining;
 - (b) for renewing members of the Party, annually on their quarter day.
- 4.3 Membership for lapsed members who rejoin shall commence on the date of receipt of their subscription and application by the enrolling body or Membership Services, whichever is the earlier.

5 Renewals and Lapsing of Membership

- 5.1 Members shall be sent renewal reminders by Membership Services not later than the end of the month before their subscriptions fall due. At least two reminders shall be sent and the Local Party shall be notified of non-renewers.
- 5.2 Resignations shall not be acted upon unless received in writing by Membership Services from the member resigning.
- 5.3 Members who do not renew their subscriptions shall retain their rights (other than their voting rights, to which Rule 7 shall apply) as members for three months beyond their renewal date after which time, if no subscription has been received, their membership rights shall be deemed to have lapsed.

6 Membership Admission and Refusal

- 6.1 All Local Parties shall operate a system agreed by the Local Party Executive Committee for the approval of prospective new members of the Party in the event that the Executive Committee is unable to meet within a reasonable time to do so. That system shall involve no fewer than three officers of the Local Party.
 - 6.2 The Local Party, either through that procedure or by resolution of its Executive Committee may only refuse membership of the Party on one or more of the grounds
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listed in Article 2.5 of the Constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England. If the membership of any individual is so refused, then the Local Party concerned shall cause the reasons for so refusing membership to be reduced to writing. The individual concerned shall be informed and provided with those reasons within two weeks of the decision being taken.

- 6.3 A meeting of the Local Party Executive Committee shall be convened within five weeks of the decision being taken to consider the issue. The individual concerned shall be notified of the meeting, their right to be represented, their right to speak and their right of appeal.
- 6.4 The Local Party Executive meeting shall be conducted as per the provisions of 7.9 (vi) below with appropriate modifications. At its conclusion, the members of the Executive Committee shall vote by secret ballot on whether the individual concerned should become a member of the Party or not.
- 6.5 A person who is refused membership has the right of appeal to the Appeals Panel for England. If no such appeal is received in writing by the Secretary of the Local Party concerned, the Region, the Liberal Democrats in England or the Appeals Panel within one calendar month from the date of the meeting when refusal was decided, then that appeal right shall cease.

7 Disciplinary Procedure

- 7.1 Where there is a suspicion that any of the grounds set out in the Constitution of the Federal Party or the Constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England for the revocation of membership are made out, the following Disciplinary Procedure shall be applied.
- 7.2 For the purposes of this Disciplinary Procedure, there shall be a rebuttable presumption that a person has brought the Party into disrepute when;
- (i) they have been convicted of an offence of dishonesty, violence or a sexual offence of any description, that is not spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974,
 - (ii) they have acted in breach of any Postal Vote Code of Conduct agreed by the Liberal Democrats with the Electoral Commission or any other external body
 - (iii) they have acted in a manner that would have brought the Party into disrepute were it to be known about outside the Party but which did not become known either by chance or by agreement with the member concerned.
- 7.3 The Disciplinary Procedure may be initiated by any of the following Party bodies, either on receipt of a valid complaint about a Party member from a complainant, or of its own motion:
- (i) the relevant Local Party,
 - (ii) the relevant Regional Party,
 - (iii) the Youth and Student S.A.O. (where the individual is a member of the Party through that S.A.O.),
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(iv) the English Party.

7.4 Before the procedure can be initiated, the following matters shall be reduced to writing either by the complainant or, where the Party body is acting of its own motion, by an appropriate member of that body:

- (i) the grounds for commencing the procedure (which must be one or more of those set out in the Constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England at Articles 2.6),
- (ii) details of why the ground(s) cited is or are made out,
- (iii) a summary of the facts giving rise to the complaint,
- (iv) details of persons who can substantiate the complaint,
- (v) details of the remedy that is sought (which must be either membership revocation or any of the sanctions prescribed below).

The resulting document shall be forwarded to the individual being complained against, copied to Membership Services and, where the Party body undertaking the procedure is a Local Party, to the relevant Regional Party. The individual being complained against shall also be provided with a copy of the Disciplinary Procedure (section 7 of the Membership Rules).

7.5 During the course of the Disciplinary Procedure, the person being complained against may be suspended from membership of the Party in accordance with Article 2.8 of the Constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England. Such suspension may not last for in excess of the full period provided in these Rules for the procedure to be completed. If the procedure is not completed within that time, then the suspension shall automatically cease unless an extension of time is granted by the English Appeals Panel in accordance with its procedures. The person being complained against shall be notified of the suspension and the reasons for it. Such notification shall be copied to Membership Services and, where the Party body undertaking the procedure is a Local Party, to the relevant Regional Party.

7.6 The relevant Party body may appoint an investigator to investigate the complaint in accordance with its internal procedures. That investigator must be independent and must not be a member of the same Local Party as the person being complained against,

- (i) The investigator shall be responsible for gathering written statements from all of those who are able to substantiate or undermine the complaint,
 - (ii) The investigator shall also be responsible for seeking to conciliate between the parties where possible and appropriate,
 - (iii) The investigator shall then evaluate the strength of the evidence in support of the complaint,
 - (iv) Within four weeks of their appointment, the investigator shall send a report to the Chair of the Party body pursuing the Disciplinary Procedure.
 - (v) That report shall either comprise a charge or list of charges against the individual concerned, together with a list of persons who can substantiate them and a copy of all of the written statements gathered during the course of the investigation, or it shall indicate that, in the view of the investigator, there is insufficient evidence to proceed.
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- (vi) Where the investigator reports that there is sufficient evidence to proceed, s/he shall be responsible for presenting the complaint at any subsequent Disciplinary Meeting and for ensuring the attendance of all witnesses who can substantiate it. Except as provided for in this paragraph and in 7.9, the investigator shall play no further part in the procedure.
- 7.7 Should no investigator be appointed, the Party body concerned may proceed with the procedure in any event and an officer of the body concerned shall formulate the charge and act in the role of investigator for the purposes of the Disciplinary Procedure.
- 7.8 When the grounds cited in the charge include those specified under Article 2.6 (c) or (d), and the particulars are that the member concerned has stood against a candidate of the Party in any election to public office, has publicly declared his or her support for another political party of Great Britain in the public media, or whilst holding public office, has joined the group of another political party, the Disciplinary Procedure may proceed as follows:
- (i) the individual concerned shall be notified that membership revocation is being considered and shall be provided with a copy of the original complaint, the charge, and copies of any written statements obtained. The individual shall also be informed that, in order to avoid automatic revocation, s/he must provide written reasons why their membership should not be revoked within seven days of the receipt of the notice. The papers shall be copied to Membership Services and, where the procedure is being conducted by a Local Party, to the relevant Regional Party,
 - (ii) if an objection to membership revocation is received by the Party body concerned within the time limit, then the procedure shall continue as set out in 7.9 below,
 - (iii) if no objection to membership revocation is received, then after the expiry of the time limit, and following the agreement of the Party body concerned arrived at through its internal procedures, the membership of that individual shall be deemed to have been revoked. The individual concerned and Membership Services shall be advised accordingly.
- 7.9 When the grounds cited in the charge are those specified under Article 2.6 (a), (b) or (d), the Disciplinary Procedure may proceed as follows:
- (i) A date shall be set for a Disciplinary Hearing which shall be not more than fourteen weeks from the receipt of the original complaint or original decision of the Party body concerned to proceed of its own motion, unless the Appeals Panel for England grants an extension of time in accordance with its procedures. Should the time expire, then no further action may be taken,
 - (ii) The Disciplinary Meeting shall be a meeting of the Local Party Executive, where the procedure is being conducted by a Local Party, the relevant Regional Executive or Regional Local Parties Committee (or other body prescribed by the constitution of the Region concerned providing that it consists of at least five people none of whom have a conflict of interest) where the procedure is being conducted by a Region, or the English Finance and Administration Committee, where the procedure is being conducted by the English State Party,
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- (iii) The original complaint, the charge, copies of any written statements obtained and details of the Disciplinary Meeting shall be provided to the person being complained against and to all members of the Disciplinary Meeting not later than four weeks before the date of that meeting. The person being complained against shall also be informed of their right to representation, right to speak, and right of appeal. The papers shall be copied to Membership Services and, where the procedure is being conducted by a Local Party, to the relevant Regional Party,
- (iv) No substantial evidence of which the person being complained against has not been given notice shall be introduced at the meeting unless it be by agreement,
- (v) The meeting may proceed notwithstanding the absence of the person being complained against providing that the requisite notice of the meeting and the required information under these Rules has been given,
- (vi) The meeting shall be conducted as follows:
 - (a) The charge shall be introduced by the investigator,
 - (b) The investigator shall then ask each witness to give their account following which the person being complained against, or their representative, may ask questions along with members of the Disciplinary Meeting,
 - (c) The person being complained against may then give their account and be asked questions by the investigator and/or members of the Disciplinary Meeting,
 - (d) The person being complained against may then call any witness that they wish. The witnesses may be questioned by the investigator and/or members of the Disciplinary Meeting,
 - (e) The investigator and person being complained against may then make any closing statement that they wish,
 - (f) The person being complained against shall leave the room and the members of the Disciplinary Meeting shall discuss the matter,
 - (g) At no stage of the meeting shall there shall be any comment made that is not relevant to the charges in issue,
 - (h) The members of the meeting shall then, by secret ballot, vote on whether the charges have been made out beyond a reasonable doubt. Each charge shall be voted upon separately,
 - (i) The individual concerned and Membership Services shall be informed of the outcome of the meeting.

7.10 In the event that any of the charges are made out, the Disciplinary Meeting may impose any one or more of the following sanctions,

- (i) Revoke the membership of the individual concerned,
 - (ii) Barring the individual concerned from holding or standing for election to any specified Party office or role either permanently, for a specified period, or until satisfactory training has been undertaken by the individual concerned,
 - (iii) Barring the individual concerned from holding or seeking to be elected to any or any specified public office on behalf of the Party either permanently, for a specified period, or until satisfactory training has been undertaken by the individual concerned,
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- (iv) Barring the individual concerned from having access to data from Membership Services either permanently, for a specified period, or until satisfactory training has been undertaken by the individual concerned,
- (v) Reprimanding the individual concerned.

The individual concerned, and Membership Services, shall be advised accordingly.

- 7.11 A person who is made subject to any of the sanctions above has the right of appeal to the Appeals Panel for England. If no such appeal is received in writing by the Secretary of the Local Party concerned, the Region, the Liberal Democrats in England or the Appeals Panel within one calendar month from the date of the meeting when refusal was decided, then that appeal right shall cease.

8 Record-Keeping

- 8.1 All members of the Party in England shall be under a duty to inform Membership Services upon conviction of any offence which might lead to action being taken under the Disciplinary Procedure. Any doubt should be resolved in favour of disclosure.
- 8.2 There shall be a record retained in Membership Services, as far as is practicable, of all disciplinary decisions under the Disciplinary Procedure

9 Rights of Members to Participate in Local Party Elections

- 9.1 For all Local Party elections, including Parliamentary and local government candidate selection and General Meetings, the Executive Committee shall determine and agree the date for the closure of nominations before which members not both registered and accepted by the Local Party, and qualifying in accordance with Rule 9.2, shall not be eligible to participate in the elections; provided that, in the event of any conflict, Rules for the Selection of Parliamentary Candidates duly made by the English Party shall prevail.
- 9.2 Members joining after 26 November 2005 shall only be eligible to vote in any such election if their membership is in at least its second continuous year, they have paid their membership renewal and have reached the age of at least 10 years. Eligible Members whose subscriptions are no more than three months overdue shall be entitled to attend the meetings specified in Rule 9.1 but shall only be eligible to vote if they pay their overdue subscription.

10 Changes to these Rules

- 10.1 These Rules have been agreed by the English Council under Article 2 of the Constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England. The English Council may amend these Rules by a simple majority of those present and voting at any Council Meeting.
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11 General

- 11.1 Where these Rules provide for anything to be done in writing then, except where these Rules require a prescribed form to be used, it may also be done by e-mail.

Model Constitution for Local Parties

CONSTITUTION OF THE (...) LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

1. Name and Area

- 1.1 The name of the body governed by this Constitution shall be “The (...) Liberal Democrats”.
- 1.2 The area of the Local Party shall be the (...) Parliamentary Constituency(ies).

2. Definitions

- 2.1 In this Constitution:

“the Local Party” means the (...) Liberal Democrats;
“the Party Constitution” means the Constitutions of the Federal Party and of the Liberal Democrats in England;
“the Party” means the Liberal Democrats;
“the Regional Party” means the (...) Region Liberal Democrats;
“the Constituency/(ies)” means the Parliamentary Constituency/(ies) of (...);
“Conference Representatives” means members of the Local Party elected to be its representatives at Federal and/or Regional Conferences;
“Party’s Youth and Student Organisation” means the Specified Associated Organisation representing youth and students;
“Majority” at any meeting means majority of those present and voting; and
“Executive Committee” means the executive committee of the Local Party.

3. Objects

- 3.1 The objects of the Local Party shall be:
 - (a) be the successor within its area to the (...) Liberal Association and to the (...) SDP Area Party; and
 - (b) to promote and support the values and objects of the Party in the Constituency and in particular through its members:
 - (i) to secure the election of Liberal Democrats as Members of Parliament, UK Members of the European Parliament, members of regional, local and other elected public authorities and other public office;
 - (ii) to admit and actively recruit new members to the Party, and encourage existing members to renew their membership;
 - (iii) to participate in the formulation of the policy of the Party;
 - (iv) to be recognised as a Local Party; to play a full role in the democratic processes of the Party; and to send representatives, in accordance with the constitutions of the bodies concerned, to Party bodies;
 - (v) to play a full part in the campaigning activities of the Party at all levels;

- (vii) to campaign and work with local people to achieve the objectives set out in the Preamble to the Party Constitution;
- (viii) to help all local people, without regard to party or any other factor, to secure their rights and to protect them against oppression; and
- (ix) to promote diversity of cultures within the Party and to represent the interests of under-represented groups in the locality.

4. Membership

- 4.1 The Local Party shall administer membership in accordance with the Membership Rules of the Liberal Democrats in England.
- 4.2 All persons shall be eligible to join the Local Party if they agree with the fundamental values and objectives of the Party; and
- (a) they live, work or study within the area of the Local Party, or
 - (b) if not eligible under Section 4.2 (a) they acquire membership with the consent of the Local Party Executive Committee, or
 - (c) they are an MP, MEP, prospective Westminster or European parliamentary candidate or member of a local authority for a seat wholly or partly within the area of the Local Party.
- 4.3 Eligible persons shall become members of the Local Party:
- (a) on enrolment through the Local Party; or
 - (b) on enrolment through the Party's Youth and Student Organisation giving an address within the Constituency; or
 - (c) if already members of the Party, on re-registration as a member of the Local Party.

Members of the Local Party who are also members of the Party's Youth and Student Organisation may be restrained under the Party Constitution from exercising certain rights as members of the Local Party if they exercise equivalent rights as members of the Youth and Student Organisation.

- 4.4
- (a) An applicant shall become a member on acceptance by the enrolling body, payment of the requisite subscription and registration on the register kept by the Party in England.
 - (b) An application shall be deemed accepted if not rejected in accordance with the Membership Rules.
 - (c) Initial membership shall run for one year from the quarter day (last day of March, June, September or December) following commencement.
 - (d) Members whose subscriptions are due shall receive notices of meetings and elections for a further 3 months.
 - (e) Members who do not renew their subscriptions before the end of the 3 months period must reapply for membership.
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- 4.5 The Executive Committee may refuse membership to, or revoke the membership of, any person, on the grounds provided by the Party Constitution, using the procedure defined in the Membership Rules of the Liberal Democrats in England.
- 4.6 A member of the Local Party who ceases to be eligible under Section 4.2 (a) may retain membership of the Local Party with the consent of the Executive Committee.

5. Officers and Executive Committee

- 5.1 The Officers of the Local Party shall be the Chair, [Vice-Chair,] Secretary, Data Officer, Membership Development Officer and Treasurer. Their duties shall include:
- (a) The Chair - to chair all General and Executive Committee Meetings [;in the event of a tied vote the Chair shall have an additional casting vote]; to be jointly responsible with the Treasurer for the Local Party's compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000;
 - (b) The Vice-Chair - to chair General and Executive Committee Meetings if the Chair is unable to do so;
 - (c) The Secretary - to handle the Local Party's correspondence; to maintain minutes of meetings;
 - (d) The Treasurer - to handle the Local Party's financial business and present financial reports to General Meetings; to be jointly responsible with the Chair for the Local Party's compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000;
 - (e) The Data Officer - to:
 - (i) receive all notices of application for membership and refer them to the Executive Committee for acceptance;
 - (ii) maintain a membership register and provide Branch and Local Party Officers with lists of members as necessary under this Constitution;
 - (iii) hold and maintain the EARS/campaigning data of the local party; and
 - (iv) ensure compliance with data protection legislation.
 - (f) The Membership Development Officer - to:
 - (i) organise and run membership recruitment and renewal campaigns
 - (ii) ensure that the Local Party has a wide a range of social and political activities to facilitate member retention

The Secretary shall not later than 2nd January and within seven days after any subsequent change notify the names and addresses of all Officers to the Regional Party and to the Chief Executive of the Federal Party

- 5.2 There may be an Honorary President to be elected by the Annual General Meeting.
- 5.3 The general and financial business of the Local Party shall be controlled and carried on by the Executive Committee, subject to the decisions of General Meetings and in compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. The Executive Committee shall consist of:
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- (a) The Officers;
 - [(b) (...) Ordinary Members to be elected annually in the same manner as the Officers;]
 - [(c) Representatives from each Branch within the Constituency, on a scale of (...) per Ward contained within the Branch, and (...) representatives of members in parts of the Constituency without Branches;]
 - (d) The Party's Member of Parliament for the Constituency, and the prospective Parliamentary Candidate;
 - (e) (...) representatives of the Party's members from the (...) County Council representing electoral divisions within the Constituency, elected by and from such members;
 - (f) (...) representatives of the Party's members from the (...) [District]/[Borough] /[Unitary] Council(s) representing wards within the Constituency, elected by and from such members;
 - (g) (...) representatives elected by and from each local Branch of the Party's Youth and Student Organisation;
 - [(h) The Local Party's Agent or Organiser.]
- 5.4 The Executive Committee may co-opt up to (...) additional members, for a term expiring not later than the next following AGM. The power of co-option shall be used, inter alia, to ensure if possible that no more than two-thirds of the Executive Committee (other than under Sections 5.3 (d) - (h)), are of the same sex, and that there is fair representation of under represented communities in the locality, taking into account race, religion, age, disability, gender or sexual orientation and that this would create a composition of the Executive that reflects the community the local Party serves.
- 5.5 [The Honorary President is entitled to attend all meetings of the Executive Committee.] Conference Representatives who are not members of the Executive Committee shall be entitled to attend any meeting of the Committee at which business relating to the Conferences is discussed. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be open to members of the Local Party as space permits.
- 5.6 The Executive Committee may fill any vacancy occurring among the Officers or the Ordinary Members. Any vacancy in the Chair shall be filled from amongst the existing Executive Committee members. The Secretary shall within seven days notify any change of Officers to the Regional Party and to the Chief Executive of the Federal Party.
- [5.7 The Executive Committee may assign special responsibilities to any of its members, including duties which would otherwise pertain to one of the Officers.] [The Executive shall designate an officer to deputise for the Chair if necessary if the Chair is ever unavailable.]
- 5.8 The Officers shall convene a meeting of the Executive Committee within one month after taking office. The Executive Committee shall meet at least quarterly and not less than four times in a year. The Secretary shall give at least 7 days notice of meetings to all members of the Executive Committee. One-third of its members shall form a quorum. [A meeting may continue without a quorum if no member present objects.]
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- 5.9 The Executive Committee may appoint sub-committees for any specified purpose. No sub-committee or Executive Committee member may take action on behalf of the Executive Committee beyond their terms of appointment. All sub-committees shall report on their activities to the Executive Committee and may include persons who are not members of the Executive Committee and may delegate authority to take actions on their behalf. [The Executive Committee may also delegate authority to committees jointly constituted with other local parties for particular purposes.]
- 5.10 In urgent circumstances the Officers may act on behalf of the Executive Committee. They shall report on such actions to the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

6. Election of Officers, Executive Committee and Conference Representatives

- 6.1 The Officers, Ordinary Members and Conference Representatives shall be elected by and from members of the Local Party at the time of the Annual General Meeting. If an election is contested, there shall be a ballot [in which all Local Party members are sent ballot papers].
- 6.2 The term of office of Officers, Ordinary Members and Conference Representatives shall be from the 1st January following their election until the following 31st December. They shall be eligible for re-election, save that the Chair shall not serve for more than three consecutive terms, and shall not be eligible for re-election as Chair for two terms after leaving Office.
- 6.3 Nominations for election shall be invited in the notice summoning the AGM, and shall close at the AGM, but not before the reception of the Chair's, Treasurer's and Conference Representatives' reports. They must be proposed and seconded, and except in the case of nominations made at the AGM shall be in writing signed by the proposer, seconder and candidate.
- 6.4 Where elections are contested, ballot papers shall be distributed [to all members of the Local Party within 7 days]/[at the AGM], and must be returned to the Returning Officer [within 21 days after]/[at] the AGM.
- 6.5 No person may be elected to hold more than one Office, or may be elected to be both an Officer and an Ordinary Member. Elections for Officers shall be counted in the order listed in Section 5.1 and for Ordinary Members after Officers. Any votes cast for candidates already elected to Office shall be transferred according to the voters' subsequent preferences.
- 6.6 The Local Party's Federal and Regional Conference Representatives shall be elected as provided by the Party's Constitution. A representative shall cease to hold office upon ceasing to be a member of the Local Party or on failing to attend any meeting of the Conference without giving notice (so far as practicable) of inability to attend or without reasonable cause, unless the Executive Committee determines otherwise.
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- 6.7 All contested elections under this constitution shall be by secret ballot by the Single Transferable Vote method in accordance with election rules made under the Party Constitution.
- 6.8 The Executive Committee shall appoint some disinterested person to act as Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall be responsible for the receipt of nominations and for the preparation and distribution of ballot papers, their receipt and counting on return, and the declaration of the results.
- 6.9 Accidental failure to despatch notice of the AGM or a ballot paper in due time or at all to a person entitled to vote shall not invalidate an election or be treated as an irregularity, unless a substantial number of persons entitled to vote have not received notices or ballot papers at all or have received them too late to make it practicable to attend the meeting or return the ballot paper in due time by first-class post.
- 6.10 An unsuccessful candidate who alleges that there has been or may have been an irregularity in the election may within one calendar month after the declaration of the result ask for an investigation by the Regional Party in accordance with the Party Constitution. Subject to any order made after such an investigation, no irregularity shall invalidate an election.
- 6.11 The Returning Officer may extend the time for distribution and return of ballot papers where there are special circumstances making it necessary to do so.

7. General Meetings

- 7.1 The Annual General Meeting shall be on a day appointed by the Executive Committee, between 1st October and 30th November. The Executive Committee may postpone the AGM if it would conflict with a Parliamentary Election in the Constituency, or for other urgent reason.
- 7.2 The business of the AGM shall include:
- (a) to receive a report from the Chair on the activities of the Local Party and the Executive Committee since the previous AGM;
 - (b) to consider and, if thought fit, approve the accounts of the Local Party for the previous financial year together with an independent report on those accounts, and to receive a report from the Treasurer including an outline budget for the following year;
 - (c) to appoint for the current Financial Year (i) Auditors if required by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 or (ii) a person(s) to produce an independent report on the accounts for a General Meeting;
 - (d) to receive reports from the Conference Representatives on the proceedings of the Federal and Regional Conferences since the previous AGM;
 - (e) to receive reports from each Liberal Democrat Council group on which Local Party members serve;
 - (f) to transact any other business specified by the Constitution, or directed by the Executive Committee;
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THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

- (g) to consider any motion which has been submitted by any member of the Local Party to the Secretary in time for circulation with the notice of the AGM;
 - (h) [to receive nominations for the election of]/[to elect] Officers, Ordinary Members of the Executive Committee and Conference Representatives.
- 7.3 The Secretary shall give all members at least 21 days written notice of the time and place of the AGM. Such notice shall specify all business to be conducted at the meeting.
- 7.4 The AGM may by a two-thirds majority agree to consider urgent or important business which has arisen since notice of the AGM was given.
- 7.5 A special General Meeting may be convened by the Officers, or by the Executive Committee; and shall, on receipt of a requisition signed by at least twenty members of the Local Party (or one-fifth of the membership if less), be convened by the Secretary so as to be held within 28 days from the receipt of such requisition. At least 14 days written notice shall be given to all members. The meeting shall only consider business stated in the notice convening it. Failure to convene a validly requisitioned meeting within 14 days shall permit the meeting to be convened on behalf of (and at the expense of) the Local Party by any of the original requisitioners. In an emergency, the Officers may convene a meeting giving such notice as they consider sufficient in the circumstances.
- 7.6 20 members (or one-fifth of the membership if less), shall form a quorum at any General Meeting. A quorum is not required to receive reports and accounts. [A meeting may continue without a quorum if no member present objects except as provided for in Section 11.1.]
- 7.7 Notice and minutes of all Annual and Special General Meetings shall be sent to the secretary of the Regional Party.
- 7.8 Minutes shall be maintained of all proceedings of all General Meetings. Minutes shall also be kept of any meetings of the Executive Committee. In the absence of an Executive Committee member charged with the duty, the Meeting shall appoint a member to take minutes.

[8. Local Branches

- 8.1 The Executive Committee may authorise the setting up of Branches covering defined areas of the Local Party, provided that no branch shall be formed with less than 10 members. The objects of a Branch shall be to further the objects of the Local Party in the area covered by the Branch. The Branch shall be subject to the ultimate authority of the Local Party.
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8.2 The members of the Branch shall be:

- (a) All members of the Local Party whose Registered Membership Address (as defined in the Membership Rules of the Liberal Democrats in England) is within the Branch area, unless they have opted to be a member of another Branch;
- (b) Any councillor who represents a ward or division falling wholly or partially within the Branch area and who opts to be a member of the Branch;
- (c) Other members of the Local Party who wish to be members, if the Branch's Committee and the Local Party Executive Committee agree.

No person who is not a member of the Local Party may be a member of the Branch. No person may be a member of more than one Branch.

8.3 A Branch shall not be entitled to require a subscription from its members, but the Executive Committee of the Local Party may agree to remit part of its subscription income to a Branch. A Branch shall not incur any debts for which the Local Party shall be responsible.

8.4 Each Branch shall be governed by a constitution which shall provide for:

- (a) a Committee which shall include Officers and Ordinary Members, and may include ex-officio and co-opted members;
- (b) rules for election of Officers, Ordinary Members of the Branch Committee and representatives to the Local Party Executive Committee;
- (c) rules for the calling and conduct of an Annual General Meeting and other General Meetings of the members;
- (d) the names and addresses of the Officers, Ordinary Members and representatives to be notified to, and minutes of General and Committee Meetings to be supplied to the Secretary of the Local Party.

The Constitution shall be in the form of the Model Constitution for Branches appended to this Constitution. A branch may adopt a constitution which is not wholly in the model form but any such constitution, or any changes to it, shall not take effect until the Executive Committee of the Local Party accepts its conformity with the Party Constitution and with this Constitution.

[8.5 The finances of the Branch shall be held by the Treasurer of the Local Party [as part of the funds of the Local Party] and subject to section 10 of the constitution.]

- [8.5 (a) The Officers of the Branch shall include a Treasurer. The Branch's accounting period shall be the same as that of the Local Party.
 - (b) The Branch Treasurer shall keep, maintain for six years, and pass to his or her successor accounting records which shall be available for inspection in accordance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.
 - (c) The Branch Treasurer shall ensure that no donation of over £200 is accepted except from a permissible donor and shall keep records and submit donations reports to the Treasurer of the Local Party.
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- (d) The Branch Treasurer shall annually produce accounts which shall be approved by the Branch Committee and shall be sent to the Treasurer of the Local Party by a date to be specified by the Treasurer of the Local Party.
- (e) The Branch Treasurer shall submit the accounts of the Branch together with an independent report to [the Annual General Meeting]/[a General Meeting to be held not later than (...)].
- (f) The Branch shall maintain one or more bank or other appropriate accounts in the name of the Branch for which the mandate for withdrawal shall require the signature of at least two Officers who shall not come solely from members of any one family. The Branch may maintain further accounts for the deposit of money not required for the time being, requiring the same signatures.]

8.6 The Branch may appoint a substitute representative to the Executive Committee to fill a casual vacancy, or if a representative is unable to attend a particular meeting.

8.7 A Branch may dissolve itself by a two-thirds majority at a General Meeting; or be dissolved or suspended by the Executive Committee on the grounds that:

- (a) it is no longer functioning or able to hold such a meeting;
- (b) there have been serious irregularities in the conduct of the affairs of the Branch;
- (c) the affairs of the Branch have not been conducted in compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and with its Constitution, this Constitution and the Party Constitution;
- (d) the membership of the Branch has fallen below 10; or
- (e) the affairs of the Branch are being conducted in a manner contrary to the interests of the Local Party as a whole.

If a Branch is dissolved or suspended, any member of the Branch may request the Regional Party to conduct an investigation. The Local Party shall not dissolve a Branch until the Branch has been given an opportunity to hold its own General Meeting.

8.8 The funds of a Branch shall, upon dissolution, be applied in paying its debts, and any surplus shall be added to the funds of the Local Party.]

9. Candidates for and Elections to Public Office

9.1 When it is necessary to select a Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, the procedure shall be as provided by the Party Constitution. The Executive Committee may appoint a sub-committee to carry out its duties under this procedure. [The electoral college shall comprise [members within the relevant constituency only]/[all Local Party members].]

9.2 The Executive Committee shall seek to ensure that, so far as practicable, all seats within the Constituency on Principal Local Authorities are contested by members of the Party, unless the Executive Committee is satisfied that it is in the best interests of the Party in any case not to do so.

- 9.3 When it is necessary to select one or more local government candidates for an electoral area, the [Local Party]/[Branch or if there is no Branch, the Local Party] shall hold a [General Meeting at]/[postal ballot in] which all members [who are resident in the electoral area concerned]/[of the Local Party]/[of the Branch] may vote, and may select any member from a list of approved candidates maintained by the Executive Committee, or may select any other member conditionally upon subsequent approval by the Executive Committee. The timetable and procedure for selection shall be agreed by the Branch Committee and the Executive Committee, or where there is no Branch by the Executive Committee.
- [9.4 In any electoral area, in which the eligible electorate for voting in the selection does not exceed 10, the electorate shall be expanded to constitute the members living in the electoral area plus the Branch Committee or, if there is no Branch, the Executive Committee.]
- 9.5 In any case in which time does not permit the holding of a [General Meeting]/[postal ballot] the [Branch Committee, or if there is no Branch the Executive Committee]/[the Executive Committee] may select the candidate.
- 9.6 Where a Principal Local Authority covers more than one constituency the Executive Committees of the Local Parties concerned may agree to form appropriate joint arrangements to co-ordinate candidate approval and selection, campaigning and publicity and be responsible for the formulation of policy on that Authority.
- [9.7 In any parish or town council elections, the committee of the relevant Branch, or if there is no Branch the Executive Committee shall vary the provisions of Sections 9.2 to 9.5 above as appropriate.]
- 9.8 A Delegated Nominating Officer will be appointed by the Party's Nominating Officer. The Delegated Nominating Officer shall act in accordance with the Rules made by the Party for Delegated Nominating Officers.
- 9.9 When a Parliamentary Election takes place, the activities of the Local Party shall be suspended except as necessary to comply with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and such power vested in an Agent to act on its behalf as necessary for the conduct of the Election.
- 9.10 The membership of any member of the Local Party who stands at any public election as candidate or agent in opposition to a properly nominated candidate of the Party shall automatically and immediately be suspended and, subject to any appeal, shall be revoked.
- 9.11 Any candidate for election to public office standing as a representative of the Party must be a current member of the Party.
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10. Finance

- 10.1 The Local party's accounting period shall be annual, ending on 31st December each year.
- 10.2 The Treasurer shall keep, maintain for six years, and pass to his or her successor accounting records which shall be available for inspection in accordance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.
- 10.3 The Treasurer shall ensure that no donation of over £200 is accepted except from a permissible donor and shall keep records and submit donations reports to the Executive Committee and to Chief Executive of the Federal Party.
- 10.4 The Treasurer shall annually produce accounts which shall be approved by the Executive Committee and if required by the Political Parties, Elections & Referendums Act 2000 shall be audited and submitted to the Electoral Commission.
- 10.5 The Treasurer shall submit the accounts of the Local Party together with an independent report to a General Meeting [which shall be held not later than (...) in each year].
- 10.6 A copy of the annual accounts shall be sent to the Treasurer of the Regional Party and to the Chief Executive of the Federal Party.
- 10.7 The Local Party shall maintain one or more bank or other appropriate accounts in the name of the Local Party for which the mandate for withdrawal shall require the signature of at least two Officers who shall not come solely from members of any one family. The Local Party may maintain further accounts for the deposit of money not required for the time being, requiring the same signatures.
- 10.8 If the Local Party fails by 15th January to notify the Chief Executive of the Federal Party of the appointment of a Chair and a Treasurer the Local Party shall automatically be suspended.

11. Constitution and Interpretation

- 11.1 Amendments may only be made by a two-thirds majority at a quorate General Meeting. No amendment shall be made which conflicts with the Constitution of the Party or of the Regional Party. Any amendment to this Constitution shall be subject to approval by the Regional Party.
 - 11.2 Details of any proposed amendment shall be sent to all members with the notice of the General Meeting.
 - 11.3 If the Model Constitution for Local Parties (England) is amended, any provision of this constitution shall be deemed to be correspondingly amended, unless the Local Party resolves in accordance with 11.1 above at a quorate General Meeting held within 6 months of receiving notice of the amendment not to accept it.
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- 11.4 One copy of the Constitution shall be deposited with the Secretary of the Regional Party; and one shall be kept with the minute book of the Local Party. Any member shall be provided with a copy of the Constitution on request.
- 11.5 In the event of any question of interpretation arising, or any question on which this Constitution is silent, the Executive Committee shall have power to act according to its interpretation of the Constitution, or at its discretion, subject to Article 8 of the Constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England and Article 14 of the Constitution of the Federal Party.
- 11.6 No word or construction in this Constitution shall be taken to imply any discrimination whatsoever with regard to sex, race, colour, creed, age, disability, sexual orientation or any other ground other than political belief or practice.
- 11.7 In the event of the dissolution or suspension of the Local Party, the assets of the Local Party shall vest in the Regional Party on trust for the future reconstitution of the Local Party, unless explicitly provided otherwise by a General Meeting in the event of dissolution pursuant upon boundary changes and subject to the agreement of the Regional Party.
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Notes on this Model Constitution

This model constitution is recommended to Local Parties in England, to be adapted as necessary to suit local circumstances.

The symbol (...) indicates a suitable value to be fixed by the Local Party. Defaults are defined below.

Words and sections in square brackets [...] are optional and Local Parties may choose to include or omit them, subject to the requirements detailed below. By default they are all included (with the first alternatives in Sections 6.4, 7.2(h), 8.5, 8.5(e), 9.1, 9.3 and 9.5), except the words in square brackets in 10.5 are not included).

If amended, the document adopted should be forwarded to the Regional Party to confirm that it conforms with the Party Constitution. There are some sections, indicated below, where variation is likely to conflict with the Party Constitution.

1,2. Name and Definitions

The name should be taken from the constituency, and may optionally include the word “Constituency” or “Local”.

A Local Party covering more than one constituency will wish to choose a suitable form for its name, to define the several constituencies. Changes throughout this constitution are necessary to reflect such a Local Party’s multi-constituency structure.

Otherwise the definitions should not be changed.

3. Objects

Should not be subtracted from, but Local Parties might wish to add additional objects, for instance the provision of social facilities for members.

4. Membership

Should not generally be changed. The powers of the Executive Committee might be reduced or transferred to General Meetings.

5. Officers and Executive Committee

Every Local Party must have a Chair and a Treasurer, which is a legal requirement under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act. The same person cannot combine the offices of Chair and Treasurer. Each Local Party must also have a Data Officer, in order to operate the Party's membership system satisfactorily. This Model Constitution does not allow for the same person to be elected to more than one office, but small Local Parties (e.g. with less than 100 members) wishing to combine offices may with the agreement of their Region amend the Model. If a Local Party finds it impossible to elect five separate people to fill the offices, it may co-opt one of the officers to do a second job, except that the Chair and Treasurer must be separate people at all times

Local Parties might decide to:

- (a) elect extra officers, e.g. Social Secretary, Press Officer, Equal Opportunities Officer;
- (b) remove the casting vote of the Chair, or to give the Chair a casting vote only;
- (c) dispense with the Honorary Office of President.

Local Parties should fix the scale of Branch, direct, Councillor and Youth/Student representation on the Executive Committee on an equitable basis and to accord with local circumstances. Either the number of direct representatives (b), or representatives per Branch (c) must be sufficient to enable fair representation of opinions within the Local Party. A minimum of 6 is recommended in one class. Unless the Local Party has a small number of large wards/branches the larger number would be in class (b).

The default numbers in Section 5.3 are 10 in (b), 1 and 2 in (c), 1 each in (e) and (g) and 3 in (f). The relevant County and District/Borough/Unitary Council names should be inserted in (e) and (f). If the Local Party area covers more than one District/Borough, each Council group may be represented separately or jointly, depending on local circumstances. Section 5.3 (e) may be dispensed with where there is no County Council.

The list of categories of Executive Committee members should not be subtracted from, but may be increased in special circumstances.

If there are Ordinary Members the number of co-opted Members in 5.4 may not be more than the number of Ordinary Members. If there are no Ordinary Members then the Local Party must determine the maximum number of co-opted Members. The default number is ten.

The Executive Committee is required to meet at least quarterly. More frequent (e.g. monthly) meetings may be appropriate. If the Executive Committee only meets quarterly, it might be appropriate to provide for a "Finance and General Purposes Committee", by whatever name is preferred, with specific make-up and powers, to meet more often.

6. Elections

Most changes to the provisions for election and holding office would conflict with the Federal Constitution. Elections can be by postal ballot of all members or by the members present at the AGM. The same method of election should be used for Officers, Ordinary Members and Conference Representatives.

Local Parties should appoint a person who is not a candidate, a close relative of a candidate or the proposer or seconder of a candidate (“a disinterested person”) as Returning Officer. Local Parties anticipating contested elections may wish to ask their Region to nominate a person from outside the Local Party to act as Returning Officer.

7. General Meetings

Most changes would conflict with the Federal Constitution. Provisions could be added, notice periods could be lengthened or a large Local Party might decide to raise the required quorum.

8. Local Branches

It is for the Local Party to decide whether it wishes to have any Branch structure. If it does not then the whole of Section 8 together with the references to Branches in Section 9 should be deleted.

If the Local Party wishes to have a Branch structure then the provisions in 8.1 to 8.8 set out the necessary constitutional provisions. A Model Constitution for Branches is appended and should be followed, but may be varied by Branches with the agreement of the Local Party Executive.

8.5 contains a number of options for the financial arrangements of Branches. Local Parties should decide which they want to adopt. A Local Party could provide for one version to apply to some branches and another version to others. Either the Local Party may provide for Branch funds to be held by the Local Party Treasurer (first option 8.5) or to be held separately (second option 8.5) in which case the Branch must have a Treasurer and produce accounts. Where the Local Party Treasurer holds Branch funds, they may be held as part of the funds of the Local Party (in which case the words in square brackets are retained). The Branch then has no financial autonomy. Alternatively, the Branch funds may be held by the Local Party Treasurer as a separate account (in which case the words in square brackets in the first version of 8.5 should be deleted). In default the first option applies with the words in square brackets retained.

9. Candidates and Elections

Most changes would conflict with the Federal Constitution. The Party Constitution and rules made by the Joint States Candidates Committee cover Parliamentary Candidate selection. Regional Parties will make rules for the selection of candidates for Regional Government. City/Borough/District Mayors are Local Government elections and Local Party Constitutions should make appropriate provision for the selection of Mayoral Candidates. 9.6 will apply where the Local Government area covers more than one Local Party.

The last sentence of 9.1 only applies to a Local Party covering more than one Constituency. Only one of the electoral college options, before or after the “/”, should then be included.

A Local Party should determine which method to use for local election candidate selection - a General Meeting or a postal ballot_and whether the selection is to be done by only the members in the relevant electoral area, by all members of the Branch or by all members of the Local Party. 9.3 and 9.4 should then be adapted accordingly. It is automatically provided that the Local Party undertakes the selection where there is no branch. 9.4 provides a minimum number of members for selections by electoral areas. This provision is not needed when selection is by all members of the Local Party or all members of the Branch, when the relevant minimum numbers are specified in other provisions.

9.5 provides for the selection procedure when a selection has to be conducted at short notice, as is often the case for by-elections. The Local Party should decide whether emergency selections are to be by the Branch Committee (where there is one) or by the Local Party Executive.

Section 9.7 should only be deleted if Local Parties find them inappropriate in local circumstances.

10. Finance

Most changes would conflict with the Federal Constitution and with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.

In 10.5 the Local Party may wish to provide for a Special General Meeting to be held reasonably soon after the financial year-end on 31st December to consider the annual accounts. In that event at the end of this paragraph a date should be inserted, for example 28th February or 31st March. The reference to the accounts being approved by the AGM in 7.2(b) should then be deleted, but not the references to a Treasurer’s report and budget. Where Local Party accounts are required to be submitted to the Electoral Commission and published, where the Local Party’s gross income or total expenditure is over £25,000, early approval of the Accounts by a Special General Meeting is recommended.

The officers whose signatures are required to draw money might be specified more precisely in 10.7, especially if extra officers have been created. No bank account should be operated on a single signature or by two members of the same family.

11. Constitution and Interpretation

None of the points in this section should be omitted. Most changes would conflict with the Federal Constitution and rules made to ensure the Party's compliance with the Political Parties, Elections & Referendums Act 2000.

Model Constitution for Branches

Constitution of the “... Branch of the ... Liberal Democrats”

1. Name

1.1 The name of the Branch shall be “... Branch Liberal Democrats.”

2. Objectives

2.1 The objects of the Branch shall be to further the objects of the ... Liberal Democrats (the “Local Party”) within the area covered by the Branch.

3. Branch area

3.1 The ... Branch area will be that part of the area of the ... Local Party in ... wards of the ... wards.

4. Members

4.1 The members of the Branch shall be:

- (a) All members of the Local Party whose Registered Membership Address (as defined in the English Party Membership Rules) is within the Branch area, unless they have opted to be a member of another Branch;
- (b) Any councillor who represents a ward or division falling wholly or partially within the Branch area and who opts to be a member of the Branch;
- (c) Other members of the Local Party who wish to be members, if the Branch’s Executive and the Local Party Executive Committee agree.

4.2 No person who is not a member of the Local Party may be a member of the Branch.

4.3 No person may be a member of more than one Branch.

4.4 The Branch may not levy a membership fee on its members.

5. Officers and Executive

5.1 The Officers of the Branch shall be Chair, Secretary, [Treasurer] and Membership Development Officer, who shall be elected annually.

5.2 The general and financial business of the Branch shall be conducted by a committee (the “Executive”), subject to the decisions of General Meetings. The Executive shall consist of:

- (a) The Officers;
 - (b) ... Ordinary Members, elected annually;
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- (c) ... representatives elected annually by and from the Branch's members on County/District/Borough/Unitary/Parish/Town Council representing wards/divisions falling wholly or partially within the Branch area;
- (d) ... representatives elected annually by and from members of the Party's Youth and Student Organisation who are also members of the Branch.

5.3 The Executive may co-opt up to ... additional members, for a term expiring not later than that of the next AGM.

Note: the number should not exceed the number of ordinary members.

- 5.4 The Executive may fill any vacancy occurring among the Officers or Ordinary Members. Any vacancy amongst the Officers shall, if possible, be filled from amongst the other members of the Executive.
- 5.5 In urgent circumstances, the Officers may act on behalf of the Executive They shall report on all such actions to the next meeting of the Executive.

6. Elections of Executive Members and others

- 6.1 The Officers and Ordinary Members and any representatives to the Local Party's Executive Committee, as provided for in the Local Party's constitution, shall be elected by and from the members of the Branch at the time of the Annual General Meeting by the single transferable vote (STV) and secret ballot [in which all branch members are sent ballot papers].
- 6.2 The term of office for Officers and Ordinary Members shall be from 1st January following their election until the following 31st December.
- 6.3 The [Executive][Local Party] shall appoint a Returning Officer for the election of Officers and Ordinary Members before the issue of notice of the AGM under 7.3. The Returning Officer will make any supplementary rules as they feel fit and are consistent with the Federal and English Party constitutions, the English Party's membership rules and any rules made by the local party.
- 6.4 Representatives from the party's councillors and the Youth and Student organisation shall be elected according to rules set by the relevant Council Group(s) and the Youth and Student organisation.
- 6.5 The names and addresses of all Executive members shall be kept by the Secretary and provided to the Secretary of the Local Party within 7 days of their election or of any change in any Officer.
- 6.6 The Executive may appoint substitute representatives to the Local Party's Executive Committee if there is a casual vacancy or an elected representative is not able to be present at a meeting.
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Note: This should only be included if the Local Party's constitution permits (see 8.4 of the model Local Party Constitution).

7. General meetings

- 7.1 The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be on a day and at a time and place decided by the Executive, not before 1st September and not later than 30th November. The Executive may postpone an AGM if it would conflict with any public election involving the Branch's area. The Local Party may require the AGM to be held before the AGM of the Local Party or before some other particular date.
- 7.2 The business of the AGM shall be:
- (a) To receive reports from all the Officers on their activities in the last year;
 - (b) To receive reports from councillors representing wards or divisions falling wholly or partially within the Branch area (if such people exist);
 - [(c) To receive a financial report;]
 - [(c) To consider, and if thought fit adopt, the accounts for the previous financial year together with an independent report on those accounts and the budget for the current financial year;]
 - (d) [To appoint a person(s) to produce an independent report on the accounts for the current financial year][To confirm or reject the appointment recommended by the Local Party of a person(s) to produce an independent report on the accounts];]
 - (e) To consider any motion which has been submitted by any two members of the Branch to the Secretary in time for circulation with the notice of the AGM;
 - (f) Any other business specified by the constitution, or directed by the Executive.
- 7.3 The Secretary shall give all members at least 14 days written notice of the time and place of the AGM.
- 7.4 A Special General Meeting may be convened by the Officers, the Executive or on receipt of a requisition signed by at least one fifth of the Branch's membership. Such a meeting shall be convened within 28 days of being requested, and with members being given at least 14 days written notice of its time and place. It shall only conduct business stated in the notice calling it.
- 7.5 Five members shall form the quorum at any General Meeting.
- 7.6 Notice and minutes of all General Meetings and Executive Meetings shall be kept by the Secretary and copies shall be sent to the Secretary of the Local Party.

8. Candidates for public office

- 8.1 The Branch shall perform the tasks prescribed by the constitution of the Local Party in connection with the selection of local government candidates for any electoral area within its area, and in conjunction with the appropriate adjoining Branch(es) or the Local Party for any electoral areas lying only partially within the Branch's area.
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- 8.2 The Executive shall seek to ensure, as far as is practicable, that all seats within its area on Principal Local Authorities are contested by members of the Party.
- 8.3 Where it is necessary to select one or more local government candidates, for either Principal Local Authorities or parish or town councils:
- (a) The Executive shall ensure that any candidate approval process specified by the Local Party is followed;
 - (b) The timetable for the selection shall be agreed by the Executive, in consultation with the Executive of the Local Party;
 - (c) The Branch shall hold a [General Meeting][postal ballot], in which all members who are resident in the electoral area concerned [or of the Branch] may vote. If the eligible electorate does not exceed 10, the electorate shall be expanded to include members of the Branch Executive;
 - (d) The election shall be held by Single Transferable Vote (STV) and secret ballot;
 - (e) The [Executive][Local Party] shall appoint a Returning Officer for the election. The Returning Officer will make any supplementary rules as they feel fit and are consistent with the Local Party constitution, Federal and English Party constitutions, the English Party's Membership rules and any rules made by the Local Party.
 - (f) In any case in which time does not permit the holding of a [meeting]/[postal ballot] the Executive may select the candidate;
 - (g) Any candidate for election to public office standing as a representative of the Party must be a current member of the Party.
- 8.4 For the period of a local government election within its area, the Executive will resolve to suspend the activities of the Branch and to invest an Agent or Agents with the authority to act on its behalf in the conduct of the election campaign.
- 8.5 The suspension of the Local Party due to the holding of an election shall have the effect of also suspending the Branch's activities for the same period.
- 8.6 During the selection of [Mayor, Greater London Authority,] Parliamentary and European candidates, the Branch and its members shall comply with the relevant selection rules.

9. Finance

- [9.1 The finances of the Branch shall be held by the Treasurer of the Local Party [as part of the funds of the Local Party] and subject to the constitution of the Local Party.]
- [9.1 The Branch's accounting period shall be the same as that of the Local Party.
- 9.2 The Treasurer shall keep, maintain for six years, and pass to his or her successor accounting records which shall be available for inspection in accordance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.
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- 9.3 The Treasurer shall ensure that no donation of over £200 is accepted except from a permissible donor and shall keep records and submit donations reports to the Treasurer of the Local Party.
- 9.4 The Treasurer shall annually produce accounts which shall be approved by the Branch Committee and shall be sent to the Treasurer of the Local Party by a date to be specified by the Treasurer of the Local Party.
- 9.5 The Treasurer shall submit the accounts of the Branch together with an independent report to [the Annual General Meeting][a General Meeting to be held not later than (...)]
- 9.6 The authorised signatories on any branch bank account shall be at least two in number, and shall not come solely from members of any one family.]

Note: The Local Party Constitution will specify whether the finances of the Branch are to be held as part of the funds of the Local party or separately. If the finances of the Branch are held as part of the funds of the Local Party then no Branch Treasurer is needed (delete in 5.1), the AGM will receive a financial report but not accounts (first option 7.2(c) and delete 7.2(d) and only the first option 9.1 is required (delete second option 9.2 through to 9.6). If the branch holds its own funds independently it must have a Branch Treasurer, the AGM will receive accounts (second option 7.2(c) and 7.2(d)) and second option 9.1 through to 9.6 are required

10. Constitution and interpretation

- 10.1 Amendments to this constitution may only be made by a two-third majority at a General Meeting. Details of any proposed change shall be sent to all members with the notice of the General Meeting.
- 10.2 Any changes to this constitution shall only come into force after being approved by the Executive Committee of the Local Party. No amendment may be made or approved which would conflict with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 or with the constitutions of the Local Party, English Party, Federal Party or English Party's Membership Rules.
- 10.3 A copy of this constitution shall be kept by the Secretary and sent to the Local Party Secretary.
- 10.4 In the event of any question on which this Constitution is silent, the Constitution of the Local Party shall be followed. In the event of any question of interpretation arising the Executive shall have the power to act according to its interpretation of the constitution, or, if it does not cover the issue, at its discretion, subject to the duty of the Local Party to ensure the Branch's compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and with its Constitution, the Local Party Constitution and the English and Federal Party Constitutions and subject to Article 8 of the Constitution
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THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

of the Liberal Democrats in England and Article 14 of the Constitution of the Federal Party.

- 10.5 The Branch may choose to dissolve itself by a two-thirds majority at a General Meeting, or may be dissolved following the procedure laid out in the Local Party's constitution. The funds of the Branch shall, if dissolved, be applied first to paying its debts, with any surplus being added to the funds of the Local Party.
- 10.6 The Executive shall perform the same functions as that of a "Branch Committee" under the Local Party's constitution.
- 10.7 The Branch shall be subject to the ultimate authority of the Local Party.

Rules for the Selection of Parliamentary Candidates

(Version 4.4, November 2008)

1 Conventions and Definitions

1.1 Conventions

The following conventions and definitions are used within these rules.

a) Terms used for mandatory cases

‘shall’ ‘must’ ‘will’

b) Terms used for cases where discretion or choice can be exercised according to the circumstances

‘can’ ‘may’ ‘should’

1.2 Where a mandatory action or case is shown, then failure to comply is considered an automatic breach of the selection rules. Where a discretionary action or case is shown, this may be taken into account when reviewing any breaches or deviations from the rules.

1.3 Definitions

The following definitions and abbreviations apply to these rules

<i>Applicants</i>	Those who return applications to the Returning Officer
<i>ECC</i>	English Candidates’ Committee
<i>Local Party</i>	Shall include any shadow or provisional Local Parties set up under the authority of the English Party or any Local Parties being run by the Regional Party at the time of their selection.
<i>PPC</i>	Prospective Parliamentary Candidate
<i>PPERA</i>	Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act
<i>Publications</i>	Includes electronic as well as printed media
<i>RCC</i>	Regional Candidates’ Chair
<i>RO</i>	Returning Officer
<i>RON</i>	Re-open nominations – an option available on a ballot paper in the case of non-standard shortlists being offered to members
<i>Selection register</i>	List of members eligible to vote in a selection
<i>Standard shortlists</i>	Shortlists as defined in Section 14, being those which must normally apply in selections
<i>The Party</i>	Liberal Democrat Party
<i>Written or in writing</i>	includes communications transmitted by post, fax, e-mail or hand-delivered unless specifically stated otherwise in the text.

2 Authority of the Rules

- 2.1** These Selection Rules are issued by the English Candidates' Committee and supersede any previous versions of the rules. They derive their authority from and are part of the Federal and English State Constitutions of the Party.
- 2.2** The rules also operate in conjunction with the Party's Membership Rules and Data Protection Policy.
- 2.3** Where appropriate these rules are subject to relevant Acts of Parliament in force at any time, and in particular the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act (PPERA) and any subsequent statutory additions or amendments to this legislation.
- 2.4** Any infringement of the above shall constitute an infringement of these Selection Rules

3 Scope of the Rules & Permitted Variations

3.1 Application of the rules

All constituencies in England must use these rules when selecting their PPC. The ECC shall prescribe separate procedures for the reselection of sitting MP's, for the selection of PPC's in suspended Local Parties and for constituencies which are likely to be subject to boundary changes.

3.2 Variation of the rules

The ECC shall prescribe a separate process in the case of by-elections and in any other exceptional circumstances as defined in these rules.

3.3 Variation of standard shortlists

In addition, the ECC shall have the power to decide to vary the size and composition of permitted shortlists in groups of seats and/or, at certain times in the electoral cycle, to direct the appointment of candidates by the RCC in certain cases. When such variations are in force, a ballot of the membership shall be arranged where ever possible, before a candidate's appointment is confirmed.

3.4 Re-opening Nominations (RON)

Whenever a shortlist of less than the standard minimum is presented in a ballot to the membership, the choice to 'Re-open Nominations' (RON) must be included on the ballot paper, except where the ECC has ruled otherwise under Section 3.3.

3.5 Interpretation of the rules by Returning Officer

Returning Officers have a duty to interpret the rules where they are silent or unclear, but must do so using principles derived from the rules. They must also use the current guidance issued to Returning Officers from time to time by the ECC, including any precedents set by appeal rulings.

3.6 If Returning Officers are in doubt about these interpretations, they must consult their Regional Candidates Chair for advice before making any rulings or changes, or in her/his absence, the Chair of the ECC.

3.7 Multi-Constituency Local Parties and multi Local Party Constituencies

Where the Local Party includes more than one constituency, the Returning Officer must consult the Local Party's constitution to determine whether a separate or joint selection process is required. If the local constitution is silent, then all members of the Local Party shall be entitled to vote. If, when the membership is divided between the constituencies, one or more has less than 30 members, then the selection for those constituencies with under 30 members must be held jointly (regardless of any Local Party constitution).

4 Timetable & Stages in the Selection

4.1 Local Parties, Returning Officers and Regional Candidates' Chairs are required to conduct their selections using the timetable and stages for the selection as laid out in the rules and to do this in a prompt and timely manner.

4.2 The Regional Candidates' Chair has the right to give permission to vary or extend the timetable in the case of an imminent election or when there are insufficient applicants to allow the selection to proceed normally or in other exceptional circumstances. In granting this permission the RCC must use the rulings and guidance currently in force as issued by the ECC under Section 3.3.

5 Starting the Selection and the Appointment of a Returning Officer

5.1 Local Parties wishing to begin their selection process must resolve to seek permission to do so at a meeting of their Local Party Executive. They must then contact their Regional Candidates Chair for permission to proceed and to request the appointment of a Returning Officer, giving the name of a local contact to liaise with the Returning Officer in the first instance.

5.2 Under no circumstances shall a Local Party attempt to proceed with their selection without the approval of the Regional Candidates' Chair.

5.3 Appointment of the Returning Officer

When permission is given to start a selection, a Returning Officer shall be appointed by the Regional Candidates Chair from the list of accredited Returning Officers held by the ECC. The appointment must be notified in writing to the Local Party and to the Returning Officer, giving the Returning Officer the details of a contact from the Local Party Executive.

5.4 Neutrality and conflicts of interest

The Returning Officer must be from outside the constituency selecting and have no interest in that selection. They would not normally be someone who had recently taken part in a selection in that constituency (for example, a past PPC or applicant) or be related to likely applicants. In the event that there is a potential conflict of interest, the Returning Officer shall declare it and seek a ruling from the Regional Candidates' Chair as to whether they should withdraw from the selection.

5.5 Returning Officer's Duties

The Returning Officer has a duty to

- a) Oversee the selection process within the rules
- b) Safeguard the rights of members
- c) Ensure fair and equal treatment of all applicants

5.6 Returning Officer's and Other Expenses

The Local Party is responsible for the costs of the selection, including the costs of the advertisement and the Returning Officer's expenses, but not the personal expenses of the applicants or candidates. The Returning Officer shall claim expenses as soon as possible after the completion of the selection process and in line with the guidance issued by the ECC for this purpose.

5.7 Replacing a Returning Officer

If a Returning Officer is unable to carry out their duties, either wholly or in part during a selection, they must contact the RCC to seek a substitute to act for them. It is expected that sufficient information and appropriate support will be provided to the substitute RO to enable them to carry out their role.

5.8 The Regional Candidate's Chair shall, after consulting the Returning Officer and the Chair of ECC, replace any Returning Officer who is failing to carry out their duties satisfactorily.

5.9 Paid agents and locally paid staff

Paid Agents and locally paid staff may not take part in the selection process, except as voting members of the Local Party where applicable.

6 Appointing & Training the Selection Committee

6.1 Size of the Selection Committee

The Selection Committee must be a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 7 members and they must all have been Party members for at least one year.

6.2 Appointment and composition of the Selection Committee

The Local Party Executive and the Returning Officer must agree the criteria for the composition of the Selection Committee along with other matters of procedure and timings. The Returning Officer will obtain demographic information about the constituency and the membership within it and use this to determine the appropriate

criteria for Selection Committee membership. Only then can the Local Party submit details of the proposed Selection Committee for the Returning Officer's approval.

- 6.3** The Selection Committee membership must include a balance of men and women and must fairly reflect the membership of the constituency in terms of geography, a balance between councillors and officers of the Local Party and those who are not, age, time in the party and ethnicity. Particular note must be taken of the presence of ethnic minority communities within the membership and if there is a significant proportion of said communities within the electorate but not the membership, then positive steps shall be taken to reflect this on the Selection Committee where ever possible. Priority shall be given to appointing a representative committee rather than one comprising experts or officers of the Local Party.
- 6.4** The Local Party Executive must formally appoint, and the Returning Officer approve, the list of Selection Committee members. The composition of the Selection Committee must be based on the criteria agreed with the Returning Officer under Section 6.2. Some or all of the Selection Committee must be trained, depending on the status of the seat as defined in Section 6.7.
- 6.5 Conflicts of Interest**
If any local member is considering standing for the seat, then they must declare their interest and withdraw from the part of meetings where the selection is being discussed and not take part in decisions being made about the selection.
- 6.6** Selection Committee members must not be relatives or partners of applicants or any member whose position as regards the selection and its outcome could be seen as making a difference to the decisions s/he would make. It is the duty of Selection Committee members to declare any such interests and withdraw.
- 6.7 Training Selection Committee Members**
In Priority seats all members of the Selection Committee must have received the Party's official training in the operation of the selection process. In all other seats at least 2 people must be trained unless the RCC determines otherwise, one of which must be the Selection Committee chair. The Returning Officer and the RCC are responsible for checking with the data base maintained by the Candidates Office that the appropriate number of Selection Committee members have been trained.
- 6.8** Constituencies may send more than the required number of members to be trained but the final composition of the Selection Committee must reflect the criteria, numbers and balance as described above.
- 6.9** The Returning Officer must ensure that anyone who has not received training is aware of the principles and areas covered in that training and has received copies of the relevant materials distributed at the training.
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6.10 Final Composition of the Selection Committee

Once the training is completed, a final list of committee members shall be approved by the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer must ensure that the final composition of the Selection Committee is as far as possible representative as laid down under Section 6.3.

6.11 Returning Officer Attending Selection Committee Meetings

The Returning Officer has a duty and the right to attend all Selection Committee meetings, interviews and assessments and has the right to intervene, including taking the Chair if necessary, but does not vote. If unable to attend, then s/he may send a substitute who shall be a qualified Returning Officer from outside the constituency.

6.12 Role of the Local Party Executive in the Selection Process

In appointing the Selection Committee the Local Party Executive delegates power to carry out the role as defined in the rules for selection. If the Local Party Executive or any other member considers the Selection Committee is failing in its duties under the rules, then they shall notify the Returning Officer and use the process defined under Section 33 to pursue their complaint.

6.13 Selection Committees have a duty to keep the Local Party Executive informed of the progress of the selection whilst continuing to exercise their delegated powers under the rules and maintaining the required confidentiality of the process.

6.14 Selecting the Chair of the Selection Committee

A Chair of the Selection Committee is then appointed by the Committee members from amongst those members of the committee who have been trained.

7 Role of the Selection Committee

7.1 The Selection Committee is responsible for the following tasks, approved and supervised by the Returning Officer at all stages

- a) Defining the attributes for a PPC in their constituency (the Selection Criteria)
 - b) Producing an application pack to send to applicants who respond to the advertisement for the seat
 - c) Devising and carrying out an assessment process to evaluate applicants for the seat according to the rules, guidance and training produced by the ECC and producing a shortlist of those applicants
 - d) Ensuring a mailing is produced to send to members about the selection process including the manifestos from shortlisted applicants and details of hustings and other events where members can meet those applicants.
 - e) Assist the Returning Officer in making arrangements for the hustings meeting(s)
 - f) Generally assisting in the running of the selection process in a fair and unbiased way.
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7.2 Contact between Applicants and Selection Committee Members

Applicants for a seat will be given the names of the Selection Committee but are not permitted to contact those people about the selection until after the shortlist has been announced, unless that person is identified as the individual giving feedback to applicants under Rule 20.3. Once the shortlist is announced, applicants may privately discuss their candidature with the Selection Committee members. Selection committee members are prohibited from campaigning for or against the selection of any applicant – see Rule 7.5

7.3 Conduct of ‘normal business’ by applicants for a seat

Applicants and Selection Committee members may continue to conduct their normal business within the Party provided their activities are not calculated to have an influence on the selection process and are no more than reasonably necessary for the purpose or functions in question. In cases of any doubt about such activities, applicants must consult the Returning Officer for their ruling.

7.4 Confidentiality and neutrality

The Selection Committee have a duty of confidentiality concerning the details of the applications and assessments of applicants and to behave in a fair and unbiased way towards all applicants.

7.5 Campaigning by Selection Committee members

Selection Committee members may not campaign for or against the selection of any applicant or endorse or declare their support for anyone on the shortlist. They are entitled to vote as a member of the Local Party. They may contact shortlisted applicants after the shortlist has been announced to discuss privately any issues which will help them decide how to cast their vote in the selection.

8 Selection Criteria

8.1 Who draws up the selection criteria

The Selection Criteria can only be finalised by the Selection Committee after the required number of members has been trained and in the presence of the Returning Officer who must agree these before they are used or the advertisement is placed.

8.2 How the selection criteria are used

The Selection Criteria are used throughout the process of assessment for the selection. They must be disclosed to applicants for the seat and to members voting in the selection (although not necessarily including the priorities for the seat – see Section 22.1).

8.3 What the selection criteria contain

The Selection Criteria must define the attributes of a PPC for that constituency, using the guidance and training provided by the Party to ensure fair, equal and non discriminatory treatment of applicants for the seat.

8.4 Essential and important selection criteria

The Committee may decide that certain criteria are essential or that they wish to give more weight or importance to some over others. If this is done, then the list of Selection Criteria must clearly indicate which these are.

8.5 Assessing applicants using the selection criteria

Any assessment process, including application forms, questions at interviews, marking schemes and minimum standards of achievement must also reflect any importance or weighting given to the selection criteria

8.6 Understanding the criteria and setting minimum standards

The Selection Committee must also agree minimum standards to be achieved by applicants before they can be placed on the shortlist . They must arrive at a detailed understanding of the meaning of the criteria as they will be used to assess applicants.

8.7 Giving applicants details of the marking scheme to be used

In all cases, the applicants must be informed about the approved marking scheme prior to either the longlisting process or the conduct of the interviews.

9 Application Pack & Local Contacts

9.1 Preparing the application pack

An application pack shall be prepared prior to the placing of the advertisement for the seat, which must include

- a) List of contents and/or a covering letter
- b) An application form
- c) A copy of the Selection criteria
- d) Names of the Selection Committee members
- e) A profile of the constituency including names of 2 or 3 local contacts for information
- f) Details of the version number of the current Selection Rules and information on how to obtain a copy of the rules from the Returning Officer if the applicant requires one.

9.2 The application pack shall be based on the current training and guidance given by the Party to Returning Officers and Selection Committees concerning this. The pack must be approved by the Returning Officer as being compliant with the rules for selection.

9.3 Sending out the application pack

The application pack must be offered by the Returning Officer to all applicants in the same format, which shall include an electronic version where possible

9.4 Application form

The application form must reflect the selection criteria for the constituency with regards to the information sought, the questions asked and the balance of these with any essential or important criteria as have been defined by the Selection Committee

9.5 Extra information or exercises

If it is anticipated that there would be a significant number of applications, a requirement for an additional exercise or submission or information can be included. Any such requirement must be consistently applied to all applicants and must not be of such a nature that, in the opinion of the Returning Officer, it would discourage applications.

9.6 Constituency profile and local contacts

The constituency profile shall reflect realistic local electoral expectations and must provide an appropriate level of information bearing in mind any exercises or tasks applicants may be asked to complete. Local contacts (who must not be members of the Selection Committee) should represent an appropriate cross section of the Local Party and local knowledge.

10 Advertisement & Dealing with Applicants

10.1 Advertising and publicising the Selection

All selections must be advertised in the Party's official newspaper (Liberal Democrat News) using the standard wording given in the Appendix to these rules. An additional local paragraph about the seat and the challenges it presents may be added. The wording must be approved by the Returning Officer and the advertisement submitted on the form or in the format as described in guidance given by the Party to Returning Officers.

10.2 Advertising elsewhere within the Party

The Local Party is encouraged also to advertise the selection by other means available within the Party such as local newsletter, the Local Party website, any national website designed for this purpose and other Liberal Democrat publications. Any advertisement must use either the standard advertisement wording, or if the Local Party wish to vary this, only with the specific written permission of the Returning Officer for that variation.

10.3 Paying for the advert

The Local Party is required to pay for the advertisement at the standard rate applying at the time.

10.4 Application deadline

The advertisement must include the deadline (date and time) for receipt of applications and details of how to contact the Returning Officer (name address and telephone number as a minimum, with a fax and email address where available)

10.5 Maintaining neutrality in reference to the selection

The Local Party may give information to Liberal Democrat members about their intention to begin their selection but must ensure that no potential applicant is either discouraged by their actions or that any suggestion is given of favouring or giving preference to a particular individual. In case of doubt about any actions relating to this

clause, the Local Party shall refer either to their Returning Officer (where appointed) or to the RCC for a ruling concerning this.

- 10.6** Any references made to the selection by the Local Party shall be neutral with regard to any applicants or potential applicants and shall give a Local Party contact (who must not be a member of the Selection Committee), or when appointed, the Returning Officer's details for individuals to make enquiries about the selection.

10.7 Intentions of previous PPC

Information about the intention of a previous PPC not to stand again can only be given with the specific written permission of that individual and with the approval of the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall satisfy his/herself that there is no doubt or inappropriate pressure being applied to that individual to state their intentions.

10.8 Role in selection of previous PPC or MP

Once a previous PPC or sitting MP has decided to stand down, s/he must take no part in the selection of their successor, except to vote if s/he is a local member.

10.9 Applications from unapproved candidates

Approved and unapproved candidates are entitled to apply for the seat but the Selection Committee has the discretion to decide whether to wait for all or none of the unapproved applicants to gain approval. Only applicants who are approved candidates by the date of the shortlisting interview may be considered by the selection committee for shortlisting and no shortlist may include an unapproved candidate. The Returning Officer is responsible for verifying their approval status by contacting the Candidate's Office.

10.10 Dealing with requests for applications pack

The Returning Officer must deal with requests for application packs promptly and offer any facilities such as email versions or other assistance to all applicants.

10.11 Discrimination against particular applicants

No applicant should be disadvantaged by their ability or inability to use a particular form of transmission or completion of their application. Due regard must be given to the provisions of relevant legislation including disability discrimination requirements.

11 Applicants' or potential applicants' activity before, during and after publication of advert

11.1 Contact with the Local Party prior to the advert

Prior to the publication of the advertisement of a selection, prospective applicants may contact Local Party Officers, Local Councillors and members of the constituency for information about the seat and the local organisation, but

- a) Must not canvass for the votes of members in the selection
 - b) Must not seek to obtain access to or use the membership list to canvass members or for any purpose in connection with the selection.
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- c) Must not use the term Parliamentary Spokesperson for that constituency in reference to themselves.

Party members who are interested in applying for a selection may involve themselves in the work of that constituency. If they are asked about their intentions concerning the selection may express interest but must not actively solicit member's vote for their candidature.

11.2 Conduct of normal business

In the case of a local member and the selection in their own constituency, prospective applicants may continue to work in their normal role within the Local Party but shall not use their position to canvass for votes for the selection.

11.3 Date of enforceability of selection rules

The rules for selection are fully enforceable from the date of publication of the advertisement and applicants shall consult the Returning Officer for their ruling on any proposed activity which may involve them in canvassing or campaigning for the selection before the official starting date of the campaign.

12 Who can vote in the Selection?

12.1 Cut off date for voting in the selection

A list of local members who are eligible to vote in the selection (known as the Selection Register) is produced by Membership Services as at the publication date of the advertisement for the seat in the official Party newspaper (the qualifying date).

12.2 Eligible members

An eligible member shall be that which is defined in the English and Federal Party constitutions and Membership Rules as entitled to vote in internal party elections.

12.3 Information on the Selection Register

The Selection Register must include the membership number, name, address, telephone number & email address (where available) and date of expiry of membership.

12.4 Use of the Selection Register for mailing

The Selection Register must be used by the Returning Officer to send out the mailing to members about the selection and hustings and to issue ballot papers to members voting in the selection.

12.5 Copy of Selection Register for shortlisted applicants

Shortlisted applicants are entitled to a copy of the Selection Register for their use during the selection campaign. Shortlisted applicants may also provide the Selection Register to those campaigning on their behalf, subject to the provisions set out in the rules for the use of that data.

12.6 Setting up the Selection Register

The Returning Officer is responsible for obtaining a copy of the membership list for the selection at the qualifying date from Membership Services. The RO must check it for discrepancies with the latest local records via the Membership Secretary

12.7 Dealing with queries

Discrepancies and queries raised by the Membership Secretary about the Selection Register must be passed to the Returning Officer for checking with Membership Services. These queries must be resolved, wherever possible, by the date of the shortlisting to allow the prompt issue of the Selection Register to applicants.

Applicants must not contact Membership Services with their queries but shall pass them to the Returning Officer.

12.8 Any further discrepancies or queries which are raised or information about members who should be treated with sensitivity can be pursued with the Returning Officer during the course of the selection. Amendments to the list must be notified promptly to all shortlisted applicants and to the Local Party via the Membership Secretary.

12.9 Final make up of the Selection Register

The Returning Officer is responsible for finally agreeing who is entitled to be on the Selection Register, but in doing so must follow the Party's membership rules in making their decisions and preserve the rights of appeal contained in those rules.

13 Use of the Selection Register

13.1 Data protection

The use of the information provided in the Selection Register is subject to the Party's Data Protection Policy. Applicants must not use the data for any other purpose than that selection (i.e. the purpose for which it is provided)

13.2 Shortlisted applicants must confirm in writing to the Returning Officer that they agree to these conditions using the standard wording provided for this purpose by the Returning Officer. It is the responsibility of the shortlisted applicants to ensure that anyone else who is entitled to receive the Selection Register for the purposes of the selection observe these restrictions.

13.3 Use of other membership lists or information

Shortlisted applicants and their helpers and supporters must not use any other data apart from that provided for the selection in their campaigning with members, unless that information is provided to them by the individual member to whom it refers for use during the selection.

13.4 Disposing of Selection Register after selection

At the end of the selection process, shortlisted applicants must satisfy the Returning Officer that they and their helpers and supporters no longer have access to the Selection Register data.

14 Deciding if the Selection can go ahead

14.1 Number and gender balance of applicants required for a standard shortlist

The minimum number of applicants and their gender required for a selection to proceed normally with a standard shortlist is defined below, but may be varied from time to time by the ECC.

14.2 Unless covered by one of the exceptional circumstances approved by the RCC in line with rulings by the ECC, the size and gender balance of the shortlist must be

- a) Minimum 3 Maximum 5
- b) shortlists of 3 or 4 must have at least one applicant of each gender
- c) shortlists of 5 must have at least two applicants of each gender

14.3 Monitoring Applications

Once the advertisement for a selection has been published, the Returning Officer is responsible for monitoring the level of expressions of interest and applications they are receiving with a view to alerting the Chair of the Selection Committee and the RCC as to whether they anticipate any difficulty with regard to the number and gender of applicants being received and their approval status.

14.4 Canvassing for additional applicants

If it appears likely that there will be insufficient appropriate applicants by the closing date for applications given in the advertisement, or that this is actually the case by the closing date itself, then the RCC may direct that the Returning Officer allows the direct canvassing of approved candidates in a given area to alert them to the selection in question and invite their applications. This canvassing must not be undertaken by any member of the Selection Committee.

14.5 Any additional canvassing for applicants must only be undertaken for reasons of non-compliance with number and gender requirements in force at any time and must not discriminate actively in favour of or against individual applicants.

14.6 Permission to proceed without a standard shortlist

If permission to proceed with less than the standard required number is sought from the RCC, the Local Party via the Returning Officer will be asked to provide evidence of the efforts made to find other applicants apart from advertising.

14.7 Qualifying date for membership when selection is delayed

A delay in the selection proceeding, but without re-advertising means that the selection is considered to be a continuous process and the cut off date for membership remains the same. A new qualifying date for membership will only be declared as a result of the selection starting again from re-advertising or by the decision of an appeals panel in relation to the rules.

14.8 Notifying applicants of progress of the selection

The Returning Officer shall keep applicants informed as to the progress of the selection and notify all applicants as soon as possible whether the selection will proceed. At that time they shall inform them of the number and gender of those who have applied (but not their names or any other personal details).

15 Shortlisting Principles – General

15.1 The Selection Committee is required to produce a shortlist of applicants which most closely fit the criteria they have set, having due regard for the number and gender balance required by the selection rules, including any variations made from time to time by the ECC.

15.2 Basis for assessment of applicants

The basis for assessment at all times in this process must be the Selection Criteria. These Selection Criteria are used to establish a marking scheme, assess application forms and conduct interviews and other methods of assessment and to determine the cut off point for inclusion in the shortlist. The marking scheme must include minimum standards agreed in advance and take account of any essential or important criteria identified in the published Selection Criteria.

15.3 Long listing

If there are more than 10 applicants, the Selection Committee may use a 'long listing process' to decide who they wish to interview. Long listing must use the Selection Criteria as the basis for a marking scheme to decide who is interviewed.

15.4 Marking schemes

To promote neutrality and equality of treatment of all applicants, the Selection Committee must decide, and the Returning Officer must approve, the marking scheme(s) for ranking applicants before the names and applications are supplied to the committee. In all cases, the applicants must be informed about the approved marking scheme prior to either the longlisting process or the conduct of interviews.

15.5 Training and guidance

The ECC will provide and regularly update training and guidance for Selection Committees and Returning Officers on best practice and examples of previously used schemes to assist Local Parties in their evaluations.

16 Long & Shortlisting Process

16.1 Consistency of Selection Committee assessing applicants

Wherever possible and to ensure consistency, the same Selection Committee members shall conduct the interviews of the applicants.

16.2 Minimum common members of Selection Committee

Where it is not possible to have the same Selection Committee at all stages, there shall be a minimum of 3 members in common throughout the process.

16.3 Long listing process

The 'long listing process' (where there are more than 10 applicants) shall be conducted by the Selection Committee using the selection criteria and the marking system agreed in advance with the Returning Officer to decide who shall be interviewed. It will use the same principles of totalling scores and minimum standards as described for shortlisting interviews.

16.4 When to interview applicants

If the number of applications received is more than is needed for the shortlist, but not more than approximately twice that number, the Selection Committee must interview all the applicants before drawing up the shortlist.

16.5 If the number of applications does not exceed the maximum number of applicants who can be included on a standard shortlist, all the applicants can be shortlisted without interview. Although interviews are not mandatory, it is strongly recommended that they take place.

16.6 Interviewing to exclude applicants

If the Selection Committee wishes to exclude any of the applicants after longlisting, all must be interviewed.

17 Shortlisting Interviews

17.1 Venue and date for interviews

Shortlisting interviews must be conducted at a suitable, neutral venue, which is accessible to and does not discriminate against any applicants with disabilities and on a date and at a time which the applicants can be reasonably expected to attend.

17.2 Questions and marking schemes

Questions or tasks given to applicants must be based on the agreed selection criteria and reflect any weighting or importance the Selection Committee has given to those criteria. All these matters must be decided before the Selection Committee knows who are the applicants for the seat and using the training and guidance given at the Selection Committee training and from the Returning Officer.

17.3 The questions must not discriminate against any group of applicants such as women, applicants from a particular geographical area, ethnic communities or applicants with disabilities.

17.4 Financial inducements

Applicants cannot be asked if they will make a financial contribution to the Local Party and applicants must not offer financial inducements.

17.5 References and endorsements

Applicants may offer evidence of their past achievements during the process both on application forms and in interviews and other assessment processes. However, the Selection Committee must not seek written or verbal references from other Local Parties about the applicant's candidature in past elections, nor are applicants permitted to provide statements of support or endorsement from others.

17.6 Scoring the applicants by Selection Committee

Selection Committee members are required to arrive at their scoring and assessments of the applicants as individuals but may adjust their scores during the process to ensure they have marked applicants to a consistent standard.

17.7 Variations in scoring

Any wide variations in the scores between panel members may be examined by the Returning Officer, but on the understanding that this does not necessarily make them incorrect. Any discussion about these must take place on the basis of understanding the criteria and not with knowledge of the ranking or totals of scores for the applicants.

18 Drawing up the Shortlist

18.1 How the scores are used

The totalled scores of the Selection Committee are considered to represent their view of the applicants before them. The Returning Officer must be satisfied that the cut off point for including or excluding applicants from the shortlist is not being used to discriminate for or against any particular applicants.

18.2 When drawing up the shortlist, the Returning Officer will advise the Selection Committee of the total scores awarded but without disclosing the names of the applicants against those scores. The list will be drawn up taking account of the minimum standards agreed in advance for the shortlisting and the gaps in the rankings between each applicant's marks.

18.3 Dealing with gender balance

If the list arrived at in this manner is also balanced for gender as required by the rules, then all applicants who meet the required minimum standards will be included on the shortlist.

18.4 If the list does not conform to the gender balance required, then the Returning Officer will identify the scores associated with the male and female applicants to the Selection Committee and the shortlist will be drawn up accordingly. Where necessary, the list will be increased rather than decreased to conform to the gender balance, provided all applicants meet the minimum standards.

19 Exceptions to Standard Shortlist

19.1 Insufficient applicants

If as a result of the shortlisting process, there are insufficient applicants of the required number and/or gender who meet the minimum standards set by the Selection Committee, the Returning Officer must consult their Regional Candidates Chair as to whether the selection can proceed.

19.2 Criteria for proceeding with a non-standard shortlist

In making this decision, the RCC must take account of the circumstances surrounding the selection including

- a) How the shortlisting process has been conducted
- b) What efforts were made to attract applicants in addition to advertising
- c) Availability of appropriate applicants on the approved list of candidates
- d) Any rulings or guidance in force at the time from the ECC

19.3 Proceeding promptly with selection on a non-standard list

Once permission to proceed with a non-standard shortlist has been given the selection should proceed without delay.

20 Notifying Applicants and Feedback

20.1 Agreeing shortlist before notifying others

All interviews must be completed and the shortlist agreed before anyone outside the Selection Committee, the RCC and the Candidates' Office is notified of the outcome. As far as is practicable, all applicants should be notified by the Returning Officer of the outcome of the shortlisting process within the same 24 hour period.

20.2 Timing of mailing and appeals deadlines

No mailing to members or wider circulation of the shortlist shall be made until the deadline for appeals against the shortlisting process has passed.

20.3 Feedback to applicants

Arrangements shall be made for a member of the Shortlisting Committee to discuss with fellow committee members and be prepared to give feedback to any applicant who requests it, based on their individual performance in the shortlisting process.

21 Confidentiality of Shortlisting Interviews

21.1 The scores given to each applicant and the content of the shortlisting interviews are confidential and may only be discussed privately within the Selection Committee, with the Returning Officer, or in the context of an appeal.

21.2 Only the shortlist itself is announced, not the ranking of scores given or any comments made by Selection Committee members

22 Mailing to Members

22.1 Contents of Members Mailing

A mailing is prepared based on the standard format as supplied in guidance to Returning Officers. The Returning Officer shall approve the full contents, which shall include

- a) Names and manifestos of shortlisted applicants
- b) Notice of the hustings
- c) Details of how to obtain a ballot paper, including postal vote arrangements (with a postal ballot request form)
- d) Copy of the attributes as described in the Selection Criteria for the seat (but not necessarily the priorities or objectives for the seat)

22.2 Production and costs of mailing

The production and cost of the mailing, including the postage and printing is the responsibility of the Local Party and the Returning Officer must agree these arrangements and be satisfied they are suitable for the purpose. The Returning Officer will arrange for labels to be supplied for the mailing from the Party's Membership Department or if they prefer, generate these labels themselves from data supplied from the same source.

22.3 Sending out the Mailing

Once any relevant deadline for appeals has been past, the mailing must be posted to every members entitled to vote in the selection on the same day and at least 22 days before the date of the first hustings meeting.

22.4 Multiple addressing of mailing

The Returning Officer must ensure that each individual receives a copy of the members mailing, but may permit the inclusion of more than one mailing in an envelope to known joint households.

22.5 Sending Mailing to Shortlisted Applicants and Returning Officer

The complete mailing must be sent to all shortlisted applicants and the Returning Officer at the same time as to members.

22.6 Participation by non-voting Local Party members

The Returning Officer may also permit Local Party members who are not eligible to vote to receive the mailing subject to agreement with the Selection Committee and with a clear indication of the part those members can play in the selection (see Section 28.8)

22.7 Supervising the mailing process

The Returning Officer must be satisfied with the arrangements for compiling and posting the mailing and where they feel it is necessary, shall supervise it personally or arrange for such supervision to take place.

23 Applicant's Manifestos and Campaign Material

23.1 Manifesto format and content

The size and specification of shortlisted applicants' manifestos for the members' mailing must be agreed between the Selection Committee and the Returning Officer in advance of the shortlisting interviews and would normally be on two sides of A4 for each applicant, printed on white paper in black ink.

23.2 Defamation

No material published or circulated by or on behalf of a shortlisted applicant shall defame by name or implication any other candidate. No candidate shall so defame any other candidate in the course of their personal canvassing.

23.3 Artwork from shortlisted applicants

The Returning Officer must notify the shortlisted applicants of the arrangements for mailing in good time to allow them to submit their artwork for inclusion and including information about the method of reproduction.

23.4 Approval of manifesto contents by Returning Officer

The Returning Officer must approve the contents of the applicants manifestos include the photographs to be used. The Returning Officer must make all reasonable attempts to verify the content of manifestos. Any third party claims relating to matters such as previous election results, media or newspaper coverage and similar claims must be substantiated to the satisfaction of the Returning Officer.

23.5 Endorsements

Manifestos must not include any endorsements of the applicant by word or implied in photographs from members of the Party or from well known non-members. Photographs of members of the shortlisted applicants' family (including non-members) can be shown, but all such photographs must be submitted for approval with names and details of those included to the Returning Officer for approval.

23.6 Copyright and other permission to use photographs

Shortlisted applicants must provide written confirmation to the Returning Officer that they have the copyright permission and the permission of those depicted in any photographs to use them in their manifesto.

23.7 References to other candidates

No references shall be made to other shortlisted applicants in manifestos or other campaign material. Applicants are permitted to make positive assertions about their own experience, skills and situation in order to promote their candidature.

23.8 Content of manifestos within the rules

Provided the material conforms to the rules set out here, shortlisted applicants are entitled to choose what to include in their manifestos. Neither the Returning Officer nor the Local Party has the right to insist on the inclusion of specific content or ask for comment on a particular issue or question in shortlisted applicants' manifestos.

23.9 Applying the principles to other items

In cases not specifically covered by these rules, the Returning Officer shall use the principles of fairness and equality of treatment between applicants, whilst permitting the positive promotion of their candidature when giving his/her ruling on campaign materials.

- 23.10** These principles must also be applied to all written material issued in connection with the selection, including websites and emails.

24 Campaigning and other written material

24.1 Unapproved written material

Only written material approved in advance by the Returning Officer for use in the selection will be allowed, with the exception of replies by shortlisted applicants to specific questions raised by individual members. This includes references to the selection published by the Local Party and its members.

- 24.2** Members of the Local Party must not publish written material in support of shortlisted applicants as this is likely to be seen as unapproved written material, which is not permitted under the rules.

24.3 Canvassing on behalf of applicants

Only Party members may canvass verbally on behalf of applicants or assist them in making contact with members during the campaign, including by telephone or face to face.

24.4 Correspondence with members and keeping copies

Candidates may reply to letters or correspondence from individual members of the Local Party, but they cannot initiate correspondence which promotes their candidacy unless covered by the permitted exceptions in these rules. Shortlisted applicants must keep copies of any individual correspondence for inspection by the Returning Officer until after the announcement of the result of the selection in case of any disputes.

24.5 Second leaflet

Shortlisted applicants shall be permitted to produce a second selection leaflet at their own expense, for use as a calling leaflet or for distribution to members by other means, excluding post. This does not include at the hustings meeting. The content shall be subject to approval by the Returning Officer under the same rules as applied to manifestos.

- 24.6** The Returning Officer shall decide on the maximum specification for the second leaflet, which shall be capable of being produced at a reasonable cost and may allow an area of no greater than 20% of one face for an individual message to the member from the shortlisted applicant.
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24.7 Other promotional items

Production or use of any other ‘promotional items’ in connection with the selection campaign is not permitted. The use of existing business cards by shortlisted applicants may be permitted provided they have been approved in advance by the Returning Officer.

24.8 Contact with members

Making contact with members entitled to vote in the selection is encouraged and shortlisted applicants will be provided with a copy of the Selection Register for this purpose. The use of this information is governed by the Party’s data protection policy and by provisions as described in these rules.

24.9 Shortlisted applicants are expected to canvass members on an individual basis and arrange to meet members from one household only at one time unless they are attending those events arranged by the Local Party for the benefit of all applicants during the selection campaign.

24.10 Local Party social and campaigning events

Local Parties are encouraged to arrange social and campaigning events during the selection campaign where applicants can meet with members. All applicants must be invited to such events.

24.11 Applicants or their supporters must not organise their own social, campaigning or any other events during the selection campaign designed for one individual or several applicants to meet members, as this is the role of the Local Party during the selection.

24.12 Using websites in the campaign

Shortlisted applicants may set up and publicise a dedicated, standalone website for the purpose of the selection. The content of the website must be approved by the Returning Officer, using the same rules for content as for other written material.

24.13 Using approved emails to campaign

Emails can be used by shortlisted applicants to canvas for support from groups of members, but the content of these must be approved by the Returning Officer in advance. Shortlisted applicants may answer specific questions from individual members by email without prior approval from the Returning Officer. In all cases, the content is governed by the same rules as all other written material. Copies of all emails must be kept by applicants in case of any queries until the result of the selection is officially declared by the Returning Officer.

24.14 Using CIX and similar groups

Applicants must not canvas for support on CIX conferences or on similar groups such as e-groups.

24.15 Using attachments to emails

Attachments to emails are not permitted.

24.16 Including emails and websites on literature

Email and approved website addresses may be included in literature produced by the applicants.

24.17 Applicants helpers and the rules

Applicants must provide anyone who is working on their behalf in a selection campaign with relevant documents and briefings about the rules for the selection, as it is likely that the actions of helpers will be deemed to be on behalf of the applicant.

24.18 Paying expenses and using staff

Applicants may pay expenses such as travel and telephone to other party members who are working for them during the selection campaign, but may not employ someone solely for that purpose.

24.19 Using employed staff

Any member who wishes to use their own employed staff to work on their behalf during a selection campaign must ensure they are Party members and that this is carried out during their own time (i.e. in the voluntary capacity) and that they are paid expenses only.

25 Contact with press and media

25.1 Applicants or their supporters must not comment to the media on what is an internal party election.

25.2 Responding to press queries

If press and media comment relating to the selection is required, it must only be made by the Returning Officer, and after consultation with the Local Party's nominated representative.

25.3 'Normal' references to applicants

Media references to applicants in their normal party roles as a campaigner, councillor or party officer are permitted during the selection, but care must be taken to avoid any references which would directly promote their candidature in the selection.

26 Postal Votes

26.1 Entitlement to postal votes

Members are encouraged to come to the hustings and cast their vote there. Any member who cannot attend the hustings is entitled to a postal vote. Proxy votes are not permitted in a selection ballot.

26.2 Applying for a postal vote

Postal votes are a matter to be arranged between the individual member and the Returning Officer. Any member who requires a postal vote must apply personally and

individually in writing to the Returning Officer using the application form supplied in the members mailing, unless their application is late (see below).

26.3 Prompt despatch of postal ballot by Returning Officer

On receiving a postal ballot application, the Returning Officer will immediately despatch a postal ballot paper to the member concerned. The Returning Officer must keep the application forms and the envelopes in which they are sent in case of any dispute or query.

26.4 Issue and return of postal votes

The Returning Officer must produce and number the postal ballot papers using the format proscribed in training and guidance given by the ECC and record on the Selection Register the ballot paper number issued to each member who applies for a postal ballot paper.

26.5 Deadlines for postal votes

The Returning Officer must not set a deadline for applications for postal vote applications to be received, but must give a deadline for the return of ballot papers at the last possible time s/he is able to receive ballot papers by post and for those delivered by hand by the close of ballot at the end of the final hustings meeting.

26.6 Delivery of postal votes to the hustings meeting

Members may ask other members (but not shortlisted applicants) to deliver sealed envelopes containing individual postal ballots to the hustings if they are unable to return this by post before the deadline. Any envelopes in which postal ballots are returned must be kept by the Returning Officer in case of any dispute or query

26.7 Late applications for postal votes

The Returning Officer shall make arrangements to accept late requests for postal votes and must keep written records of these applications. If it would not be possible to receive a written request and then respond to it in time before the count, the Returning Officer shall issue a postal ballot paper in response to the late request. The returned postal vote will only be counted in the ballot if the required signed application form has been received by the Returning Officer before the close of the ballot and in a satisfactory manner (i.e. not forming part of a postal vote campaign)

26.8 Postal vote campaign

A campaign by applicants or their supporters to encourage postal votes, arranging for members to apply for postal votes, distributing or collecting the application forms or the postal ballot papers themselves by anyone apart from the Returning Officer is not permitted. Applicants are expected to encourage members to attend the hustings meeting, but if that is not possible, they may ask if they require a postal vote and direct them how to contact the Returning Officer to obtain one.

26.9 If the Returning Officer believes that an application for a postal vote may be part of a postal vote campaign, s/he shall issue a separately coloured or numbered ballot paper and record this on the Selection Register. If s/he subsequently finds that a postal vote campaign has been conducted, then the votes cast in this way shall not be included in the count. Any such ruling shall be made in accordance with the procedure laid down

for Returning Officer's rulings and subject to the process of appeal against such rulings.

27 Hustings Meeting Arrangements

27.1 Approving the arrangements

The Returning Officer must approve the arrangements for the hustings – one or more meetings depending on the geography and membership of the constituency, at which all the shortlisted applicants are invited to speak and answer questions from members.

The meeting must be a separate event, but may include a fundraising opportunity for the Local Party if they so wish. The detailed arrangements including length of speeches, questions from members, time of arrival and how to get in touch on the day in case of a problem or emergency, must be made available to all shortlisted applicants as soon as possible.

27.2 Date and location of meeting

The date for the hustings meeting must be one at which the shortlisted applicants can reasonably be expected to be present at a venue which is neutral in respect of the applicants. Where there is a single hustings meeting, it should be situated in a central location having regard to the distribution of membership of the constituency.

27.3 Chair of the Hustings Meeting

The Returning Officer has a right of veto over the choice of Chair for each hustings meeting, who shall be an individual who is not associated with the campaign of one or more of the shortlisted applicants. This is typically one of the Local Party Officers or the Chair of the Selection Committee. However, if no suitable person is available or acceptable to the Local Party or the Returning Officer, the Regional Candidates Chair shall adjudicate on the matter and may provide a suitable individual from outside the constituency to act as Chair.

27.4 Preparing the ballot papers

The Returning Officer is personally responsible for preparing and printing the ballot papers and for their safe custody until the completion of the process. Under no circumstances should the ballot papers be printed by the Local Party

27.5 Helpers and aides

The Returning Officer has the right to appoint suitable aides to help with the administration of the hustings including a timekeeper to assist the Chair, and aides to help with the issuing of ballot papers.

27.6 Applicants' Supporter at Hustings

Applicants are entitled to be accompanied by a partner or friend to support them at the hustings. No applicant may be present in the hall to hear the speeches or questioning of other applicants. In addition, partners or friends may not move in and out of the hall to report on their opponents' performance. Where there is more than one hustings meeting, partners or friends must not witness the performance of opponents until the last hustings meeting.

27.7 Lifts to the Hustings Meeting

The Returning Officer shall ensure that applicants are aware they should not arrange lifts for members attending the hustings meeting, but that this shall be responsibility of the Local Party.

28 At the Hustings Meeting

28.1 Checking identity of those attending and voting

The Returning Officer shall ensure that only eligible members and any approved non-voting members are present at the hustings meeting and that they issue one ballot paper to each member entitled to vote. Members shall be expected to show their membership cards to obtain a ballot paper or some other material proof of identity.

28.2 When votes can be cast

Members are entitled to obtain ballot papers and cast their vote at any time during the hustings meeting up to the deadline for closure of the ballot. There is no obligation on a member to be present for all or any of the speeches and questions to applicants and the Returning Officer must ensure members are able to vote at any time during the meeting up until the close of the ballot.

28.3 Numbering ballot papers

The Returning Officer must number the ballot papers distributed at the Hustings meeting and record the number of the ballot paper given to each member on the Selection Register as they are distributed. A ballot will only be valid if it has been so numbered and recorded.

28.4 Ballot papers for overdue members

Every member on the Selection Register who has not had a postal vote shall be given a ballot paper unless their subscription is more than 3 months overdue at the date of the last hustings meeting. If this is the case, they must pay their overdue subscriptions or provide proof that they have done so before they can vote.

28.5 Ballot papers for disputed members

The Returning Officer must issue a separately coloured or numbered ballot paper to any member whose entitlement to vote is in doubt so that their papers may be identified if necessary during the counting of the votes.

28.6 Conduct of the meeting – intervention by Returning Officer

The Returning Officer is entitled to intervene in the proceedings of the hustings meeting at any time if they feel that applicants are not being treated fairly or appropriately or that the Selection Rules are or may be being broken.

28.7 Questions from members

The Returning Officer and the Selection Committee may decide, at their discretion, to agree in advance that all questions at the hustings meeting(s) shall be in writing. Members are entitled to ask either the same questions of all applicants or different questions to each if they so choose. The Returning Officer must make it clear to the meeting any questions they will not permit, such as financial contribution by applicants and other questions which discriminate against groups of applicants such as women, applicants from a particular geographical area, ethnic communities or applicants with disabilities.

28.8 Participation by non-voting Local Party members

Typically members not eligible to vote are entitled to act solely as observers at the hustings meeting. However, the Returning Officer and the Chair of the meeting may at their discretion, decide to take questions from non-voting members, provided, this does not prevent those who are entitled to vote from having their questions answered during the time permitted at the meeting.

29 The Count

29.1 When to count the ballot

The ballot cast must be counted at the end of the last hustings meeting and not before, nor must the count continue after the last hustings meeting unless it has been suspended for reasons given below.

29.2 Where to count the ballot

The count should take place in a separate room, in the presence of the shortlisted applicants and their partner/friend, two representatives of the Local Party and any Regional representatives who may be present. The Returning Officer may appoint aides to assist with the checking of the count at their discretion.

29.3 Reconciling the ballot papers & removing ineligible votes

Prior to counting the votes cast, a reconciliation of the ballot papers shall take place to verify the number of papers returned is no greater than the number issued, and to remove any papers issued to members whose eligibility to vote was in doubt and cannot be verified.

29.4 Minimum number of votes for a valid ballot

If the number of votes cast is less than the greater of 20% of the eligible membership or 10 votes, the Returning Officer must decide whether the number of votes cast constitutes a valid ballot, taking into account the size and circumstances of the Local Party. If the ballot is not valid, the count must be suspended and the Returning Officer shall consult with the Regional Candidates' Chair to determine whether the ballot is to be accepted.

29.5 Method of counting votes

The counting shall be by the Alternative Vote method (i.e. STV for a single vacancy) and shall follow the detailed guidance given to Returning Officers for the conduct of such ballots given in Appendix D of these rules. This guidance will follow the standard format for this type of election as indicated by the Electoral Reform Society and will include the drawing of lots in the case of all ties.

29.6 Dealing with 'RON' on the ballot paper

If the ballot contains the 'reopen nominations' (RON) option, this is treated in the same way as any other applicant in the counting of votes.

30 Announcing the result

30.1 Shortlisted applicants' representatives at the count

If an applicant is not able to attend the counting of votes, they may send a representative, who shall be deemed to be acting in their stead.

30.2 Acceptance of result by shortlisted applicants

Once the counting of the votes has been conducted and a winner determined, the Returning Officer must ask the shortlisted applicants if they accept the result or if they wish to make any objection or complaint in relation to the process.

30.3 Dealing with a complaint prior to announcing the result

If a complaint is made, it must be dealt with prior to the announcement of the result and in accordance with the current procedures for rulings by Returning Officers and subsequent appeals.

30.4 Final acceptance of the result by shortlisted applicants

The Returning Officer shall require the applicants or their representative to sign a copy of the result to indicate their agreement to the announcement of the result and that they have no complaint to make about the process. Once this has been signed, the result cannot be challenged, subject to Articles 8 and 14 respectively of the English and Federal Party Constitutions, and to the Rules for the Conduct of Appeals to Panels of the English Candidates Committee.

30.5 Announcing the result to the meeting

The result is then announced to the meeting by the Returning Officer and the details of the votes cast made available to the applicants and the Local Party after the announcement of the result.

30.6 Informing the wider party

The Returning Officer must inform the Candidates Office and the Regional Candidates Chair of the outcome of the selection and this will then be recorded as the official result. The Local Party may also inform the local media of the outcome of the selection using the current guidance for such announcements.

31 Withdrawal of applicants or candidates

31.1 Withdrawal after result announced

If the winning candidate withdraws after the announcement of a result, the selection process is re-started from the beginning.

31.2 Withdrawal before the announcement of the result

If a shortlisted applicant withdraws, all remaining shortlisted applicants must be notified. The action to be taken then depends on when the withdrawal takes place and the situation that remains. It is also governed by the current advice from the ECC, as to action to be taken either nationally or regionally in the case of non-standard shortlists

Time of applicant's withdrawal:	Gender balance maintained and at least 3 applicants remain:
Before shortlist issued:	No action needed
After members' mailing sent but before postal votes issued:	No action needed
After some postal votes issued:	Change ballot papers to show new situation. For ballot papers issued including all applicants, transfers of preferences to be taken when counting
At hustings:	Use ballot papers as prepared, explaining to members to ignore withdrawn applicants

Time of applicant's withdrawal:	Gender balance not maintained but at least 3 applicants remain:	Fewer than 3 applicants remain:
Before shortlist issued:	Refer to Regional Candidates Chair (RCC) - if new list approved, no further action needed	Refer to RCC- if new list approved, add RON to ballot paper
After mailing sent but before postal votes issued:	Refer to RCC - if new list approved, no further action needed	Refer to RCC- if new list approved, add RON to ballot paper
After some postal votes issued:	Refer to RCC - if new list approved, change ballot papers to show new situation. For ballot papers issued including all applicants, transfers of preferences to be taken when counting	Refer to RCC - if agreed, change ballot papers to show new situation and add RON to ballot paper (see * below)
At hustings:	Use ballot papers as prepared, explaining to members to ignore withdrawn applicants but RCC must be consulted before result is announced	Use ballot papers as prepared - tell members to ignore withdrawn applicants and that they may vote for RON but RCC must be consulted before result is announced

32. Selection Expenses and PPERA

Donations to applicants for a selection in cash or kind may be subject to Schedule 7 of PPERA and any applicant or their supporter who expects to receive such donations should seek the advice of the Party's PPERA Compliance Officer (via the Returning Officer) as to whether they will be required to make a return of expenses.

33 Enforcement of rules, rulings and penalties

33.1 Asking for a ruling from the Returning Officer

If applicants or members of the Local Party wish to bring to the attention of the Returning Officer any matter concerning the conduct of the selection in relation to the rules they must do so with the minimum of delay. In any event this must be before the expiry of deadlines for appeals against rulings by Returning Officers as set down in the Rules for the Conduct of Appeals to Panels of the English Candidates Committee.

33.2 In seeking a ruling from the Returning Officer, the complainant(s) shall supply in writing the following information

- a) details of the rule or rules said to have been breached
- b) a summary of the facts giving rise to the complaint
- c) details of any persons who can substantiate the complaint(s) being made
- d) details of how the complainant and/or others have been affected

33.3 Investigation of the complaint and making a ruling

The Returning Officer shall investigate the complaint promptly and make a ruling concerning the complaint. S/he shall take such action as they feel is appropriate in the light of the nature, seriousness and effect of any breach of the rules which may have taken place.

33.4 The Returning Officer may consult with relevant colleagues within the Party, including the Regional Candidates Chair and any relevant experts where appropriate.

33.5 The Returning Officer's ruling shall be made in writing and communicated to the complainant(s), the applicants in the selection and the Regional Candidates Chair.

33.6 Reporting gross abuse of the Rules

The Returning Officer shall refer any instances of gross abuse under the rules by approved candidates to the Regional Candidate's Chair and by other Party members to the appropriate authority within the Party. As a result recommendations for action be taken against the individual concerned through the appropriate procedures under the Party's constitutions.

33.7 Appealing against a ruling

Anyone wishing to appeal against a ruling from a Returning Officer in a selection shall do so using the process as laid down in the Rules for the Conduct of Appeals to Panels of the English Candidates Committee.

Appendix A

Rules for the Conduct of Appeals to Panels of the English Candidates Committee

1. Provisions Relating to these Rules

- 1.1 These Rules set out the process by which decisions of Returning Officers are to be challenged. The English Candidates Committee shall have power to make Regulations to implement, regulate and co-ordinate this process in areas where these Rules are ambiguous or silent.
- 1.2 If Parliamentary electoral conditions dictate, the Chair of the ECC, in consultation with the relevant Regional Candidates Chair, may seek to vary the timetable or to resolve an appeal in order to meet an imminent General Election.
- 1.3 In these Rules, the following terms shall be given the following meanings unless the context otherwise requires;
- (a) 'Appeal' shall mean a challenge to a decision of a Returning Officer submitted in accordance with these Rules;
 - (b) 'Appellant' shall mean a person who has submitted an Appeal;
 - (c) 'Respondent' shall mean any person who is criticised in an Appeal;
 - (d) 'Applicant' shall mean any person who has applied to the Returning Officer for inclusion in the selection;
 - (e) 'Candidate' shall mean an applicant who has been placed on the shortlist for a particular selection;
 - (f) 'Witness' shall mean each of the following:
 - (i) the Chair of the Local Party,
 - (ii) the Chair of the Local Party Selection Committee (if different from a));
 - (iii) the candidates;
 - (iv) the other applicants, where the Appeal is submitted by an Applicant;
 - (v) the Regional Candidates Chair; and
 - (vi) anyone else who can, in the opinion of the Appeals Panel, give material evidence, either of a factual or expert nature.
 - (g) 'ECC' shall mean the English Candidates Committee.
 - (h) 'Written' shall include communications transmitted by post, fax, e-mail or hand-delivered.

2. Initiating an Appeal

- 2.1 Any eligible person who wishes to challenge a decision of a Returning Officer must submit an Appeal to the Chair of the ECC within the deadlines prescribed in the following Rules.
- 2.2 The following people shall be eligible to submit an Appeal;
- (a) any applicant (provided that their Appeal relates to the process up to and including the shortlisting and is submitted within seven days of the notification to the candidates of the shortlist);
 - (b) any candidate;
 - (c) any member of the Local Party in which the selection is taking place;
 - (d) the Regional Candidates' Chair.
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- 2.3 An Appeal shall contain the following information:
- (a) details of the decision which is being challenged;
 - (b) references to the Rule or Rules said to have been breached;
 - (c) a summary of the facts giving rise to the Appeal;
 - (d) details of persons who can substantiate the claims made in the Appeal;
 - (e) details of how the Appellant and/or others have been affected;
 - (f) details of the remedy the Appellant wishes to be provided.
- 2.4 All Appeals must be in writing. The ECC shall have the power to regulate the form in which Appeals are submitted.
- 2.5 All Appeals up to and including the shortlisting process must be made within seven days of the despatch of notification to the applicants of the shortlist. No mailing shall be despatched until the deadline for appeals has passed.
- 2.6 Appeals which do not relate to matters up to and including the shortlisting process must be made prior to the declaration of the result at the hustings meeting. Prospective Appellants who wish to appeal at this stage shall inform the Returning Officer of their wish, either personally or through a representative at the count, and the result shall not be declared. The prospective Appellant shall then lodge their Appeal with the Chair of the ECC within 24 hours of informing the Returning Officer of their wish to appeal.
- 2.7 In the event that a ruling is sought from the Returning Officer prior to the declaration of the result and the Returning Officer is not in a position to issue a ruling immediately, the result shall not be declared and the Returning Officer shall rule as soon as practicable. Any Appeal must then be submitted within 24 hours of the communication of the ruling to the candidates. If no Appeal is submitted, the result shall be declared forthwith.
- 3. The Conciliation Stage**
- 3.1 Within 48 hours of receiving an Appeal, the Chair of the ECC shall appoint a Conciliator from a list approved and maintained by the ECC for the purpose. The Conciliator shall be entirely independent and a member of a Local Party from outside the Region in which the relevant selection is taking place.
- 3.2 There shall be no obligation to appoint a Conciliator where the Chair of the ECC takes the view that the Appeal discloses a case so weak that no reasonable Appeals Panel, properly directing itself, could possibly uphold it.
- 3.3 The Chair of the ECC shall ensure that the Conciliator is provided with a copy of the Appeal upon his/her appointment.
- 3.4 The Conciliator shall take immediate steps to resolve the Appeal through the co-operation of those involved. This shall include, but not be limited to:
- (a) seeking to develop and maintain a dialogue with and between the people involved in the Appeal,
 - (b) investigating and ascertaining the true facts giving rise to the Appeal;
 - (c) seeking to identify the areas of agreement and disagreement between those involved in the Appeal;
 - (d) seeking to negotiate a solution which is acceptable to those involved and which is in accordance with the Rules.
- 3.5 The Conciliator shall have no power to force a settlement.
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- 3.6 Within five working days of their appointment, the Conciliator shall provide a confidential report of their findings to the Chair of the ECC. The report must also be circulated, confidentially, to the Appellant, Respondent(s) and Returning Officer.
- 3.7 This period may be extended by agreement between the Conciliator and the Chair of the ECC if it appears appropriate to do so in order to achieve a settlement of the Appeal.
- 3.8 The Appellant will have five full days to decide whether or not they wish to proceed with the Appeal after the Conciliation stage has been completed.
- 3.9 If the Appellant decides to proceed with the appeal, the Conciliator shall provide a summary including:
- (a) the issues at stake in the Appeal; and
 - (b) the facts giving rise to the Appeal;
- to the Chair of the ECC for circulation to any future Appeals Panel. That summary shall seek to be as objective as possible.

4. **The Appeals Panel Stage**

- 4.1 Upon receiving a report from the Conciliator;
- (a) which indicates that that Appeal has not been resolved; or
 - (b) which has been rejected by the Appellant or any Respondent;
- the Chair of the ECC shall, within three working days, appoint an Appeals Panel to determine the Appeal.
- 4.2 There shall be no obligation to appoint an Appeals Panel where the Chair of the ECC takes the view that the Appeal discloses a case so weak that no reasonable Appeals Panel, properly directing itself, could possibly uphold it.
- 4.3 The Appeals Panel shall consist either of three or five members,
- (a) all of whom shall be members of Local Parties from outside the Region in which the relevant selection is taking place;
 - (b) at least one of whom shall be an experienced Returning Officer;
 - (c) at least one of whom shall be a Regional Candidates Chair; and
 - (d) at least one of whom shall appear on the Party's list of approved candidates, or have so appeared in the last five years.

The Chair of the ECC and the Conciliator are ineligible to be members of the Appeals Panel.

- 4.4 The Chair of the ECC shall appoint one of the Appeals Panel members as Chair.
- 4.5 The Chair of the ECC shall ensure that the members of the Appeals Panel are provided, upon their appointment, with copies of:
- (a) the Appeal and supporting documents, and
 - (b) the Conciliator's summary of the facts and issues in the Appeal.
- 4.6 The Chair of the ECC shall ensure that sufficient administrative support is provided for the Appeals Panel to conduct its work efficiently.
-

5. **Timetable Prior to the Hearing**

5.1 The Appeals Panel shall have the power to make directions with regard to any administrative or pre-hearing matter not covered in these Rules.

The Appellant

5.2 As soon as practicable after its appointment, the Appeals Panel shall arrange for the Appellant to be written to. That letter must invite the Appellant to submit their case in advance and give a timetable and proposed date for the Appeal to be heard.

5.3 The Appellant shall provide their case first and by a deadline set by the Appeals Panel (normally within six working days of receiving the letter under Rule 5.2).

5.4 Their case shall consist of:

- (a) a statement from the Appellant, which shall be confined to matters raised in the original Appeal;
- (b) statements from any person whom the Appellant wishes to call to give evidence in support of their case;
- (c) any supporting documents which the Appellant wishes to be before the Appeals Panel.

5.5 Upon receipt of the Appellant's case, the Appeals Panel shall arrange for it to be circulated to each Respondent or allow each Respondent a reasonable opportunity to inspect it. The Appeals Panel may order wider circulation if they believe the issues raised by the appeal or the evidence given impacts on others not directly involved in the process.

The Respondent(s)

5.6 At the same time as writing to the Appellant, the Appeals Panel shall ensure that each Respondent is written to. That letter must outline what the Appeal is about and how the Respondent(s) are criticised, invite each Respondent(s) to submit their cases in advance of the hearing and give a timetable and proposed date for the Appeal to be heard.

5.7 In the event of any dispute over who is a Respondent, the Appeals Panel shall make a ruling.

5.8 Each Respondent shall provide their case by a deadline set by the Appeals Panel (normally within ten working days of receiving the Appellant's case or being informed that they may inspect it).

5.9 The case for each Respondent shall consist of;

- (a) a statement from the relevant Respondent, which shall seek to answer the issues raised in the Appeal,
- (b) statements from any person whom the Respondent wishes to call to give evidence in support of their case,
- (c) any supporting documents which the Respondent wishes to be before the Appeals Panel.

5.10 The Appeals Panel shall arrange for the circulation of those cases to the Appellant and the other Respondent(s) as appropriate or offer them a reasonable opportunity to inspect it. The Appeals Panel may order wider circulation.

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Witnesses

- 5.11 At the same time as writing to the Appellant and each Respondent, the Appeals Panel must also ensure that everyone listed as a Witness in Rule 1.3(f) above is written to. They must be informed of the general nature of the appeal and told that if they wish to give evidence at the hearing, they must provide a statement in advance. The Appeals Panel may also ask for particular or specific information from the Witnesses to assist them in arriving at their ruling.
- 5.12 In the event of a dispute over who is a Witness, the Appeals Panel shall make a ruling.
- 5.13 Each Witness wishing to provide a statement must do so by a deadline set by the Appeals Panel (normally within ten working days of being invited to do so).
- 5.14 The Appeals Panel shall arrange for the circulation of Witness statements to the Appellant and each Respondent. The Appeals Panel may order wider circulation.

General Powers of the Appeals Panel over timetables

- 5.15 In the event that any of the above deadlines are breached, the Appeals Panel may;
- (a) if the breach is the fault of the Appellant, strike out the appeal; or
 - (b) prevent anyone relying on matters contained in a document supplied late; or
 - (c) grant an extension of the deadline concerned.
- 5.16 The Appeals Panel shall inform those to whom documents are circulated that they may only copy them or show them to:
- (a) party member(s) seeking to advise them; and/or
 - (b) a legal adviser.

6. The Hearing

- 6.1 The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with the principles of natural justice. Those principles provide that;
- (a) all parties have the right to be heard;
 - (b) proceedings are conducted fairly;
 - (c) there is no bias or appearance of bias on the part of the Appeals Panel.
- 6.2 The hearing shall normally be conducted in the presence of the Appellant, Respondent(s) and Witnesses. Other party members may be admitted at the discretion of the Appeals Panel.
- 6.3 The Appellant and/or Respondent(s) may each be assisted by a friend (who must be a party member) or by a legal adviser. The friend or adviser may speak on behalf of the Party concerned at any time but must not merely repeat points already made.
- 6.4 The Appeals Panel may decide that parts of the hearing shall be conducted in private. This may either be at the invitation of a Party or Witness or of the Appeals Panel's own volition. Any such decision shall be based on the following ground(s);
- (a) that evidence of a sensitive nature is to be given; or
 - (b) that conducting the hearing in public would inhibit the Appeals Panel from ascertaining the truth.
-

6.5 The hearing shall normally be conducted as follows:

- (a) the Appellant shall give his/her evidence followed by those who provided statements in support of the Appellant;
- (b) the first Respondent shall give their evidence followed by those who provided statements in support of the Respondent;
- (c) any further Respondent shall give their evidence followed by those who gave statements in their support;
- (d) the Witnesses shall give their evidence;
- (e) the Appellant and each Respondent shall have the right to sum up.

The Appeals Panel shall have the power to deviate from this procedure if it appears necessary in the interests of justice.

6.6 All evidence shall be given orally unless the Appeals Panel agrees to accept it in writing, in which case it shall be in the form of the statement submitted prior to the hearing.

6.7 The Appellant and/or each Respondent may ask questions of those giving evidence. Others may have equivalent rights at the discretion of the Appeals Panel.

6.8 Appeals Panel members shall be entitled to ask questions or seek clarification at any time.

7. **The Ruling and Enforcement**

7.1 The Appeals Panel may make its decision by a majority of those present and voting. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chair of the Appeals Panel shall have a second (casting) vote. No member of the Appeals Panel may vote unless he or she has been present throughout the hearing of all the evidence.

7.2 The Appeals Panel shall prepare a full Ruling for circulation to the Appellant, Respondent(s), Chair of the ECC and the Candidates' Office. This Ruling must be circulated within five working days of the hearing.

7.3 The Appeals Panel shall have the power to provide an effective remedy in respect of any Appeal which it has upheld, either in full or in part.

7.4 The range of available remedies for the Appeals Panel shall include;

- (a) to declare that there has been a breach of the Rules;
- (b) to take any action open to the Returning Officer when making the decision which gave rise to the Appeal;
- (c) to take any action open to the Selection Committee when shortlisting candidates;
- (d) to recommend to the ECC that any candidate be removed from the list of approved candidates or that the Returning Officer shall cease to be an accredited Returning Officer; and
- (e) to make any further directions it sees fit.

7.5 If it appears to the Chair of the ECC that a Ruling from an Appeals Panel has been breached, then, within 48 hours, the Chair of the ECC shall notify the Chair of the Appeals Panel.

7.6 The Appeals Panel shall decide whether the Ruling has been breached by seeking oral or written evidence from:

- (a) the person said to have breached the Ruling; and
 - (b) any other person who the Appeals Panels considers able to give material evidence on that question.
-

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7.7 If the Appeals Panel is satisfied, on balance, that there has been a breach of the Ruling, then it may:

- (a) if the breach was the fault of the Returning Officer, dismiss the Returning Officer and/or debar them from conducting future selections;
- (b) provide any of the remedies open to it when it determined the Appeal in the first instance.

8. **Further Appeals**

8.1 Any party who claims that his or her rights under the Party Constitution or under these Rules have been infringed may, in accordance with the Constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England, appeal to the Appeals Panel for England.

8.2 Any Party who wishes to make such an appeal shall give notice in writing to the Secretary of the Appeals Panel for England within seven days of the circulation of the Appeal's Panel's Ruling. Subject to any appeal under this paragraph, the decision of the Appeals Panel shall be final and binding on all the parties.

Appendix B - Advertisement wording

PPC – SOMEWHERE

The Local Party Executive of Somewhere Liberal Democrats invites applications for selection as Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for the constituency of Somewhere.

Potential applicants should contact the Returning Officer, Jo Bloggs, Pavement Street, Focusville, Targetshire, Phone no. xxx-xxxx for an application pack. Completed applications must be received by the Returning Officer by time on date/month 200x (approx. 3 weeks after the advert).

Applicants not on the Party's list of Approved Candidates at the closing date for applications will not be guaranteed consideration by the Selection Committee. It is the responsibility of applicants to check that their applications have been received by the

In addition, a short paragraph of local information may be added at the discretion of the Returning Officer.

Contact details of Returning Officer

Additional information such as email and fax numbers can be included in the above. Returning Officers are encouraged to make it as easy as they can for applicants to get in touch and receive information back. Whatever method of communication is offered to one applicant, should be available to all

Appendix C - Sample timetable for selection

Deadlines in **bold** are compulsory as defined in the rules, others are advisory

Activity	
Appointment of Returning Officer	
Meeting with Local Party Executive	+ 4-6 weeks
Training of Selection Committee	Variable #
Formal Appointment of Selection Committee	ASAP after training
Meeting of Selection Committee to prepare Application Pack	ASAP after appointment
Advert appears in Lib Dem News and deadline for eligible members	+ 7- 10 days
Closing date for applications	+ 3 weeks
Assessment of applicants and decision on who is shortlisted	+10 days
Deadline for appeals about selection up to and including shortlisting	+ 7 days
Announcement of shortlist and posting of mailing to members	+ 1 week
Hustings meeting(s)	+ 22 days min

Training of potential selection committee members may take place before the appointment of the Returning Officer, in liaison with the Regional Candidates Chair. **BUT** the final composition of the Selection Committee must be based on the agreed criteria for the seat and subject to the approval of the Returning Officer.

Appendix D - Method for counting votes and drawing lots. Electing one person by means of Single Transferable Vote

1 Method of voting

- a) Each member who is eligible to vote shall be issued with one ballot paper with the names of the shortlisted applicants (and the option to 'Re-open nominations) printed on it
- b) To record their vote, the member should place a '1' against their preferred applicant or option. Further preferences may be expressed using figures 2,3, 4 or 5 against the remaining applicants or option.
- c) Voters may indicate as many or as few preferences as they choose.

2 Verifying the ballot papers

- a) The Returning Officer will have kept a record, as they are issued, of the number of ballot papers issued to postal voters and those voting in person, including any tendered ballot papers issued to members whose eligibility to vote is in doubt.
- b) To verify the ballot, s/he shall count the total of each type in the ballot box and verify this is no higher than the number issued. S/he shall proceed to count the ballot if this is correct.
- c) In the event of the number in the ballot box being higher than that issued, then an individual check of ballot papers against the numbered Selection List shall take place to identify the error.
- d) At this stage, any ballot papers belonging to members whose eligibility to vote cannot be verified shall be removed and not counted.
- e) Once the verification is complete the total number of valid ballot papers shall be recorded to be used as the figure to be exceeded by the winner at the next stage.

3 Sorting and counting the ballot papers and resolving ties

- a) The ballot papers shall be sorted according to the first preference recorded for each applicant, putting to one side any papers that are invalid.
 - b) The number of first preferences recorded for each applicant shall be counted. If the total of first preferences recorded for an applicant exceeds 50% + 1 of the valid votes, then that applicant is the winner.
 - c) If there is no winner at this stage, the Returning Officer shall take the papers of the applicant with the smallest number of first preferences and transfer their votes to the remaining applicants using the voter's next highest preference, putting to one side any papers which do not express a next highest preference.
 - d) If there is a tie for the lowest place at this stage, then the Returning Officer shall determine who drops out by drawing lots.
 - e) After the distribution of next highest preferences, the votes are again counted to see if an applicant exceeds 50% + 1 of the valid votes.
 - f) This process is repeated until an applicant receives 50% + 1 of the valid votes or, when only two applicants or remain, one has a simple majority.
 - g) At any stage after the first preferences, should there be a tie for exclusion, then this should be resolved by excluding the applicant with the lowest number of votes at the earliest stage in the count where they had an unequal number of votes. If they were equal at all stages then the returning officer shall decide the outcome by drawing lots.
 - h) The process in (g) shall also apply if there are two applicants left and they are tied.
-

Appendix E - Wording for press release

For a PPC who stood last time.....

Date: 00/00/200x
Embargo: 00/00/200x

LibDems choose A BODY again

SOMEWHERE LibDems have chosen A BODY (local description Eg councillor), again as their Prospective Parliamentary Candidate.

A BODY came second/pollled X,000 votes/fought SOMEWHERE at the last General Election.

A BODY is a (list of positive points about new PPC which are relevant to why they are a good prospective candidate. Commenting on his/her selection A BODY said, '.....(highlight main issues of concern, point out strength of LibDems. Use current LibDem themes and make them relevant locally. Use tactical points where relevant Eg past voting figures, council election results, etc)').

Ends

For further information contact:- XXXXXXXX
Address & Telephone No.

For a new PPC.....

Date: 00/00/200x
Embargo: 00/00/200x

LibDems choose A BODY for
SOMEWHERE Constituency

SOMEWHERE LibDems have chosen A BODY (local description eg councillor), as their Prospective Parliamentary Candidate.

A BODY takes over from PREVIOUS BODY who fought at the last General Election.

A BODY is a (list of positive points about new PPC which are relevant to why they are a good prospective candidate. Commenting on his/her selection A BODY said, '.....(highlight main issues of concern, point out strength of LibDems. Use current LibDem themes and make them relevant locally. Use tactical points where relevant eg past voting figures, council election results, etc)').

Ends

For further information contact:- XXXXXXXX
Address & Telephone No.

Appendix F – Rules for the Conduct of Appeals to Panels of the English Candidates’ Committee: appeal against an assessment panel grading

1. Provisions Relating to these Rules

1.1 These Rules set out the process by which decisions of assessment panels for inclusion on the lists of approved parliamentary candidates are to be challenged. The English Candidates Committee shall have power to make Regulations to implement, regulate and co-ordinate this process in areas where these Rules are ambiguous or silent.

1.2 In these Rules, the following terms shall be given the following meanings unless the context otherwise requires;

- (a) 'Appeal' shall mean a challenge to a decision of an assessment panel submitted in accordance with these Rules;
- (b) 'Appellant' shall mean a person who has submitted an Appeal; this would normally only be an applicant for approval who has attended an assessment centre. The chair of the ECC may accept appeals from other persons if this is deemed appropriate.
- (c) 'Respondent' shall mean any person who is criticised in an Appeal;
- (d) 'Witness' shall mean each of the following:
 - i. the other applicants at the assessment centre;
 - ii. any members of the assessment panel, including the facilitator, who are not named as respondents;
 - iii. anyone else who can, in the opinion of the Appeals Panel, give material evidence, either of a factual or expert nature.
- (e) 'ECC' shall mean the English Candidates Committee.
- (f) 'Written' shall include communications transmitted by post, fax, e-mail or hand-delivered.

1.3 The people that the Party entrusts with the responsibility of assessing candidates for inclusion on the Approved List is the team of trained facilitators and assessors. They are in the best position to assess the suitability of candidates for inclusion. They conduct the exercises and they have the ability to see at first hand whether or not a person meets the correct standard. It is therefore only in exceptional circumstances that a panel should disturb the findings of the assessors and order that a candidate be permitted to attend another assessment centre with their original grading set aside.

1.4 These circumstances are as follows:

- (a) Where something has gone procedurally wrong at the assessment centre or in the pre-assessment centre administration and that procedural error is capable of having affected the result.
-

- (b) Where the relevant assessor or assessors have demonstrably failed to take into account relevant matters or have taken into account irrelevant ones in reaching their decision. This includes apparent bias on the part of an assessor.
- (c) Where the decision of the assessors was correctly reached procedurally and through the application of the correct criteria, but it was such an unreasonable decision on the available facts that it should not be allowed to stand.

1.5 No appeal will lie where the candidate simply disagrees with the decision of the assessors. Where a decision was made through the proper procedure, taking into account all relevant matters and taking out of account all irrelevant matters, and where that decision was one that a reasonable assessor could have reached under the circumstances, no panel should interfere with it.

2. Initiating an Appeal

2.1 Any applicant who wishes to challenge a decision of an assessment panel must submit an appeal to the Chair of the ECC within seven days of receiving notification of their assessment panel grading.

2.2 An Appeal shall contain the following information:

- (a) details of the decision which is being challenged;
- (b) references to the circumstances in (1.4) above said to have been breached;
- (c) a summary of the facts giving rise to the Appeal;
- (d) details of persons who can substantiate the claims made in the Appeal;
- (e) details of how the Appellant and/or others have been affected;

2.3 All Appeals must be in writing. The ECC shall have the power to regulate the form in which appeals are submitted.

3. The Appeals Panel Stage

3.1 Within 30 days of receiving an appeal the Chair of the ECC shall appoint an Appeals panel to determine the appeal.

3.2 There shall be no obligation to appoint an Appeals Panel where the Chair of the ECC takes the view that the Appeal discloses a case so weak that no reasonable Appeals Panel, properly directing itself, could possibly uphold it.

3.3 The Appeals Panel shall consist of three members:

- (a) all of whom shall be members of Local Parties from outside the Region from which the appellant comes;
 - (b) at least one of whom shall be an experienced assessor;
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- (c) at least one of whom shall be a Regional Candidates' Chair; and
- (d) none of whom shall have been part of the assessment centre which the appellant attended.

The Chair of the ECC is ineligible to be a member of the Appeals Panel.

- 3.4 The Chair of the ECC shall appoint one of the Appeals Panel members as Chair.
- 3.5 The Chair of the ECC shall ensure that the members of the Appeals Panel are provided, upon their appointment, with copies of the appeal and supporting documents.
- 3.6 The Chair of the ECC shall ensure that sufficient administrative support is provided for the Appeals Panel to conduct its work efficiently.

4. Timetable Prior to the Hearing

- 4.1 The Appeals Panel shall have the power to make directions with regard to any administrative or pre-hearing matter not covered in these Rules.

The Appellant

- 4.2 As soon as practicable after its appointment, the Appeals Panel shall arrange for the Appellant to be written to. That letter must invite the Appellant to submit their case in advance and give a timetable and proposed date for the Appeal to be heard.
 - 4.3 The Appellant shall provide their case first and by a deadline set by the Appeals Panel (normally within six working days of receiving the letter under Rule 4.2).
 - 4.4 Their case shall consist of:
 - (a) a statement from the Appellant, which shall be confined to matters raised in the original appeal;
 - (b) statements from any person whom the Appellant wishes to call to give evidence in support of their case. Evidence from supporting witnesses who were not present at the assessment centre is generally not relevant unless the allegation is made under (1.4(c)) above.
 - (c) any supporting documents which the Appellant wishes to be before the Appeals Panel.
 - 4.5 Upon receipt of the Appellant's case, the Appeals Panel shall arrange for it to be circulated to each Respondent or allow each Respondent a reasonable opportunity to inspect it. The Appeals Panel may order wider circulation if they believe the issues raised by the appeal or the evidence given impacts on others not directly involved in the process.
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The Respondent(s)

- 4.6 At the same time as writing to the Appellant, the Appeals Panel shall ensure that each Respondent is written to. That letter must outline what the Appeal is about and how the Respondent(s) are criticised, invite each Respondent(s) to submit their cases in advance of the hearing and give a timetable and proposed date for the Appeal to be heard.
- 4.7 In the event of any dispute over who is a Respondent, the Appeals Panel shall make a ruling.
- 4.8 Each Respondent shall provide their case by a deadline set by the Appeals Panel (normally within ten working days of receiving the Appellant's case or being informed that they may inspect it).
- 4.9 The case for each Respondent shall consist of;
- (a) a statement from the relevant Respondent, which shall seek to answer the issues raised in the Appeal,
 - (b) statements from any person whom the Respondent wishes to call to give evidence in support of their case. Evidence from supporting witnesses who were not present at the assessment centre is generally not relevant unless the allegation is made under (1.4(c)) above.
 - (c) any supporting documents which the Respondent wishes to be before the Appeals Panel.
- 4.10 The Appeals Panel shall arrange for the circulation of those cases to the Appellant and the other Respondent(s) as appropriate or offer them a reasonable opportunity to inspect it. The Appeals Panel may order wider circulation.

Witnesses

- 4.11 At the same time as writing to the Appellant and each Respondent, the Appeals Panel must also ensure that everyone listed as a Witness in Rule 1.2(d) above is written to. They must be informed of the general nature of the appeal and told that if they wish to give evidence at the hearing, they must provide a statement in advance. The Appeals Panel may also ask for particular or specific information from the Witnesses to assist them in arriving at their ruling.
- 4.12 In the event of a dispute over who is a Witness, the Appeals Panel shall make a ruling.
- 4.13 Each Witness wishing to provide a statement must do so by a deadline set by the Appeals Panel (normally within ten working days of being invited to do so).
- 4.14 The Appeals Panel shall arrange for the circulation of Witness statements to the Appellant and each Respondent. The Appeals Panel may order wider circulation.
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General Powers of the Appeals Panel over timetables

- 4.15 In the event that any of the above deadlines are breached, the Appeals Panel may;
- (a) if the breach is the fault of the Appellant, strike out the appeal; or
 - (b) prevent anyone relying on matters contained in a document supplied late; or
 - (c) grant an extension of the deadline concerned.
- 4.16 The Appeals Panel shall inform those to whom documents are circulated that they may only copy them or show them to:
- (a) party member(s) seeking to advise them; and/or
 - (b) a legal adviser.

5. The Hearing

- 5.1 The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with the principles of natural justice. Those principles provide that;
- (a) all parties have the right to be heard;
 - (b) proceedings are conducted fairly;
 - (c) there is no bias or appearance of bias on the part of the Appeals Panel.
- 5.2 The hearing shall normally be conducted in the presence of the Appellant, Respondent(s) and Witnesses. Other party members may be admitted at the discretion of the Appeals Panel.
- 5.3 The Appellant and/or Respondent(s) may each be assisted by a friend (who must be a party member) or by a legal adviser. The friend or adviser may speak on behalf of the Party concerned at any time but must not merely repeat points already made.
- 5.4 The Appeals Panel may decide that parts of the hearing shall be conducted in private. This may either be at the invitation of a Party or Witness or of the Appeals Panel's own volition. Any such decision shall be based on the following ground(s);
- (a) that evidence of a sensitive nature is to be given; or
 - (b) that conducting the hearing in public would inhibit the Appeals Panel from ascertaining the truth.
- 5.5 The hearing shall normally be conducted as follows:
- (a) the Appellant shall give his/her evidence followed by those who provided statements in support of the Appellant;
 - (b) the first Respondent shall give their evidence followed by those who provided statements in support of the Respondent;
 - (c) any further Respondent shall give their evidence followed by those who gave statements in their support;
 - (d) the Witnesses shall give their evidence;
 - (e) the Appellant and each Respondent shall have the right to sum up.
-

The Appeals Panel shall have the power to deviate from this procedure if it appears necessary in the interests of justice.

- 5.6 All evidence shall be given orally unless the Appeals Panel agrees to accept it in writing, in which case it shall be in the form of the statement submitted prior to the hearing.
- 5.7 The Appellant and/or each Respondent may ask questions of those giving evidence. Others may have equivalent rights at the discretion of the Appeals Panel.
- 5.8 Appeals Panel members shall be entitled to ask questions or seek clarification at any time.

6. The Ruling and Enforcement

- 6.1 The Appeals Panel may make its decision by a majority of those present and voting. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chair of the Appeals Panel shall have a second (casting) vote. No member of the Appeals Panel may vote unless he or she has been present throughout the hearing of all the evidence.
- 6.2 The Appeals Panel shall prepare a full Ruling for circulation to the Appellant, Respondent(s), Chair of the ECC and the Candidates' Office. This Ruling must be circulated within five working days of the hearing.
- 6.3 The Appeals Panel shall have the power to direct that the original grading be set aside and that the applicant be offered a re-assessment in respect of any Appeal which it has upheld, either in full or in part. The Appeals Panel may also make any further directions it sees fit.

7. Further Appeals

- 7.1 Any party who claims that his or her rights under the Party Constitution or under these Rules have been infringed may, in accordance with the Constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England, appeal to the Appeals Panel for England.
- 7.2 Any Party who wishes to make such an appeal shall give notice in writing to the Secretary of the Appeals Panel for England within seven days of the circulation of the Appeal's Panel's Ruling.

Subject to any appeal under this paragraph, the decision of the Appeals Panel shall be final and binding on all the parties.

Appendix G – protocols agreed by English Candidates Committee

The English Candidates' Committee has approved the following protocols, copies of which are available on request from the English Candidates' Office - candidates@libdems.org.uk:

1. Protocol for selecting a Parliamentary By-election candidate
2. Protocol for re-selecting a sitting MP
3. Protocol for resigning from the post of PPC
4. Procedure for deselecting a sitting PPC

The Constitution of the Scottish Liberal Democrats

As amended, Special Conference of the Scottish Party, Perth, April 2002

The Constitution of The Scottish Liberal Democrats

PREAMBLE

- A. The Party
 - B. Functions of the Party
 - C. Membership
 - D. Local Parties
 - E. Conference
 - F. Office Bearers and Executive Committee
 - G. Policy Committee
 - H. Candidates For Election
 - I. Ballots For Purposes Other Than Elections
 - J. Associated Organisations
 - K. The Appeals Tribunal
 - L. Amendment
-

PREAMBLE

The Scottish Liberal Democrats exist to build and safeguard a fair, free and open society, in which we seek to balance the fundamental values of liberty, equality and community and in which no-one shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity. We champion the freedom, dignity and well-being of individuals, we acknowledge and respect their right to freedom of conscience and their right to develop their talents to the full. We aim to disperse power, to foster diversity and to nurture creativity. We believe that the role of the state is to enable all citizens to attain these ideals, to contribute fully to their communities and to take part in the decisions which affect their lives.

We look forward to a world in which all people share the same basic rights, in which they live together in peace and in which their different cultures will be able to develop freely. We believe that each generation is responsible for the fate of our planet and, by safeguarding the balance of nature and the environment, for the long term continuity of life in all its forms.

Upholding these values of individual and social justice, we reject all prejudice and discrimination based upon race, colour, religion, age, disability, sex or sexual orientation and oppose all forms of entrenched privilege and inequality. Recognising that the quest for freedom and justice can never end, we promote human rights and open government, a sustainable economy which serves genuine need, public services of the highest quality, international action based on a recognition of the interdependence of all the world's peoples and responsible stewardship of the earth and its resources. We believe that people should be involved in running their communities. We are determined to strengthen the democratic process and ensure that there is a just and representative system of government with effective Parliamentary institutions, freedom of information, decisions taken at the lowest practicable level and a fair voting system for all elections.

We will at all times defend the right to speak, write, worship, associate and vote freely, and we will protect the right of citizens to enjoy privacy in their own lives and homes. We believe that sovereignty rests with the people and that authority in a democracy derives from them. We therefore acknowledge their right to determine the form of government best suited to their needs. We commit ourselves to the promotion of these aims and beliefs in the Scottish and United Kingdom Parliaments. We similarly commit ourselves to the promotion of a flourishing system of democratic local government in which decisions are taken and services delivered at the most local level which is viable. We will foster a strong and sustainable economy which encourages the necessary wealth-creating processes, develops and uses the skills of the people and works to the benefit of all, with a just distribution of the rewards of success. We want to see democracy, participation and the co-operative principle in industry and commerce within a competitive environment in which the state allows the market to operate freely where possible but intervenes where necessary. We will promote scientific research and innovation and will harness technological change to human advantage.

We will work for a sense of partnership and community in all areas of life. We recognise that the independence of individuals is safeguarded by their personal ownership of property, but that the market alone does not distribute wealth or income fairly. We support the widest possible distribution of wealth and promote the rights of all citizens to social provision and cultural activity. We seek to make public services

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responsive to the people they serve, to encourage variety and innovation within them and to make them available on equal terms to all.

Our responsibility for justice and liberty cannot be confined by national boundaries; we are committed to fight poverty, oppression, hunger, ignorance, disease and aggression wherever they occur and to promote the free movement of ideas, people, goods and services. Setting aside national sovereignty when necessary, we will work with other countries towards an equitable and peaceful international order and a durable system of common security. Within the European Community we affirm the values of federalism and integration and work for unity based on these principles. We will contribute to the process of peace and disarmament, the elimination of world poverty and the collective safeguarding of democracy by playing a full and constructive role in furtherance of these ends within the framework of the Community, the United Nations, the Commonwealth and other appropriate international organisations.

These are the conditions of liberty and social justice which it is the responsibility of each citizen and the duty of the state to protect and enlarge. The Scottish Liberal Democrats consist of women and men working together for the achievement of these aims.

A. The Party

- A1. The name of the Party shall be the Scottish Liberal Democrats (hereinafter called "the Party").
- A2. The Party shall be an independent constituent part of a federation consisting of the Party, the Welsh Liberal Democrats, and the English Liberal Democrats. The provisions of the Federal Party's constitution shall apply in Scotland in the manner therein specified.
- A3. The Party shall be the successor in title to the Scottish Liberal Party and to the Social Democratic Party in Scotland.
- A4. The objects of the Party shall be:-
- a. to promote the values and principles enshrined in the preamble of this Constitution;
 - b. to develop and promote policies that lead to the realisation of those values and principles; and
 - c. to seek the return of members of the Scottish Parliament, the UK Parliament, the European Parliament and local councillors at all levels of local government in Scotland and the appointment of members to public bodies, who support the above objects and who are members of the Party.
- A5. Any reference in this Constitution to:
- a. any Bill before the Scottish or UK Parliaments shall, when the Bill is enacted, become a reference to the Act the Bill becomes; and
 - b. any Act of the Scottish or UK Parliaments shall include any statutory re-enactment or amendment of such Act.
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B. Functions of The Party

The functions of the Party shall be:

- B1. To provide the organisation, administrative and campaigning support for Local Parties and Associated Organisations within Scotland.
 - B2. To provide support for Party Members of the Scottish Parliament, both Houses of Parliament of the United Kingdom, the European Parliament and of local councils and other public bodies;
 - a. to maintain the definitive list of members of the Party;
 - b. to liaise with Local Parties regarding the maintenance and expansion of that list; and
 - c. to administer the division of membership income between Local Parties, the Party and the Federal Party;
 - B3. To play a full part in the work of the Federal Party and to encourage Local Parties and members to do likewise.
 - B4. To develop and formulate the policies of the Party, to place the policies of the Federal Party in a Scottish context and to promote such policies.
 - B5. To promote public awareness within Scotland and elsewhere of the philosophy, policies and work of the Party.
 - B6. To promote and encourage the selection of effective candidates for public office; and
 - B7. To raise the finance required to carry out the functions described in this Constitution and to maintain such an organisation, including staff, to do so.
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C. Membership

- C1. All individuals shall be eligible for membership of the Party if:
- a. they support the values and principles of the Party;
 - b. they are not members or supporters of any organisation whose purposes are incompatible with those of the Party; and
 - c. they are not members of any other political party within Great Britain.
- C2. Any eligible person shall be admitted to membership on payment of a subscription and acceptance of a membership application:
- a. by the Executive or by a person authorised to act on the Executive's behalf; or
 - b. by a Local Party in accordance with its own rules;
 - c. by an Associated Organisation; or
 - d. in such other manner as the Executive may approve.
- C3. The Executive may determine whether the purposes of any organisation in Scotland are to be treated as incompatible with those of the Party.
- C4. All members shall be guaranteed the following rights under this Constitution:
- a. the right to elect Party Office Bearers in Scotland;
 - b. the right to participate in the policy making bodies of the Party;
 - c. the right to have a say in the operation and amendment of the Party's Constitution;
 - d. the right to participate in Local Party meetings and Party Conferences; and
 - e. the right to stand for election to office within the Party.
- C5. The Secretary of the Party shall supervise the maintenance of the Party membership list.
- C6. The names and addresses of current members of the Party shall be entered on the membership list, which shall be the definitive list of members. Members' addresses shall be either their residence or their place of work or study.
- C7. Members whose membership address is within any parliamentary constituency in Scotland shall be members of the Local Party for that constituency or any other Local Party which is prepared to accept that person as a member. Any member whose membership address is outside Scotland shall be a member of any Local Party which is prepared to accept that person as a member. No person shall be a member of more than one Local Party.
- C8. The Membership list shall be confidential and the Executive shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that information contained on the membership list is used solely for Party purposes and is not disclosed to any person other than persons authorised by this Constitution or by the Executive.
- C9. All members of the Party shall be required to pay an annual subscription to be determined from time to time by the Conference. The minimum subscription shall not be less than that fixed by the Federal Conference. The proportions paid to or retained by the Party and the Local Party or Associated Organisation shall be determined by the
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Conference on the recommendation of the Executive. The Executive shall also negotiate with the Federal Executive on the proportion of subscription income to be remitted to the Federal Party prior to its determination by the Federal Conference.

- C10. Membership of the Party shall be terminated if:
- a a member ceases to be eligible for membership under clause 1 hereof; or
 - b a member sends written notice of resignation to such address as may from time to time be specified for communications relating to the membership list; or
 - c a member's subscription has expired and has not been renewed within three months (provided that membership shall be restored if the arrears are paid during the period to which the subscription relates); or
 - d a member is expelled from membership under clause 11 hereof.
- C11. A member shall be expelled from membership of the Party if the Executive is of the opinion that his or her continued membership would be seriously detrimental to the interests of the Party, provided that:
- a a motion to consider expulsion of a member shall only be competent at a meeting of the Executive of which due notice has been given and intention to propose the motion has been circulated in advance; and
 - b such motion shall require a simple majority of Executive members present and voting; and
 - c the member shall, subsequent to such vote, be notified in writing of the grounds on which the Executive is considering the termination of his or her membership and given a fair opportunity to comment in writing thereon; and
 - d the member shall be expelled only if the Executive, after consideration of the relevant material, shall so decide by a two thirds majority of votes cast in a secret ballot of its members.
- C12. In case of urgency, the Executive may, by a two thirds majority of members present and voting at a properly called meeting, suspend any member from the rights and privileges of membership for a period not exceeding three months while the question of termination of his or her membership is under consideration.
- C13. No person who has been expelled from membership of the Party shall be eligible for readmission without the prior approval of the Executive.
- C14. Any person whose application to become a member has been refused, or any member who has been suspended or expelled from membership or who is otherwise aggrieved in a matter pertaining to this Section C may appeal to the Appeals Tribunal as provided in Section K hereof. Any appeal by any person to the Federal Appeals Panel in terms of Article 14 of the Federal constitution in relation to membership of the Party may only be made if the procedure under Section K of this Constitution has been exhausted.
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D. Local Parties

- D1. There shall be Local Parties in all parts of Scotland, usually established within the bounds of a single parliamentary constituency.
- D2. A Local Party shall only be recognised as such and be entitled to the rights granted by this Constitution if it has at least thirty members and has adopted a constitution which satisfies the principles contained in this Constitution and the Federal constitution.
- D3. The members in two or more adjacent constituencies may decide to form a joint Local Party provided that a majority of members in each component constituency voting at a properly called meeting of all such members agrees to such an arrangement. Where exceptional geographical difficulties render it desirable and a majority of members agrees to it, the Executive may recognise separate Local Parties within one constituency.
- D4. In any constituency where there are less than thirty members, either:
- a those members shall be incorporated in a Local Party with the members of one or more adjacent constituencies in a manner approved by the Executive, following local consultation; or
 - b the Executive shall agree to such other form of local organisation within the constituency as commands local support, provided that:
 - i) representation at Conference shall be one per ten members or part thereof;
 - ii) the selection of a candidate to contest any election on behalf of the Party shall be subject to the Executive's approval;
 - iii) the appointment of office-bearers shall be subject to the Executive's approval;
 - iv) the affairs of the group shall be conducted in a manner which is to the Executive's satisfaction;
 - v) for the purposes only of satisfying the provisions of Articles 4 and 6 of the Federal constitution relating to representation at Federal Conference, the members shall be deemed to be members of a neighbouring Local Party; and
 - vi) the rights of individual members contained in this Constitution and the Federal constitution shall not be infringed.
 - c When in any constituency which has had less than thirty members the membership exceeds thirty, the members shall have the right to form a Local Party under the terms of this Constitution.
 - d When the membership of any Local Party falls below thirty for a continuous period of six months, that Local Party shall cease to be so and the organisation shall be determined in terms of this clause 4.
- D5. Each Local Party shall adopt a constitution and shall make a copy of it available to the Executive and to any member of the Local Party on request. Each Local Party constitution shall conform with the principles of this Constitution and the Federal constitution, shall include its objects and shall also provide :
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- a. for the holding of an annual general meeting at which audited accounts (to be made available to the Executive) are provided;
 - b. for the election of a committee (however named) to manage the affairs of the Local Party and for the election of a person to chair it (by whatever name), secretary and treasurer (who shall be the registered treasurer of the Local Party in terms of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000) and such other office-bearers as the Local Party sees fit);
 - c. that the term of office of the treasurer of the Local Party and the treasurer of any branch thereof should commence on 1 January and end on 31 December for each year that they hold office, and that the financial year of the Local Party and its branches (if any) should end on 31 December ;
 - d. that members should be advised timeously of the procedure for nominating members as officers of the Local Party or Scottish Conference and Federal Conference representatives;
 - e. that all members should receive not less than fourteen days notice of all general meetings at which the Party's business is to be transacted, which notice should include the date, time and place of the meeting;
 - f. that all contested elections for party officers and representatives should be by single transferable vote in a secret ballot and that all such ballots should either be postal ballots of all members or ballots of members at the annual general meeting (provided that members unable to attend may vote by post or proxy);
 - g. that members of the Party holding elective office in a principal local authority in the area of the Local Party should, if not elected to the Local Party committee, be entitled to attend its meetings but not to vote;
 - h. that the Local Party's representatives at the Conference and the Federal Conference should, if not elected to the Local Party committee, be entitled to attend its meetings but not to vote;
 - i. for quorum for general meetings;
 - j. for procedures for the election and adoption of candidates for all Party, local and national elections;
 - k. for the keeping of the membership list, the procedure for notifying the appropriate person appointed by the Executive of its details, and for keeping its details confidential; and
 - l. for amendment of the constitution by a two-thirds majority of members voting.
 - m. that the Local Party must ensure its own compliance and that of its branches with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.
- D6. A Local Party may provide for the establishment of branches thereof which shall be bound by the terms of its own constitution.
- D7. Each Local Party shall advise the Executive of any amendment which it makes to its constitution. If the Executive considers that a Local Party constitution is in conflict with the requirements of this Constitution or that the Local Party is in breach of its own constitution, it may appeal to the Appeals Tribunal for a ruling on the matter. Any member of a Local Party who believes that its constitution is in conflict with the
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requirements of the Constitution, or that it is in breach of its own constitution or that it is being improperly administered may appeal to the Appeals Tribunal.

- D8. The Executive may, by a two thirds majority of all its members suspend from office any or all of the office-bearers and committee members of a Local Party if, but only if, any of the following obtains:
- a. the committee or any of its office-bearers or members has acted in persistent or serious breach of the terms of this Constitution or the Federal constitution or its own constitution;
 - b. the committee or any of its office-bearers or members has failed to give effect to a ruling of the Appeals Tribunal under Section K hereof, or the Federal Appeals Panel under Article 14 of the Federal constitution;
 - c. the committee has acted or is proposing to act in a manner which is seriously detrimental to the interests of the Party.

The committee shall be advised in each case in writing of the grounds on which the Executive is considering suspension and given a fair opportunity to comment in writing thereon.

Any member of a Local Party aggrieved by the suspension or proposed suspension of office-bearers or committee members of the Local Party may appeal to the Appeals Tribunal and, if the appeal is allowed, the suspension shall be cancelled.

Following the suspension from office of a Local Party committee or any of its office-bearers or members, the Executive shall make such arrangements as may be necessary to restore authority as soon as possible to a committee elected by members.

Regional Organisation

- D9. a. There shall be Regional Parties in all parts of Scotland, usually established within the bounds of a single Scottish Parliamentary region.
- b. Regional Parties shall have as their members all Local Parties which fall within the Regional Party area, and all members of those Local Parties, except that no Local Party may be a member of more than one Regional Party.
- c. Where a Local Party falls within the area of more than one Regional Party, it shall have the right to elect which Regional Party it will be a member of for the forthcoming financial year, except that where no decision is made by 1 December in any year the Executive shall make the election on the Local Party's behalf.
- d. Regional Parties shall submit draft rules relating to their own functions and procedures to the Executive for approval. Such rules shall:
- i) comply with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000;
 - ii) provide for the election of a treasurer, who should be the registered treasurer of the Regional Party in terms of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000;
 - iii) provide that the financial year of the Regional Party should end on 31 December; and
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- iv) enable the Regional Party to exercise financial authority in relation to a Local Party in terms of clause 8 hereof,

and any proposed amendments to those rules shall also be submitted to the Executive for approval.

- D10. a Except as provided in this clause D, a Local Party shall be an accounting unit in terms of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.
- b If, at any time, a Local Party is in breach of the terms of the Act, or the Executive has reason to believe it is about to be in breach of the terms of the Act, the Executive shall consult with the office-bearers of the Local Party to seek agreement on a means of securing its compliance with the Act.
 - c If, but only if, the procedure in paragraph (b) above fails, the Executive may, not less than 14 days after giving notice of its intention to the Local Party Committee,
 - i) remove from office the Treasurer of the Local Party and arrange for the election of a replacement Treasurer or, if necessary to ensure compliance, itself appoint a person to be acting Treasurer (who need not be a member of a Local Party); or
 - ii) suspend from office for a specified period any office-bearer or committee members of the Local Party, but only on the ground that this is essential for the purposes of compliance with the Actbut may in so doing specify that the action taken is deemed to have effect from the point in time at which the Local Party began to be in breach of the Act.
 - d Either with the agreement of the Local Party Committee or if the procedure in paragraph (b) above fails, the Executive may, not less than 14 days after giving notice of its intention to all the affected parties, combine the Local Party with one or more other Local Parties or with a Regional Party to form a single accounting unit in terms of the Act. The Executive may in so doing specify that such combination is deemed to have effect from the point in time at which the Local Party began to be in breach of the Act. The Executive shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that the new accounting unit is able to comply with the terms of the Act.
 - e In the event that the procedures in paragraph (c) or (d) above are followed, the rights and duties of the Local Party and members thereof shall not be affected in any way except as far as necessary to secure compliance with the Act. No Local Party shall cease to be a Local Party solely by virtue of having ceased to be an accounting unit. In particular, the procedures in paragraph (c) and (d) shall not infringe:
 - i) the rights of members contained in section C, clause 5;
 - ii) the rights and duties of Local Parties contained in section D (other than as specified in those paragraphs);
 - iii) the representation of the Local Party members at Conference; or
 - iv) the rights and duties of Local Parties and members thereof in the selection of candidates contained in Section H.
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- f Except with the agreement of the Local Party Committee, the Executive shall take steps to ensure that a Local Party which has ceased to be an accounting unit is re-established as such as soon as practicable, subject only to their being satisfied that the terms of the Act will be complied with.
- g Any member of a Local Party may appeal to the Appeals Tribunal against any action taken under this clause and, if the appeal is upheld, the action shall be annulled.

E. Conference

- E1. The Party shall meet in conference not less than twice in each year. The Conference shall be the governing body of the Party and all other organs of the Party shall be accountable to it, subject only to the terms of this Constitution.
- E2. The last ordinary Conference in each year shall also be the Annual General Meeting of the Party. All elections to office in the Party provided for in this Constitution shall take place at that Conference or shall be arranged to be complete by the end of it as appropriate, and members so elected shall take office from the following 1 January. The Executive shall arrange a time-table for all such elections and may depart from the strict application of the timings specified in this clause in the event that the date of a General Election or political event of comparable importance makes it necessary to do so. The Executive shall appoint a Returning Officer for the conduct of the elections.
- E3. In the event of a tied vote in any election provided for in this Constitution, a decision between the candidates tying shall be reached by drawing lots.
- E4. An Annual Report and the audited accounts of the Party for the previous calendar year shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting or, if Conference so resolves, at a preceding ordinary Conference in that year, and the Conference shall appoint or re-appoint auditors.
- E5. The following members of the Party shall be entitled to attend the Conference as voting members:
- a the Office Bearers, members of the Executive, members of the Policy Committee; and members of the Conference Committee
 - b Members of either House of Parliament, the Scottish Parliament and the European Parliament;
 - c prospective Scottish, European and Westminster candidates;
 - d members of any Scottish Local Authority who are part of a Liberal Democrat Group that has adopted Group Standing Orders; and
 - e representatives of Local Parties and representatives of members in constituencies where there is no Local Party, as provided in this Constitution.

Those entitled to attend Conference ex-officio (including prospective parliamentary candidates) shall continue as ex-officio members until the next opportunity to be a member of conference as a Local Party representative.

- E6. Local Parties shall elect Conference representatives to serve for one year and the secretary of each Local Party shall notify the Secretary of the Party of the names of the representatives when elected, and in any event by a date specified by the Conference Committee prior to the Annual General Meeting of the Party. The number of representatives shall be three for the first thirty members in a constituency, and one for every additional ten members or part thereof. For this purpose the membership shall be calculated at 1st February, or the first day of the month preceding the Annual General Meeting if earlier.
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- E7. The representatives shall be elected in a secret ballot by the single transferable vote, either in a postal ballot of all members or at a general meeting of members (provided that members unable to attend may vote by post or proxy).
 - E8. A representative shall cease to hold office on resignation or cessation of membership of the Party. A representative who ceases to be a member of the relevant Local Party or who fails to attend two consecutive meetings of the Conference without reasonable cause may, at the discretion of the Local Party committee or a general meeting of its members, be removed from office.
 - E9. If, on the first day of the month preceding each other ordinary Conference, the number of members of the Local Party entitles that Local Party to one or more additional representatives, such representative(s) shall be appointed to serve until the next election of Conference representatives.
 - E10. In relation to clauses 8 and 9 hereof, vacancies shall be filled either by ballot as provided in clause 7 hereof or by appointment by the Local Party committee as the committee shall decide.
 - E11. In the event that a decline in number of members entitles a Local Party to a reduced representation at Conference, that reduction shall not take effect until the next biennial election of Conference representatives.
 - E12. In constituencies where there is no Local Party the Executive shall, in consultation with the members or their office bearers, arrange for the appointment of representatives on a basis that conforms as nearly as practicable to the arrangements for Local Parties.
 - E13. If any representative shall intimate in writing inability to attend a forthcoming Conference, the committee of the Local Party may appoint a substitute for that Conference.
 - E14. All members of the Party shall be entitled to attend a Conference of the Party as non-voting observers and may, except at such times as shall be specified in the agenda, have the opportunity of speaking in debates.
 - E15. The Conference shall have the power to determine the policy of the Party in a manner prescribed in Section G of this Constitution. The Party shall be entitled to make policy on all matters relevant to Scotland except those which might reasonably be expected to fall within the remit of the federal institutions in the context of a federal United Kingdom.
 - E16. The Conference may also debate and express opinions upon matters on which the Federal Party has the right to make policy, but the opinions expressed shall not constitute the policy of the Party.
 - E17. The Conference may also debate and express opinions upon any other matters.
 - E18. Motions for debate and amendments thereto or proposals relating to the business of the Party may be proposed by the Executive, the Policy Committee, the Conference Committee, any Local Party, Associated Organisations, not less than twenty-five representatives or, at the discretion of the Conference Committee, any member of the Party who is not a member of a Local Party. In addition amendments to published motions may be proposed by not less than five representatives.
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- E19. The Conference shall be organised by a Conference Committee which shall consist of:
- a. the Conference Convener who shall chair the Committee
 - b. the Convener;
 - c. six members elected by the Conference to serve for two years;
 - d. two members elected annually by the Executive;
 - e. two members elected annually by the Policy Committee;
 - f. one member chosen by and from the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons who are members of the Party representing a Scottish constituency;
 - g. one member chosen by and from the Parliamentary Party in the Scottish Parliament who are members of the Party;
 - h. one member chosen by and from the Parliamentary Party in the European Parliament who are members of the Party representing Scotland or any part thereof;
 - i. one councillor who is a member of a Liberal Democrat Group on any Scottish Local Authority
 - j. the Scottish Party's Representative on Federal Conference Committee if not already a member;
 - k. one member appointed by the Scottish Young Liberal Democrats.
- E20. The Conference Committee may co-opt additional members up to one quarter of their membership. Co-opted members may not vote.
- E21. The Conference Committee shall, for each ordinary Conference, prepare and circulate to every organisation specified in clause 19 hereof, a timetable for the receipt of motions, amendments and other notices of business for the Conference.
- E22. The Conference Committee shall be answerable to the Conference and shall be responsible for setting the agenda for ordinary Conferences, which shall include motions for public debate (and amendments thereto) and time for the transaction of Party business. It may, at its discretion, redraft a motion or amendment submitted to it so as to improve expression, treat any severable part of a motion or amendment as a separate motion or amendment or composite similar motions or amendments, all so far as practicable in consultation with the proposers of the motions or amendments. The Conference Committee shall provide assistance and guidance on matters relating to the agenda to members and Local Parties. The agenda shall be circulated to Conference representatives registered for that Conference as soon as practicable after publication and in any event not less than seven days before the Conference. The Conference Committee shall have the discretion to allow (or itself propose) emergency motions which have not been placed on the agenda.
- E23. The Conference Committee shall draft and, from time to time review, standing orders for the conduct of business at the Conference, which shall be subject to the approval of the Conference.
- E24. A quorum of the Conference shall be one third of the representatives registered to attend at that Conference, but it shall be competent for debate on any matter to continue in the presence of less than one third provided that no vote is taken until a quorum is present.
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- E25. A special Conference of the Party shall be called either by the Executive or at the request of ten Local Parties or one tenth of the representatives. The request shall be submitted along with the purposes for which the Conference is called to the Secretary of the Party who shall within seven days serve notice on all representatives. The Conference shall be held not less than twenty-one nor more than twenty-eight days after the date of the notice, save that the Secretary may, at his or her discretion, disregard statutory public holidays in this calculation. This timetable shall not apply to a special Conference called in terms of Section L clause 1 of this Constitution.
- E26. Subject to the over-riding authority of the Conference, the Conference Committee shall determine the date and place of a Conference, except in relation to a Conference called in terms of clause 24 hereof.
- E27. In relation to financial matters and the use of other resources the Conference Committee shall be subject to the authority of the Executive.
- E28. In the event of the death or resignation of a member of the Conference Committee who was elected by the Conference, the Conference Committee shall take such action with regard to the vacancy as it shall think fit.
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F. Office Bearers And Executive Committee

- F1 The Office Bearers of the Party shall be the
- a. Leader;
 - b. Deputy Leader;
 - c. President;
 - d. Convener;
 - e. Policy Convener;
 - g. Conference-Convener;
 - h. Campaigns and Candidates-Convener; and
 - i. Treasurer.
- F2 The Leader shall be a member of the Scottish Parliament. The Deputy Leader shall be a Member of the House of Commons representing a Scottish Constituency.
- F3 The Leader and the Deputy Leader shall hold office from the declaration of the result of their election until the Annual General Meeting of the Party immediately following a Scottish General Election;
- F4 Office Bearers other than the Leader and Deputy Leader shall hold office for two years from the 1st January immediately following their election.
- F5 All Office Bearers of the Party shall be elected by the single transferable vote in a secret postal ballot of all members.
- F6 Nominations for any of the Office Bearer posts shall be by not less than thirty members of the Party of whom not more than five shall be members of the same Local Party.
- F7 Nominations for the Leader must be supported by another Member of the Scottish Parliament. Nominations for the Deputy Leader must be supported by another member of House of Commons representing a Scottish Constituency.
- F8 The Leader shall be responsible for the political direction of the Party and for promoting its cause in Scotland.
- F9 The Deputy Leader shall deputise for the Leader within the Party and shall be responsible for co-ordinating the work of the Party and the Members of the Parliamentary Parties in the Scottish Parliament, United Kingdom Parliament and the European Parliament representing Scottish Constituencies.
- F10 In the event of the death or resignation of the Leader, Deputy Leader or Convener a successor shall be elected to complete the unexpired term of office. Save if the term has less than six months to run, the Executive may appoint an acting Leader or Deputy Leader or Convener.
- F11 In the event of the death or resignation of an Office Bearer other than the Leader, Deputy Leader or Convener or of any member of the Executive elected under clauses 8(c) and 8(d) hereof, the Executive shall take such action with regard to the vacancy as
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it shall think fit, save that any member appointed to hold such office shall only do so to complete the unexpired term of office

- F12 The President shall be the guardian of the Constitution and shall have a duty to report to the Conference, independently of the other office bearers if, in his or her opinion, the Executive's activities or plans are constitutionally unsound. The Conference shall have the right to take such action on the President's report as it thinks fit. The President shall be entitled to attend and speak at meetings of the Executive but not to vote. The President may preside at the Conference on formal occasions.
- F13 The Convener shall be responsible for the day-to-day direction and administration of the Party and shall be entitled to preside at meetings of the Executive and Conference. He or she shall be a Vice President of the Federal Party.
- F14 The Policy Convener shall convene the Policy Committee.
- F15 The Treasurer shall convene the Business Committee
- F16 The Conference Convener shall convene the Conference Committee.
- F17 The Campaigns and Candidates Convener shall convene the meetings of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee.
- F18 The Policy Convenor, , Conference Convenor and Campaigns & Candidates Convenor shall be Vice-Convenors of the Party and shall assist the Convener in such activities as he or she and the Executive shall agree, and shall deputise for him or her when absent.
- F19 The Treasurer shall receive and disburse monies on behalf of the Party according to a policy directed by the Executive. The Treasurer shall be the registered treasurer of the Party in terms of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.
- F20 The Office Bearers shall be responsible for the appointment and management of staff and for agreeing their terms and conditions according to a policy determined by the Executive, and for the Party's compliance with employment law. A member of staff shall have right of appeal to the Executive in the event of any grievance relating to his or her employment.
- F21 The Officer Bearers shall also be responsible for ensuring the co-ordination of the political and other work of the party and for this purpose will meet regularly and may make recommendations to the Executive and it's sub-committees, the Policy Committee or the Conference Committee or to Conference.
- F22 There shall be an Executive Committee, referred to in this Constitution as the Executive, which shall consist of:
- a. the Office Bearers;
 - b. one Member chosen by and from the Parliamentary Party in the Scottish Parliament
 - c. one member chosen by and from the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons representing a Scottish constituency
 - d. one member chosen by and from the Parliamentary Party in the European Parliament representing Scotland or any part thereof;
 - e. two Scottish Local Authority Councillors elected by Scottish Local Authority Councillors who are members of the Party from amongst their own number;
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- f. eight members of the Party elected by members entitled to attend and vote at the Conference, half of whom shall be elected each year by the single transferable vote and shall serve for two years; and
 - g. two members from each of the Scottish Parliamentary Regions elected in a secret postal ballot of all members with membership addresses in the relevant region.
- F23 The four members of the Executive elected by Conference and not due to retire in 2002 shall remain in office until the Annual General Meeting of the Party in 2003, notwithstanding the reduction in the number of positions to two. The clause shall lapse following that meeting and be struck out from the Constitution without the necessity of an amendment being passed.⁷*
- F24 Nominations for members of the Executive shall be subscribed by two members of the Party eligible to vote for that member.
- F25 A representative of each Associated Organisation shall be entitled to attend and speak at meetings of the Executive but not to vote.
- F26. The Executive shall be responsible for the management and conduct of the Party and ensuring compliance of the Party with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, and shall be accountable to the Conference. The Executive shall appoint a Secretary of the Party for the purposes of this Constitution.
- F27 The Executive shall have the power to appoint sub-committees. The quorum at any meeting of the Executive shall be one-third of its members.
- F28 In particular, the Executive will work through the following Standing Committees, both of which are responsible and accountable to the Executive:
- a. Business Committee
 - b. Campaigns and Candidates Committee
- F29 The Convener shall be a member of all Standing Committees and sub-committees.
- F30 The quorum of each of the Standing Committees shall be four.
- F31 The Executive and the Standing Committees may co-opt additional members up to one-quarter of their membership. Co-opted members may not vote.

Business Committee

- F32 The members of the Business Committee shall be:
- a. the Treasurer;
 - b. two members of the Executive appointed by the Executive;
 - c. a member of the Conference Committee appointed by the Conference Committee;
 - d. a member of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee appointed by the Campaigns and Candidates Committee.
- F33 The Business Committee shall be responsible and accountable to the Executive for:
- a. managing all financial activity of the Scottish Party;

⁷ Time lapse clauses are shown in italics here and in clause F38

- b. managing the recruitment and retention of members;
- c. management and commercial aspects of Conference and shall act for the Executive in its supervision of the Conference Committee in terms of Clause E26;
- d. management of all commercial activities.

Campaigns and Candidates Committee

F34 The members of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee shall be:

- a. the Campaigns and Candidates Vice-Convener;
- b. three members of the Executive appointed by the Executive
- c. one member of the Conference Committee appointed by the Conference Committee;
- d. one member of the Policy Committee appointed by the Policy Committee;
- e. one Member chosen by and from the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons representing a Scottish constituency;
- f. one Member chosen by and from the Parliamentary Party in the Scottish Parliament;
- g. one member chosen by and from the Parliamentary Party in the European Parliament representing a Scottish Constituency;
- h. one Scottish Local Authority Councillor elected by Scottish Local Authority Councillors of the Party from among their own number;
- i. one member appointed by the Scottish Women Liberal Democrats;
- j. one member appointed by the Scottish Young Liberal Democrats;
- k. one member chosen by and from the Liberal Democrat Group on the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities.

F35 The Campaigns and Candidates Committee shall be responsible and accountable to the Executive for:

- a. recommending and administering the procedures relating to candidate selection for parliamentary elections;
- b. supporting and co-ordination of campaigning activity within Scotland, including elections.

F36. The Executive shall have the power to borrow money and to grant indemnities for the general purposes of the Party and to secure any monies borrowed, or grants of indemnity given, in such a manner as it thinks fit upon the assets of the Party; provided always that the total amount of the monies borrowed, or the terms of the indemnities, shall not exceed such amount as may from time to time be determined by the Executive and approved by the Conference.

F37. The Office Bearers of the Party and other members of the Executive shall not be liable for any loss arising from the negligence or fraud of any person employed by them or the Party (even if the employment of any such person was not necessary or expedient), or by reason of any mistake or omission made in good faith by any of them or by reason of any

other matter or thing except wilful fraud or wrongdoing on the part of the Office Bearer or Executive member who is sought to be made liable. They shall be entitled to an indemnity out of the assets of the Party (including future assets) against all costs, damages and expenses incurred by them, in respect of any liability from which they are relieved by the foregoing provisions of this clause and for all liability costs and expenses properly incurred by them in the execution of their powers and duties.

F38 Notwithstanding the terms of Clauses F1.3 and F1.4 elections shall be held to choose all the Officer Bearers at the Autumn Conference of 2002 and the Officer Bearers elected in that diet of election will hold office only until the Autumn Conference of 2003 at which point elections will again be held to choose all the Officer Bearers whereupon this clause shall lapse and shall be struck out of the Constitution without the necessity of an amendment being proposed.

G. Policy Committee

- G1. There shall be a Policy Committee which shall have the duty of researching and developing policy, shall have the powers and responsibilities contained in this Section G and shall also be responsible for:
- a. presenting the policies and opinions of the Party to the Federal Party;
 - b. placing the policies of the Federal Party in a Scottish context and promoting them within Scotland;
 - c. presenting the policies and opinions of the Party to outside bodies in Scotland and elsewhere;
 - d. consulting outside bodies in relation to proposed policies of the Party; and
 - e. approving official policy publications of the Party;
 - f. supporting Regional Parties in developing Policy seminars”
 - g. assisting Local and Regional Parties to formulate motions for Conference
- G2. The Policy Committee shall consist of :
- a. The Policy Convenor who shall normally chair the Committee
 - b. the Leader;
 - c. the Convener;
 - d. two Members chosen by and from the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons who are members of the Party representing a Scottish constituency;
 - e. two Members chosen by and from the Parliamentary Party in the Scottish Parliament who are members of the Party;
 - f. one member chosen by and from the Parliamentary Party in the European Parliament representing a Scottish Constituency;
 - g. one member elected from all councillors who are members of the Party and belong to a Liberal Democrat Group on a Scottish Local Authority.
 - h. two other members of the Executive elected by the Executive;
 - i. five members of the Party elected by the Conference to serve for two years; and
 - j. the Scottish Party’s representatives on the Federal Policy Committee if not otherwise members
 - k. one member appointed by the Scottish Young Liberal Democrats;
- G3. The quorum of any meeting of the Policy Committee shall be four members.
- G4. The Policy Committee may co-opt additional members up to one quarter of their membership. Co-opted members may not vote.
- G5. Nominations for members of the Policy Committee under clause 2(e) hereof shall be subscribed by two Conference representatives.
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- G6. In the event of the death or resignation of a member of the Policy Committee who was elected by the Conference or of the Scottish Party's representatives on the Federal Policy Committee, or in the event of their being insufficient nominations to fill these positions, the Policy Committee shall take such action with regard to the vacancy as it shall think fit .

Policy Formation

- G7. The Conference alone shall have the power to make the policy of the Party. This power shall be exercised in accordance with the provisions of this Section of the Constitution and there shall be no other means of making Party policy.
- G8. The Policy Committee shall commission, prepare, publish and submit to the Conference consultative documents and policy proposals, either on its own initiative or at the request of the Conference. In discharging this duty, the Policy Committee shall take account of comment by Local Parties, Associated Organisations, relevant bodies outside the Party and members and other individuals with an interest in the issues to be addressed in the consultative document or policy proposal. Where consultation shows there to be substantial disagreement within the Party, the Policy Committee's submission to the Conference shall offer options. When approved by the Conference, a policy proposal shall, subject to any amendment or qualification the Conference makes, become the policy of the Party.
- G9. The Policy Committee may request that any proposal, whether by motion or amendment or otherwise to be considered by any Conference which would, if approved, state, amend or otherwise affect the policy of the Party, should first be remitted to itself for further consideration. The Conference shall not be bound to accede to the Policy Committee's request, or may accede to it subject to qualifications. Any proposal in relation to which the Policy Committee makes no such request shall, if passed by the Conference, become the policy of the Party.
- G10. When necessary and impracticable to wait until the normal procedures have been completed, the Policy Committee shall have power to formulate and express or authorise the expression of the views of the Party on issues of policy, but any views so expressed shall not constitute Party policy.
- G11. The Policy Committee shall be responsible for the preparation of an election programme for any General Election to Parliament, the European Parliament or the Scottish Parliament.
- G12. An election programme shall be based upon policy adopted by the Conference but, if no policy has been adopted on some issue which in the view of the Policy Committee needs to be referred to in the programme, the Policy Committee shall have power to pronounce a policy on that issue for inclusion in the programme.
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H. Candidates For Election

- H1. The Executive shall maintain panels of approved members of the Party or the Federal Party who wish to stand in Scotland for election as Members of Parliament ("the Panel") or as Members of the European Parliament ("the European Panel") or as members of the Scottish Parliament ("the Scottish Panel").
- H2. Any member of the Party or of the Federal Party may apply in writing to the Secretary of the Party to be entered on any one, two or all three panels. The applicant may express a wish to be included also in the equivalent panels for England or Wales or both. An applicant to the English or Welsh panels who expresses a wish to be on one, two or all three of the Scottish panels also shall be eligible for inclusion. The applicant shall supply the Secretary with such information about himself or herself as the Executive may require and shall, if required, attend an interview.
- H3. If the application is approved by the Executive or by a sub-committee appointed to act on its behalf, the applicant shall be entered on the relevant Panel or Panels.
- H4. Subject to clause 5 hereof, any person entered on the Westminster Panel, the European Panel, or the Scottish Panel shall remain so until:
- a he or she ceases to be a member of the Party;
 - b he or she resigns from a Panel by giving notice in writing to the Secretary;
 - c the Executive has reason to believe that he or she no longer supports the principles of the Party; or
 - d the Executive has reason to believe that conduct (whether personally or in connection with the affairs of the Party) has been such as to make him or her unsuitable to be a candidate for the Party.
- H5. The Executive shall review the Panels after each Scottish Election, General Election or European Election as the case may be and may require any person wishing to remain on either Panel to submit a fresh application.
- H6. Any person whom the Executive has not approved or has removed from either or both of the Panels under clause 4 hereof may appeal to the Appeals Tribunal. If such appeal is allowed that person's name shall be added or restored to the Panel.
- H7. In respect of any constituency containing at least thirty members, selection of prospective parliamentary candidates shall be by a secret ballot of members in accordance with the terms of clauses 8 to 17 hereof and, where relevant, with the requirements of Article 11.5 of the Federal constitution.
- H8. The Local Party shall appoint a returning officer for the selection.
- H9. A selection committee of eligible members from the Local Party shall from among applicants prepare a short-list, provided that the selection committee shall not include on the short-list the name of any person who is not entered on the Scottish Panel without having first secured the approval of the Executive.
- H10. In relation to any constituency containing at least thirty members the selection of a prospective parliamentary candidate and the adoption of a parliamentary candidate shall
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be made by those members provided that no member may vote who became a member after a specified date not later than the closing date for applications.

- H11 In relation to any parliamentary constituency with less than thirty members the Executive may authorise the Local Party which includes that constituency to proceed with the selection of a candidate in accordance with clauses 7, 8, 9 and 12 hereof or itself (but only after consultation with members of the Party having membership addresses within the constituency in question) select a candidate.
- H12 The Local Party (having regard to the geography of the constituency) shall arrange one or more hustings meetings at which all short listed applicants shall be invited to speak and answer questions. There shall be sent to each eligible member not less than seven days before the first hustings meeting:
- a. the names of the short listed applicants and such information about themselves as may be appropriate;
 - b. notice of the time and place of the hustings meetings; and
 - c. information that a ballot paper will be posted out to all members on the day immediately following the last hustings meeting.
- H13. A Member of Parliament who is a member of the Party may notify the secretary of the relevant Local Party of his or her wish to stand at the next General Election. A general meeting of the Local Party shall then be called. The Member shall be selected as the candidate for that constituency if the candidacy is endorsed by a majority of the members of the Local Party present and voting by secret ballot. If that resolution is rejected, there shall be a ballot of all members of the Local Party, if the Member so requests, and he or she shall be selected candidate if his or her candidacy is endorsed by a majority of the members of the Local Party voting in the ballot.
- H14. In any case where clause 13 hereof is applicable, the person who chairs the Local Party may at any time request the Member of Parliament to notify him or her within one month whether he or she wishes to stand at the next General Election as a candidate for the constituency.
- H15. Any sitting constituency member of the Scottish Parliament may be reselected as the prospective Scottish Parliamentary candidate for the relevant constituency in accordance with the procedure specified in clauses H13 and H14 of the Constitution as if the Member of the Scottish Parliament were a Member of Parliament.
- H16. The immediate past candidate in a constituency may be reselected in accordance with this clause. Reselection shall require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at a meeting of the committee of the Local Party, followed by those voting in a ballot of members of the Local Party as provided in clause 12 hereof. The process must begin not less than six and be completed not more than eighteen months after the previous General Election.
- H17. The Executive may, in any particular case, modify the procedure for selection of a prospective candidate:
- a. by agreement with the relevant Local Parties; or
 - b. for the purpose of expediting the selection process, if the circumstances so require.
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- H18. In the event of a by-election in any constituency, a selected prospective candidate may be required to stand down at the discretion of either the Executive or the Local Party and a fresh selection, in that event, shall be held as far as practicable in accordance with the foregoing clauses.
- H19. If, after the selection of a prospective parliamentary candidate, boundary changes substantially affecting the related constituency come into force, a new selection shall be held. The Executive shall in case of disagreement decide whether a constituency has been substantially affected.

Prospective European Parliamentary Candidates

- H20. Selections of prospective European parliamentary candidates shall be by secret ballot of members within the European constituency. The selection shall proceed in accordance with regulations laid down by the Executive after consultation with Local Parties; such regulations shall conform to the requirements of clauses 9, 10 and 12 hereof provided that the selection committee shall comprise at least one member from each Local Party within the European constituency.
- H21. A Member of the European Parliament who is a member of the Party may notify the Secretary of the Party of his or her wish to stand at the next European Election. A meeting of the committees of the Local Parties containing any part or parts of the constituency shall be called by the Executive, who shall be invited to send a representative. A Member shall be adopted as prospective candidate for that constituency if his or her prospective candidacy is endorsed by a two-thirds majority of the members of the committees present and voting on the resolution endorsement. If that resolution is not passed by such a majority, there shall, if the Member requests, be a ballot of all members of the Party with membership addresses in the European constituency and the Member shall be selected as the candidate if his or her prospective candidacy is endorsed by a majority of the members voting in the ballot.
- H22. Not less than one year before the date of the next European Election, the Member shall notify the Executive if he or she wishes to be selected as prospective candidate for the constituency.
- H23. The Executive may, in any particular case, modify the procedure for selection of prospective candidates under the regulations currently in force:
- a by agreement with the relevant Local Parties; or
 - b for the purpose of expediting the selection process, if the circumstances so require.
- The regulations may be amended by the Executive after consultation with Local Parties.
- H24. In the event of a by-election in any European constituency, a selected prospective candidate may be required to stand down at the discretion of either the Executive or joint committee of the Local Parties and a fresh selection, in that event, shall be held as far as practicable in accordance with the foregoing rules.
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Prospective Scottish Parliament Candidates

H25 In relation to the selection of prospective candidates for the Scottish Parliament:

- a candidates for a single constituency shall be selected in accordance with the provisions of clauses 7 to 12 and 17 to 19 of this section, save that the conference may, by simple majority approve additional rules ; and
- b candidates for the additional members lists should be selected in accordance with the provisions of clauses 20, 23 and 24 of this section save that the regulations referred to therein should be subject to the approval of conference.

Selected Candidates

H26. A candidate shall cease to be the selected candidate for the constituency:

- a on the conclusion of the election for which he or she was selected; or
- b if he or she is removed as a candidate by the vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting at a general meeting of the relevant Local Party or Parties (called for the purpose and of which the candidate has been given not less than 14 days notice) and a quorum was present when the vote was taken (in the case of a parliamentary constituency) or at a joint meeting of the committees of the relevant Local Parties (in the case of a European constituency) provided that in any such case the Executive may require the removal to be confirmed by a secret postal ballot of the members of the relevant Local Parties.

H27. A candidate who is removed under clause 26(b) hereof shall have the same right of appeal to the Appeals Tribunal as if the removal were a selection in which he or she had been an unsuccessful candidate.

Candidates for Local Elections

H28. Candidates for election from electoral divisions and wards within a Local Party's area shall be selected in the manner provided by the rules of the Local Party.

I. Ballots For Purposes Other Than Elections

- I1. A consultative ballot of all members of the Party may be called on any fundamental question where the values and principles of the Party are in issue or it is otherwise in the essential interests of the Party. Such a ballot may be called by the Conference or by the Executive either on its own initiative or on the request of the Policy Committee. When a ballot is under consideration, the Executive shall present a statement as to the financial and administrative implications.

J. Associated Organisations

- J1. The Executive may recognise as an Associated Organisation any organisation of persons having some common link of interest, which;
- a has a membership the majority of whom are members of the Party, from at least 15 different Local Parties, and all of whom support the fundamental values and objects of the Party;
 - b has objects consistent with the Party's fundamental aims and objects; and
 - c has internal procedures that conform to the basic democratic values contained in Section D.5 of this Constitution.
- J2. An Associated Organisation shall have the following rights:
- a to propose motions and amendments thereto, or proposals relating to the business of the Party at Conference;
 - b to representation on the Executive as specified in Section F.10 and to a representative on the Policy and Conference Committees;
 - c to enrol members of the Party as specified in Section C.2(c)
 - d to be consulted on policy matters of special interest to it or on which it has special knowledge or expertise; and
 - e to submit proposals for membership of any relevant policy working group.
- An Associated Organisation or a group of members refused recognition as such may appeal against a ruling of the Executive under Section K of this Constitution.
- J3. An Associated Organisation which is a constituent part of a Specified Associated Organisation recognised under Article 13 of the Federal constitution shall not have rights under this Constitution additional to those of other Associated Organisations.
- J4. The Executive may require of an Associated Organisation a copy of its rules or constitution and such other information as shall enable it to decide on recognition or the withholding or withdrawal of recognition as an Associated Organisation.
- J5. The Executive may withdraw recognition of an Associated Organisation if, in the Executive's opinion, the Associated Organisation is not complying with the requirements of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. In such event the Associated Organisation shall have the right of appeal against such withdrawal to the Appeals Tribunal.
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K. The Appeals Tribunal

- K1. The function of the Appeals Tribunal shall be to hear and determine appeals on any matters on which a member or a Local Party or any other body provided for in this Constitution has a grievance under this Constitution as well as on all matters in respect of which it is provided by this Constitution or by the rules of a Local Party that an appeal may be made to the Appeals Tribunal. The Appeals Tribunal may, at their discretion, also hear and determine appeals on any other dispute between members or organisations within the Party where all parties to the dispute so agree.
- K2. Any dispute over the interpretation of this Constitution may be referred to the Appeals Tribunal for a ruling.
- K3. The Appeals Tribunal shall consist of the President and five members of the Party who shall be appointed by the Conference. One member shall be elected annually and shall serve for five years. Members shall be eligible for re-appointment. Nominations for members of the Tribunal shall be subscribed by two Conference representatives.
- K4. No person shall be eligible for appointment as a member of the Tribunal who is a member of the Executive and a member of the Tribunal shall cease to be so if elected to the Executive.
- K5. Three members of the Tribunal (selected by the President) shall sit to hear each appeal. If none of the three is a qualified lawyer, the Tribunal shall appoint such a person (who may be another member of the Tribunal) to attend the appeal hearing as an assessor. The assessor shall advise the Tribunal on points of law and equitable procedure.
- K6. A vacancy, however arising, in the membership of the Appeals Tribunal shall be filled at the next Annual General Meeting of the Party, the new member being elected to serve for the balance of the term of office of the previous member. In the event that a reduction in number of members of the Appeals Tribunal makes it impossible for the Tribunal to hear an appeal, the President shall appoint a member of the Party to be a temporary member of the Tribunal.
- K7. No member of the Tribunal shall sit to hear an appeal which concerns the Local Party of which he or she is a member or any member of that Local Party.
- K8. All appeals shall be heard in private except where both parties to the appeal shall agree otherwise.
- K9. The Tribunal shall give reasons for its decision, but shall have discretion whether to give publicity to a decision. A record of decisions and reasons shall be kept by the Secretary of the Party.
- K10. The Tribunal shall have power to adopt and publish Rules of Procedure (consistent with the provisions of this Constitution) to govern its own affairs, subject to confirmation by the Conference. Such rules may, subject to confirmation by the Conference, be varied from time to time.
- K11. An appellant must give notice of appeal in writing to the President and shall give a copy of that notice to the secretary of the body with which the appellant is aggrieved. Such a body shall act as respondent in the appeal, The Tribunal may refuse to hear an appeal if, in its opinion, there has been undue delay on the part of the appellant in giving notice of appeal in terms of this clause.
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- K12. Except with the agreement of all parties, an appeal will be heard within two months of the receipt of notice of the appeal by the President, and the agreement of the appellant that all relevant evidence on the part of the appellant available at that time has been submitted.
- K13. There shall be no appeal from the Appeals Tribunal to the Federal Appeals Panel save on a matter pertaining to provisions of the Federal constitution.

L. Amendment

- L1. Save as hereinafter provided, this Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the Annual General Meeting of the Party or at a special Conference called for the purpose. Amendments may be proposed by the Executive or by the Conference Committee or by any Local Party or by any Associated Organisation or by twenty-five members of the Party and must be received by the Secretary of the Party not less than three calendar months before the date of the Conference at which they are to be considered, provided that it shall be in order for the wording of a proposed amendment to be subsequently adjusted by the proposer of it to allow for clarification, or for the submission of consequential amendments. The Secretary shall send the proposed amendments to the Executive and to all Local Parties and all Associated Organisations not less than one month before the date of the Conference and to all members of the Party registered to attend and vote at the Conference not less than seven days before the date of the Conference (or immediately on registration if later).
 - L2. Any amendment whose effect would be to infringe the rights of individual members contained in Section C clause 4 of this Constitution or to restrict the matters for which a ballot of members is required pursuant to this Constitution shall not take effect unless it is passed by Conference in accordance with this Constitution and ratified by a majority of the members voting in a secret postal ballot.
 - L3. Any amendment to secede from the Federal Party shall not take effect unless it is passed by Conference in accordance with this Constitution and ratified by a majority of the members voting in a secret postal ballot.
 - L4. Any proposed amendment to the Federal constitution referred to the Party in terms of Article 2.6(iii) of the Federal constitution shall require a two thirds majority of those present and voting at Conference to be effective.
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The Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats/ Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru

As amended, Autumn Conference 2008

The Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats

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Preamble

The Welsh Liberal Democrats exist to build and safeguard a fair, free and open society, in which we seek to balance the fundamental values of liberty, equality and community and in which no-one shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity.

Section A: The Party

1. The name of the Party shall be the Welsh Liberal Democrats / Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru, hereinafter called the Party.
 2. The Party shall be part of a federation consisting of the Party, the Scottish Liberal Democrats, and the English Liberal Democrats, and the provisions of the Federal Constitution shall apply to Wales in the manner therein specified.
 3. References in this Constitution to the 'Executive' or 'National Executive', the 'Conference' and the 'Appeals Panel' shall be construed as references to the relevant bodies of the Welsh Liberal Democrats and references to 'Federal' bodies shall be construed as references to the relevant bodies of the Liberal Democrats.
 4. Without imposing an obligation to provide all documents in a bilingual form, the Party shall accord equal status to the Welsh and English languages.
 5. The Objectives of the Party shall be:
 - a. to promote the values and principles enshrined in the Preamble to the Federal Constitution;
 - b. to develop and promote policies that lead to the realisation of those values and principles; and, in order to achieve such objectives:
 - c. to secure the election of Liberal Democrats as Members of Parliament and Members of the European Parliament for the Wales Region; Members of the National Assembly for Wales; and members of local and other elected public authorities in Wales.
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Section B: Functions of the Party

The Functions of the Party shall be:

1. To provide the organisational, administrative and campaigning support for Local Party organisations (see Section H) and associated organisations within Wales;
 2. To provide support for Welsh Liberal Democrat Members of both Houses of Parliament, of the European Parliament; of the National Assembly for Wales and Welsh Liberal Democrat appointees to public bodies, endorsed either by the Welsh or Federal Leader;
 3. To co-operate with the Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors and other relevant bodies in the provision of support for Welsh Liberal Democrat Councillors and Welsh Liberal Democrat Council Groups within Wales;
 4. To increase the membership of the Party and maintain a definitive list of members.
 5. To operate in compliance with all UK and Welsh Legislation relating to the running of a political party including all financial activity, with particular reference to, but not in exclusivity, the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (hereinafter referred to as PPERA) and any successor legislation.
 6. To encourage members of the Party to make a full contribution to the work of the Party, the Federal Party and other constituent Parties and organisations within the Federation described in Section A.2 of this Constitution;
 7. To promote public awareness within Wales of the work and policies of the Party;
 8. To co-operate with the Federal Party and other constituent Parties and organisations within the Federation, described in Section A.2 of this Constitution, in the furtherance of shared objectives.
 9. To raise the finance required to carry out the functions described in this Constitution and to maintain such an organisation, including staff, so to do;
 10. To develop and formulate the policies of the Party on Welsh issues, to place the policies of the Federal Party in a Welsh context and to influence policy development within the Federal Party as is necessary and relevant to Wales and promote such policies; and
 11. To provide for the approval of Parliamentary, Assembly, European Parliamentary and directly-elected Mayoral candidates and provide rules for Local Parties on selection procedures and to co-operate with the relevant Welsh or Federal Bodies in the provision of support for such candidates.
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Section C: Membership

1. Membership of the Party is open to all persons who agree with its fundamental values and objectives without discrimination as to age, ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation. Membership shall be acquired through an enrolling body, being:

- a. a Local Party in the area in which the member lives, works or studies (or, another Local Party with its consent);
- b. a Specified Associated Organisation representing Youth and/or Students; or
- c. the Party in accordance with the provisions of its Membership Rules.

2. An applicant shall become a member on acceptance by the enrolling body, payment of the requisite subscription, and registration.

3. Responsibility for renewal of membership shall lie with the Party, but it may, by a decision of its Conference, provide for this function to be fulfilled by any other body or bodies within the Federal Party. Membership will be automatically terminated if the renewal subscription is not received within three months following the due date.

4. All other matters relating to the admission or refusal of admission to membership of any person, or for the revocation or cessation of membership of any member, including the basis on which Local Parties may be involved in the recruitment and renewal of members, shall be governed by this Constitution, any Membership Rules made under this Constitution in accordance with Clause C.9, below, and any membership provisions in the Federal Constitution.

5. No person may simultaneously be a member of more than one Local Party. A member may re-register as of right in a different Local Party under the terms of Clause C.1a, or may, with the consent of the member's previous Local Party where that Local Party has ceased to be appropriate in terms of Clause C.1a, retain membership of that Local Party. A member who is an AM, MP, MEP, prospective National Assembly for Wales, Parliamentary or European Parliamentary candidate or member of a Local Authority may re-register as of right in a relevant Local Party.

Membership may be refused by an enrolling body on one or more of the following grounds:

- a. material disagreement, evidenced by conduct, with the fundamental values and objectives of the Party;
- b. the admission of the applicant would be likely to bring the Party into disrepute; or
- c. membership of another political party in Great Britain.

6. Membership may be revoked by a Local Party (or, where appropriate, a Specified Associated Organisation which acted as the enrolling body) or the Party on one or more of the following grounds:

- a. material disagreement, evidenced by conduct, with the fundamental values and objects of the Party;
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- b. conduct which has brought, or is likely to bring, the Party into disrepute;
- c. standing against the candidate of the Party in any National Assembly for Wales, Parliamentary or European Parliamentary election;
- d. standing against the candidate of the Party in any Local Authority or Mayoral election; and
- e. membership of or support for another political party in Great Britain.

7. Membership shall not be revoked unless the member has been notified of the grounds on which revocation is to be considered and has been given a reasonable opportunity to reply. Where paragraph (c), (d) or (e) of this Clause (C.7) applies, membership shall be automatically and immediately suspended, and in other cases of urgency the body with powers of revocation may suspend membership while revocation is being considered.

8. The Party's Chief Executive shall be responsible for the maintenance of the Party's Register of Members.

9. Subject to the above, and to the provisions of the Federal Constitution, the Conference shall determine and approve the Membership Rules applicable to the Party.

10. Any person aggrieved by a decision under Clauses C.6 or C.7, above, may appeal to the Appeals Panel, save that any appeal shall be governed by any timetables and rules specified by the Appeals Panel (Section L: Appeals Panel).

Section D: Organisation of the Party

1. The organisation of the Party shall consist of:

a. The Conference

b. The Party Committees:

i. The National Executive Committee

ii. The Finance and Management Committee

iii. The Policy Committee

iv. The Conference Committee

v. The Campaigns and Candidates Committee

c. Local Parties

d. Assembly Electoral Regional Committees, hereinafter referred to as AERCs

e. Specified Associated Organisations

2. The Conference shall elect a Returning Officer who shall be responsible for the internal elections of the Party save as provided in this Clause and who will keep the Party's election rules under review and submit proposals for amendment by the Conference. The Returning Officer shall be elected by the Conference from the membership of the Party at large at the Spring Meeting of the Conference. The President, or a nominee appointed by the President for this purpose, shall act as returning officer for this one election. Nomination shall be by five members of the Conference. The Returning Officer shall not hold any other office within the Party at a Welsh level or be a person elected or standing for election under any of the elections at a Welsh level referred to in this Constitution.

3. All elections of Welsh Party Officers and Committee Members provided for in this Constitution shall take place every two years. Representatives to Federal Bodies shall take place every two years.

4. Each Committee established by this Constitution shall, unless otherwise provided, elect its own Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary and representatives on other committees at its first full meeting following the elections to the Committee. The Chair shall become ex-officio a full member of the National Executive and shall attend all meetings of the National Executive or arrange for a non-voting substitute to attend an individual meeting. The Chair of each committee shall have an additional casting vote in the event of tied votes at committee meetings.

5. Each Committee referred to in D.1 of this Constitution may co-opt members of the Party as non-voting members. Such co-opted members shall have full speaking rights in the Committee. Co-opted members may not serve as Committee Chairs or Vice Chairs.

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6. Unless otherwise provided:

- a. All Officers and Committee members shall be elected by the Conference from the membership of the Party at large;
- b. Nomination for election by the Conference shall be by 5 members of the Conference and for election by the Party Committees by 2 members of the relevant Committee.

7. All elections (other than those arising from a meeting of the Conference which need to be held at that meeting) to be carried out by the Conference shall be carried out by a postal ballot of all those registered as members of Conference for the current year (and not their substitutes) immediately after the relevant meeting of Conference

Section E: Officers of the Party

1. The Officers of the Party shall be:

The President

The Deputy President

The Leader of the Party

The Chair of the National Executive Committee

The Treasurer

The Returning Officer

The Federal Vice-President for Wales

The Leader of the Party

The Deputy Leaders of the Party

2. The President shall be the principal public representative of the Party at large. The President shall report to the Annual Meeting of Conference and may make reports to any other meetings of Conference. S/he shall be assisted by a Deputy President.

Both the President and Deputy President shall have special responsibility to represent the interests of the members and the Party. The President and the Deputy President shall be elected by a postal ballot of the membership in accordance with Annexe 1, Appendix 3 of this Constitution for a term of two years. Nomination for both offices shall be by not less than thirty members of the Party, of whom not more than five shall be members of the same Local Party. Members may only sign one nomination paper. Members of Parliament, Assembly Members, Peers and Members of the European Parliament shall not be eligible for these posts.

3. The Chair of the National Executive Committee shall be elected every two years by members of the National Executive from their number and shall take the Chair at meetings of the Executive.

4. a. The Leader of the Party shall be elected from the Welsh Liberal Democrat members of the European Parliament, House of Commons & National Assembly for Wales and shall become Leader of whichever Group they originate from. Candidates for this office shall be nominated by a Welsh Liberal Democrat Member of the European Parliament, House of Commons or National Assembly for Wales; and supported by 30 members, of whom not more than five shall be members of the same Local Party or Youth/Student SAO. No member shall sign more than one nomination paper. The election shall be by postal ballot of the membership in accordance with Annexe 1, Appendix 3 of this Constitution.

b. There shall be an election for Leader within twelve months of a Westminster General Election or a Welsh General Election or Elections to the European Parliament depending on which Body the Leader resides. An election shall in addition take place if he/she resigns, ceases to be a member of the European Parliament, House of Commons or National Assembly for Wales, if

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a vote of no confidence by the relevant group from which they originate is passed by a majority of that Group or by a resolution of no confidence passed by at least 10 Local Parties, following a quorate General Meeting of each Local Party.

5. a. If not elected Leader, the Leader of the Parliamentary Group shall be elected from the members of the Parliamentary Group in the House of Commons and shall be known as Deputy Leader of the Party. Candidates for this office shall be nominated by a member of either House of Parliament supported by 30 member of whom not more than five shall be members in the same Local Party, or Youth/Student SAO. No member shall sign more than one nomination paper. The election shall be by postal ballot of the membership in accordance with Annexe 1, Appendix 3 of this Constitution.

b. An election for the Leader of the Parliamentary Group shall be held within 12 months of a General Election for a term ending with a similar election after the following election. An election shall in addition take place if he/she resigns, ceases to be a member of Parliament or a vote of no confidence in the Leader of the Parliamentary Group is passed by a majority of the Parliamentary group in the House of Commons or by a resolution of no confidence passed by at least 10 Local Parties, following a quorate General Meeting of each Local Party.

6. a. If not elected Leader of the Party, the Leader of the National Assembly Group shall be elected from the members of the National Assembly Group and shall be known as Deputy Leader of the Party. Candidates for this office shall be nominated by an Assembly Member, supported by 30 members of the Party, of whom there shall be at least 5 from each Assembly Electoral Region. No member shall sign more than one nomination paper. The election shall be by postal ballot of the membership in accordance with Annexe 1, Appendix 3 of this Constitution.

b. An election for the Leader of the National Assembly Group shall be held within 12 months of a Welsh General Election for a term ending with a similar election after the following elections. An election shall, in addition, take place if he/she resigns, ceases to be member of the National Assembly, a vote of no confidence in the National Assembly Group Leader is passed by a majority of the National Assembly Group, by a resolution of no confidence passed by at least 10 Local Parties or by a resolution of no confidence passed by at least 10 Local Parties, following a quorate General Meeting of each Local Party.

7. a. If not elected Leader of the Party, the Leader of the European Parliamentary Group shall be elected from the Welsh members of the European Parliamentary Group and shall be known as Deputy Leader of the Party. Candidates for this office shall be nominated by a member of the European Parliament supported by 30 members of whom not more than five shall be members in the same Local Party, or Youth/Student SAO. No member shall sign more than one nomination paper. The election shall be by postal ballot

of the membership in accordance with Annexe 1, Appendix 3 of this Constitution.

b. An election for the Leader of the European Parliamentary Group shall be held within 12 months of a European Election for a term ending with a similar election after the following election. An election shall in addition take place if he/she resigns, ceases to be a Member of the European Parliament, a vote of no confidence in the Leader of the Parliamentary Group is passed by a majority of the Group in the European Parliament or by a resolution of no confidence passed by at least 10 Local Parties, following a quorate General Meeting of each Local Party.

8. The Treasurer shall be elected every two years by the Conference from the membership at large.

9. Members who derive the majority of their remuneration from the Federal or any State Party; or by Welsh Liberal Democrat members of the National Assembly, Westminster Parliament and European Parliament; or by the Welsh Liberal Democrat Group at the National Assembly, or by the Liberal Democrat Groups at the Westminster Parliament and European Parliament shall not be eligible to stand for election as an Officer or as Chair of any Party Committee.

10. The Federal Vice President for Wales shall be elected every two years by the Conference from the membership at large.

11. The President and Deputy President shall serve a term of two years and take office immediately upon election.

12. All other Officers and all Committees are elected every two years and shall commence office on January 1st of the year following their election save that of President, Deputy President, Leader, Deputy Leaders, and The Returning Officer. The period between the election results and the commencement of office shall serve as the 'hand-over' period.

13. By elections for any vacancy may coincide with the annual set of elections.

Section F: The Conference

1. The functions of the Conference shall be:
 - a. the formulation of the policy of the Party;
 - b. the receipt of a report from the Conference Committee;
 - c. the receipt of reports, including a report from the Party's Assembly group, Westminster Group and MEPs, financial and membership reports from the Executive and other Committees
 - d. the election of Officers and members of all Committees and bodies referred to in this Constitution;
 - e. the election of all representatives that may be provided for in the Federal Constitution;
 - f. the appointment of two auditors to audit the accounts of the Party;
 - g. the approval of such Rules as may be provided for in this Constitution and consideration of proposals to amend such Rules;
 - h. the consideration of proposals to amend this Constitution; and
 - i. all other functions required by this Constitution or by its status as the supreme decision-making body of the Party.

 2. The debates of the Conference shall be based on policy papers submitted by the Policy Committee and motions submitted by any of the party's committees as laid down in Section D of this Constitution, Local Parties, SAOs. or supported by at least 20 members of the Conference.

 3. The Conference year shall commence on January 1st and run for a full calendar year. The entitlement of each Local Party shall be calculated as laid out below and shall be based on their paid-up membership on December 31st of the preceding year.
 - a. Local Parties and SAOs. shall be represented on the following basis:
 - i. Local Parties and SAOs. of up to 60 members shall be entitled to six representatives of whom at least one shall be a man and one a woman provided appropriate nominations have been received;
 - ii. Local Parties and SAOs. of over 60 members shall be entitled to one additional representative for every 20 members (or part thereof) in excess of 60;
 - b. Recognised local groups of less than 30 members shall be entitled to one representative.

 4. The following members shall be ex-officio voting members of the Conference:
 - a. All officers of the Party and all members of Party Committees referred to in Clause E.1 of this Constitution;
 - b. Welsh Liberal Democrat members of the House of Commons, the House of Lords, the European Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales.
 - c. Selected Prospective Parliamentary, Assembly and European candidates;
 - d. The following Local Party Officers (as recognised by PPERA):
 - i) The Chair;
 - ii) The Secretary;
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iii) The Treasurer; and

iv) The Membership Secretary.

e. All Unitary Councillors in Wales registered with the Welsh Liberal Democrats as sitting Liberal Democrat Councillors. Members nominated under this procedure shall serve from election until they resign as a Liberal Democrat Councillor or to the end of the calendar year in which they are defeated or stand down from their council seat.

5. The term of office of the Conference shall be one year and representatives shall be elected at the commencement of the term, by ballot of the members of the Local Party in accordance with Annexe 1 of this Constitution. Casual vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the term when the membership is next scheduled to be balloted. Substitutes, to replace elected representatives unable to attend, may be appointed by the executive of the Local Party for individual meetings of the Conference.

6. The Conference shall meet not less than twice in each year. The timings and agenda of these two meetings shall be decided by the Conference Committee save that the AGM shall be included within the meeting of the Conference held in the autumn, as required by PPERA.

7. In exceptional circumstances the National Executive Committee and the Conference Committee may jointly agree to postpone a meeting of Conference to facilitate election campaigning or respond to a specific civil contingency situation.

8. The President, the Deputy President, or such other persons as the Conference Committee may appoint for the duration of one meeting, shall take the chair at all meetings of the Conference.

9. Any member of the Party shall be entitled to attend a meeting of the Conference as a Non-Voting Member of Conference on payment of the published registration fee.

Section G: Party Committees

1. The National Executive Committee

1. The National Executive shall consist of
 - a. The President;
 - b. The Deputy President;
 - c. The Leader of the Party;
 - d. The Deputy Leaders of the Party;
 - e. The Treasurer;
 - f. The Federal Vice-President for Wales;
 - g. 9 members elected by Conference from the membership at large;
 - h. 1 representative of the Welsh Liberal Democrat members of Unitary Authorities elected in accordance with Annexe 1, Appendix 2 of this Constitution;
 - i. 2 representatives of the Youth and Student SAO, elected in accordance with its own internal procedures
 - j. The Party's representative on the Federal Executive Committee;
 - k. The Party's representative on the Federal Conference Committee;
 - l. 1 representative of the National Assembly Group elected by and from their number;
 - m. 1 representative of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Westminster Parliamentary Group elected by and from their number;
 - n. 1 representative of the Welsh Liberal Democrat European Parliament group elected by and from their number; and
 - q. The chairs of the other Party Committees referred to in Section D.1.b of this Constitution.
 2. The National Executive shall elect its own Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary from amongst its members.
 3. The Executive shall meet at least 6 times annually
 4. There shall be a quorum of one quarter (rounded up) of the membership of the Executive.
 5. Individuals may be members of the National Executive and Party Committees referred to in Section D.1.b of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats in more than one capacity and accordingly no vacancy shall be caused in the event of a member becoming a member of the National Executive in an additional capacity.
 6. Casual vacancies for all posts shall be filled as soon as a by-election can be arranged.
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2. The Finance and Management Committee

1. The Finance and Management Committee shall consist of:
 - a. The Chair of the National Executive;
 - b. The Party's Representative to the Federal Finance and Administration Committee;
 - c. The Party President;
 - d. The Party Treasurer;
 - e. The Chief Executive;
 - f. The Party Manager; and
 - g. Three members elected by the Conference from the membership at large.
2. The Committee shall elect its own Chair and Secretary from among its own number.

3. The Policy Committee

1. The Policy Committee shall consist of:
 - a. The Leader of the Party, or their nominated substitute;
 - b. The Deputy Leader of the Party or their nominated substitutes;
 - c. The Party's representative on the Federal Policy Committee;
 - d. 6 members elected by Conference from the membership at large;
 - e. 1 representative of the Welsh Liberal Democrat members of Unitary Authorities elected in accordance with Annexe 1, Appendix 2 of this Constitution;
 - f. 1 member of the Conference Committee, who has been elected by Conference, elected from among its own number; and
 - g. 1 representative of the Youth and Student SAO elected in accordance with their own internal procedures;
2. The Committee shall elect its own Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary.

4. The Campaigns and Candidates Committee

1. The Campaigns and Candidates Committee shall consist of:
 - a. The Leader of the Party, or their nominated substitute;
 - b. The Deputy Leader of the Party or their nominated substitutes;
 - c. 9 members elected by Conference from the membership at large;
 - d. 1 representative of the Welsh Liberal Democrat members of Unitary Authorities elected in accordance with Annexe 1, Appendix 2 of this Constitution; and
 - g. 1 representative of the Youth and Student SAO elected in accordance with their own internal procedures; and
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2. The Committee shall elect its own Chair, Vice Chair (Candidates) and Secretary from among its own number. It may also appoint sub-committees to run election or referendum campaigns. Such sub committees shall be accountable and responsible to this Committee.

5. The Conference Committee

1. The Conference Committee shall consist of:

- a. a Chair elected by the Conference from the membership at large;
- b. a Vice-Chair elected by the Conference from the membership at large;
- c. 6 members elected by the Conference from the membership at large;
- d. The Party's representative on the Federal Conference Committee;
- e. 1 representative of the Youth & Student SAO elected in accordance with their own internal procedures;
- f. 1 member of the Policy Committee, who has been elected by Conference, elected from among its own number; and
- g. A rolling pool of 1 member each of the Local Parties which cover the location of the two immediately forthcoming meetings of Conference to advise on and facilitate local arrangements for the Conference. Such members shall not vote on decisions relating to the Conference Agenda. Once the relevant meeting of Conference has taken place the Local Party member for that Conference shall cease to be a member of the Committee and the next Local Party member shall take his/her place.

2. The Committee shall elect a Secretary from among its own number.

Section H: Local Parties

1. The National Executive shall promote the establishment of recognised Local Parties based on parliamentary constituencies.
 2. Local Parties shall be recognised by the Party and entitled to the rights granted by this Constitution only if they have at least thirty members and have adopted a constitution incorporating the principles contained in the Federal Constitution and in this Constitution.
 3. Following consultation with the Executive, the members of two or more adjacent Local Parties may decide to form a joint Local Party, provided that a majority of members voting in a ballot in each component Local Party agrees to such arrangement, and references in this Constitution to a Local Party shall apply to such a joint Local Party as if it were a single Local Party, save insofar as it relates to the selection of candidates and to provisions in the Federal Constitution.
 4. A Local Party containing two or more constituencies may divide into new Local Parties, provided that none of them will have fewer than thirty members. A division requires the consent of the Executive Committee of the existing Local Party and of a majority of those voting at separate general meetings of the members resident in the area of each proposed new Local Party. Any dispute concerning such a division, and any necessary provisions consequential upon changes of parliamentary boundaries, shall be determined by the National Executive Committee.
 5. For the purpose of elections for a local authority comprising a plurality of Local Parties, the Local Parties concerned shall form a joint coordinating committee to co-ordinate campaigning and publicity, and to be responsible for the formulation of policy on local issues for that election with such powers and otherwise on such terms as may be thought fit.
 6. The Conference shall publish, and may from time to time vary, a model constitution for Local Parties.
 7. Each Local Party shall have a constitution, and may adopt a constitution which is not in the model form, or is in the model form subject to variations, and may from time to time amend its constitution.
 8. Any Local Party constitution not wholly in the model form and any amendment shall be subject to approval by the National Executive Committee. Such approval may be withheld if, in the opinion of the National Executive Committee, the constitution or amendment:
 - a. contravenes the principles set out in Article 4.6 of the Federal Constitution or the Preamble to this Constitution or is otherwise in conflict with any of the provisions of this Constitution; or
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b. is unworkable or defective, or omits or deletes provisions necessary to the proper functioning of the Local Party.

9. The constitution of a Local Party must comply with the following principles:

a. the Local Party must have an executive committee, which has officers and ordinary members and may have ex-officio and co-opted members, and which must report to the Annual General Meeting on its activities;

b. the executive committee must comprise both men and women and at least one person under the age of 26;

c. the election of officers and ordinary members of the executive committee must be by all members of the Local Party, voting either on a single roll or (in the case of voting for ordinary members of the executive committee) in branches;

d. there must be proper regulations (either in the constitution of the Local Party or in standing orders made thereunder) for the conduct of elections and meetings;

e. there must be a democratic process for the selection of candidates for election to local authorities;

f. the constitution of the Local Party may be amended only by a properly convened and quorate general meeting by the vote of at least two thirds of those present and voting, and no amendment shall take effect until it has been approved under Clause H.8 of this Constitution;

and

g. those contained in Article 4.6 of the Federal Constitution.

10. The constitution of a Local Party is subject to this Constitution and, in the event of any conflict between them, this Constitution shall prevail.

11. The rights of a Local Party under this Constitution may be suspended by the Conference on the proposal of the Executive if it is not adhering to this (or its own) Constitution, if it is not adhering to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 or if events have taken place which are or may be seriously detrimental to the Local Party or to the Party as a whole.

12. Before exercising any powers under Clause H.11 of this Constitution, the Executive shall draw the attention of the Local Party to the grounds on which it is proposed to take this action, and shall give the Local Party a reasonable time to answer any allegations and/or take any necessary corrective action. A Local Party which is suspended under Clause H.11 of this Constitution may appeal that decision as provided by Section L - Appeals Panel - of this Constitution.

13. During the period of suspension the powers and functions of the Local Party and its organs shall be exercised subject to and in accordance with the directions of the National Executive Committee, and the Local Party shall not be entitled to representation at the Federal Conference or at the Welsh Conference.

14. Where a Local Party has been suspended, the suspension may be lifted by the Executive if it is satisfied that corrective action has been taken.

15. A Local Party shall be suspended if its membership has remained below thirty for a continuous period of six months, and shall remain suspended until its

membership reaches thirty. A Local Party which has been suspended on this ground shall cease to have the rights conferred upon Local Parties by this Constitution.

16. Any person who is employed by or provides services to a Local Party for payment shall be appointed only by its executive committee and paid only through the Local Party's funds.

17. Each recognised Local Party shall appoint a Membership Secretary, who shall be responsible for such membership fees as are collected by the Local Party and shall account to the Finance and Management Committee for such fees.

18. The Executive of a Local Party may approve the formation of ward or branch parties.

19. The National Executive Committee shall have the power, in its absolute discretion, to recognise groups of local members of fewer than thirty members who shall have only the right to representation on the Conference pursuant to Clause F.3.b of this Constitution.

Section I: Assembly Electoral Regional Committees

In each Assembly Electoral Region there shall be established and maintained an Assembly Electoral Regional Committee, hereinafter referred to as AERCs.

A. Function

AERCs shall assume principal responsibility for all aspects of Regional Assembly elections. Specifically, they shall be responsible for:

- a. Coordinating regional Assembly election campaigns;
- b. Coordinating and supervising the selection of Assembly list candidates within their electoral region;
- c. Coordinating and initiating regional campaigns in between Assembly elections;
- d. Raising money for the conduct of Regional Assembly elections;
- e. Liaising with Local Parties to organise regional membership recruitment campaigns;
- f. Coordinating policy on regional issues for the National Assembly Election in line with national policy and local needs;
- g. Maintaining liaison between regional AM's and the Party in their region;
- h. Coordinating local government election campaigns and collate information on local government elections within their Assembly Electoral Region.

B. Composition

1. An AERC shall consist of:

- a. A Chair, whose function shall be to chair meetings of the AERC and report in writing to the Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee at least twice a year. The Chair shall be nominated and elected by the representatives to the AERC from the regional membership at large.
- b. A Vice-Chair, who shall carry out the functions of the Chair in his/her absence. The Vice-Chair shall be nominated and elected by the representatives to the AERC from the regional membership at large.
- c. A Secretary, who shall take minutes of all AERC meetings and shall conduct all correspondence on behalf of the AERC. The Secretary shall be nominated and elected by the representatives to the AERC from the regional membership at large.
- d. A Treasurer, who shall maintain the accounts of the AERC and shall ensure that the AERC is compliant with PPERA and any subsequent UK and/or Welsh legislation regarding the financial operation of Political Parties. The Treasurer shall be nominated and elected by the representatives to the AERC from the regional membership at large.
- e. Representatives of each Assembly Constituency covered by the Assembly Region elected at a Local Party AGM based on the membership in each Constituency at 31st December of the year of the AGM. Constituencies shall be represented on the following basis:
 - i. Constituencies of up to 50 members shall be entitled to two representatives.

ii. Constituencies of over 50 members shall be entitled to one additional representative for every 75 members (or part thereof) in excess of 50 members up to a threshold of 500 members. If a constituency is in excess of 500 members they shall be entitled to additional representation of one representative for every 100 members (or part thereof) in excess of 500.

f. Sitting Assembly Members and selected Assembly Candidates for either the relevant Regional List or Assembly Constituencies within the Region.

C. Meetings

Each AERC shall meet no less than four times a year. Normally, the Autumn meeting of the AERC shall serve as the Annual Meeting, at which the AERC's officers are elected.

The Annual Meeting of the AERC shall be responsible for:

- a. Electing the AERC officers set out in Clause I.B.1, above;
- b. Receiving the audited accounts from the Treasurer;
- c. Receiving reports from the Electoral Region's AMs;
- d. Any other business deemed necessary.

C. Failure to Fulfil Functions and/or Responsibilities

Should an AERC fail to fulfil its functions or responsibilities as set out in sub-sections I.A to I.C, above, the National Executive Committee, or a nominated subgroup thereof, shall take over the role of the relevant AERC until such a time that

**Section J:
Parliamentary / Welsh Assembly
Candidates**

1. There shall be lists of persons approved to stand as official Welsh Party Candidates for the National Assembly for Wales, the House of Commons and the European Parliament.
 2. Any member may apply to the Campaigns and Candidates Committee for consideration to be included on the lists and a Local Party may propose an applicant for approval.
 3. No candidate or prospective candidate shall be entitled to style themselves a Welsh Liberal Democrat Candidate unless that person is an approved candidate under this Section.
 4. Any person refused approval or disputing the grade given may appeal to the Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee. In deciding whether to enter an applicant on the list, the Committee shall take into account the matters referred to in Article 11.3 of the Federal Constitution.
 5. The Conference shall determine and may from time to time vary the regulations governing the selection process for Prospective Candidates of the European Parliament, Prospective Candidates for the Westminster Parliament and Prospective Candidates for the National Assembly for Wales and their adoption insofar as is consistent with this constitution and the Federal Constitution.
 6. The Conference shall consider and approve rules for the approval and selection of Candidates which shall be submitted to it by the Campaigns and Candidates Committee and which shall comply with the provisions of the Federal Constitution.
 7. The Campaigns and Candidates Committee shall ensure that prospective candidates are selected for the Welsh European region, for each Parliamentary Constituency and for each Constituency and Electoral Region for the National Assembly for Wales, and may set selection procedures in motion where individual Local Parties have failed to do so within the six month period in the run up to an election or the imminent prospect of an election.
 8. Selection shall nevertheless be in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Constitution and this Constitution but the Campaigns and Candidates Committee shall have authority to vary the operation of the Rules where it considers that such variation is required by unusual local circumstances.
 9. If, following the selection of a Prospective Parliamentary/Assembly Candidate, a vacancy occurs in the seat, such selection shall cease to have effect and a new selection process shall take place to select a prospective candidate for the byelection save that the incumbent Prospective Candidate shall be guaranteed an
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interview for potential inclusion on any shortlist that arises from the new selection process.

10. These provisions shall apply to the approval and selection of European candidates and Welsh Assembly List Candidates except that the functions of the Local Party and its Executive Committee shall be carried out by such bodies as the Selection Rules shall provide.

11. The Rules for the Selection and adoption of Candidates for the European Parliament Elections in the European Electoral Region of Wales and the the Rules for the Selection of Assembly Candidates and Parliamentary Candidates shall form an Annexe to this Constitution.

Section K: Associated Organisations

1. Any organisation of persons having a common link of interest which satisfies the following criteria:

- a. its membership is limited to members of the Party or non-members who support the fundamental values and objectives of the Party;
- b. its objects are consistent with those fundamental values and objectives; and
- c. its internal procedures conform with the basic democratic principles set forth in Section C of this Constitution may be recognised as an Associated Organisation ("AO") by the Executive.

2. a. Any such organisation which, in addition to satisfying the criteria set forth in Section K.1, above, consists solely (in the case of youth and/or students) of members of the Party and is listed in the Annexe to this Constitution shall be recognised as a Specified Associated Organisation ("SAO") by the National Executive Committee. Other organisations may, subject to any criteria established pursuant to Section K.1, above, qualify for status as a Specified Associated Organisation following a proposal from the National Executive Committee and a two-thirds majority of Conference.

b. Once so approved, an SAO shall be subject to the provisions in the same way as those SAOs which are specified herein. A list of such added SAOs shall be appended to the relevant Annexe of this Constitution. The Annexe shall expire at the end of every fourth Autumn Conference from 2008 (although the National Executive Committee shall have the power to delay this each time by a further twelve months on a two-thirds majority) and must be renewed by means of an amendable motion from the National Executive Committee to the Conference.

3. An Associated Organisation (AO) shall have the following rights:

- a. to be consulted on policy matters of special interest to the AO or on which it has special knowledge or expertise;
- b. to present evidence to any policy working group covering issues relevant to the organisation; and
- c. to submit proposals for membership of any relevant policy working group.

4. Specified Associated Organisations shall:

- a. Have the same recognitions procedure and rights as provided for SAOs at Federal level by the Federal Constitution; and
 - b. Have the additional right to identify with and move motions and amendments at meetings of the Conference through those members of the SAO who are members of the Conference.
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5. For the purposes of exercising the rights conferred on SAOs by this Constitution, an SAO representing youth and/or students shall have the same rights as a Local Party.

6. If an AO, or an SAO, is in breach of the criteria set forth in Section K or established pursuant to Clause H.1, above, it may be suspended from the exercise of its rights under this Constitution by the National Executive Committee. Before exercising any powers under this Clause, the body proposing to suspend or recommend the suspension of the rights of the AO or SAO shall draw the attention of the AO or SAO concerned to the grounds on which it is proposed to take this action, and the AO or SAO shall be given reasonable time to answer any allegations and/or take any necessary corrective action.

7. The suspension of an AO or SAO may be effected by the National Executive Committee and shall be reported to the next meeting of the Conference, which may revoke such suspension or, by a two-thirds majority, remove from an organisation the status of an AO or SAO.

8. Any suspension of an AO or SAO may be lifted by the suspending body if it is satisfied that corrective action has been taken.

9. A member of an SAO shall not be counted as a member for the purposes of Section E of this Constitution or participate in exercising the rights of an SAO under Sections D to H of this Constitution or of Article 10 of the Federal Constitution, if:

- a. such a member is not a member of the Party;
- b. in the case of the Youth and/or Student Organisation, such a member has reached the age of 26 and is not a Student;
- c. such a member, having been originally enrolled by an SAO, has elected to exercise the relevant constitutional rights through a Local Party; or
- d. Such a member, having been originally enrolled by a Local Party, has not elected to exercise the relevant constitutional rights concurrently as a member of more than one SAO or as a member of both an SAO and a Local Party.

10. The recognition by the Party of Associated Organisations, and the conferring by this Constitution of rights upon Specified Associated Organisations, shall not prejudice the independence of such organisations.

Section L: Appeals Panel

1. There shall be an Appeals Panel comprising of a Clerk, who shall be the Party's Chief Executive, the Chair and ten other members nominated by the National Executive or a Local Party and confirmed by the Conference. The Appeals Panel shall elect a Vice-Chair from amongst its members. The list of members of the Appeals Panel along with the date(s) of their appointment and/or expiry of appointment shall form an Annexe to this Constitution.
 2. Welsh members of the Federal Appeals Panel shall be nominated and confirmed by the same procedure outlined in I.1 above, and shall be ex-officio members of the Welsh Appeals Panel during the period of their membership of the Federal Appeals Panel.
 3. Each member of the Panel shall be eligible for reappointment. No person shall be eligible for appointment if (and any member shall forthwith vacate office upon becoming) an AM, MP, MEP or a member of the National Executive or the Campaigns and Candidates Committee or an employee of the Party. Further any member will be suspended from office during any period when they are a prospective parliamentary candidate. The body making the original appointment may terminate the appointment because the appointee is no longer able to carry out his or her duties as a member of the Panel on account of ill health or for other good cause. Any casual vacancy on the Panel may be filled by the body making the original appointment for the residue of the term of that appointment and/or by a resolution of the Appeal Panel members providing this is subject to ratification by Conference at the next available opportunity.
 4. The Appeals Panel shall adjudicate on:
 - a. any dispute over the interpretation of this Constitution;
 - b. any claim that the rights under this Constitution of a member or of a Party body have been infringed;
 - c. any dispute between the Welsh Liberal Democrats and an AERC or Local Party, or between AERCs or between Local Parties; and
 - d. any matter expressly so provided by these Sections or by rules made hereunder.
 5. The members of the Panel to hear a particular case shall be selected by the Chair, subject to the following provisos:
 - a. the Chair alone may determine any dispute over the interpretation of this Constitution;
 - b. at least three members shall hear any other case;
 - c. no member shall be from the same Constituency/Area as the appellant or have any direct involvement in the matters in dispute.
 6. The Chair of the Appeals Panel and the Clerk may make and publish rules for its own procedures. The rules so published must be ratified by Conference at the next available opportunity and shall form an Annexe to this Constitution. These
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rules shall include:

a. the initial processing of an appeal, including:

i. a power to the Chair to determine whether or not an appeal is valid;

ii. a power to the Chair to order a mediation process;

iii. an indicative timetable, and a power to the Chair to impose deadlines (and so that any appeal must, unless the Chair extends this deadline in exceptional circumstances, be concluded within three months of being lodged, and may be dismissed if the appellant does not co-operate with the related timetable) save that any appeal must be submitted to the Clerk of the Appeals Panel no later than two weeks after then incident which is the subject of the appeal, has occurred; and

iv. an obligation on the Appeals Panel, so far as is practicable to identify the parties to an appeal hearing, and to notify all of them sufficiently in advance to enable them to submit documentary evidence and provide witnesses; and

b. the conduct of an appeal.

7. Any decision of the Panel shall, subject to any right of appeal under the Federal Constitution, be final and binding on all concerned. The Panel may publish any decisions or issue any statement/direction in respect of a decision which, in the opinion of the Chair, are likely to be of value as a precedent. The Panel shall also report annually to the Conference on any adjudication it has made regarding the interpretation of this Constitution and the nature of any other complaints it has had to deal with and any recommendations to avoid the recurrence of similar

Section M: Constitutional Amendments

1. Save as is hereinafter provided, this Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of members of Conference present and voting at a meeting of the Conference. Motions to amend the Constitution may be proposed by either the National Executive, Local Parties, Specified Associated Organisations or by 20 members of the Conference. Notice of motions to amend the Constitution shall be sent by post to all members of Conference at least one month before the meeting of Conference at which those motions are to be debated.

2. Any motion to amend the constitution shall require a quorum of one half of the registered representatives in respect of the relevant meeting of the Conference,

3. There shall be a standing, Constitutional Review Panel which shall have the power to amend the Constitution subject to ratification by Conference at its next meeting (and if necessary by any all-member ballot if the rights of an individual are reduced (Clause J.4, below)) following any changes. Additionally, the Panel shall:

a. ensure that this Constitution is compliant with any UK or Welsh Legislation covering the governance of Political Parties, such as PPERA.

b. review proposed amendments to this Constitution to ensure that they are valid amendments and to ensure that the integrity of the Constitution is retained by proposing additional drafting amendments.

The membership of the Constitutional Review Panel shall be:

a. The President, who shall be the Chair of the Panel;

b. The Chair of the National Executive;

c. The Chair of the Conference Committee;

d. 1 Representative of the Combined Assembly/Parliamentary Groups;

e. The Party's Returning Officer;

f. 3 members nominated by the President and confirmed by Conference who shall serve for a two-year term of office and shall be eligible for re-confirmation. For the purposes of this Panel the provisions of Clause E.9 of this Constitution shall not apply.

g. The Federal Party's Head of Compliance and Constitutional Support, or his/her designated substitute shall be invited to act as a consultant to the Panel and may attend meetings as he/she sees fit.

The full list of members, with the dates of appointment and expiry shall form an Annexe to this Constitution.

4. a. Any proposed motion to amend the constitution whose effect would be to reduce the rights of individual members (including any reduction in the matters for which a ballot of members is required pursuant to this Constitution) shall not be valid unless ratified by two-thirds of the members voting in a ballot.

b. The outcome of any ballot of the Party's Membership shall be notified to the Membership no later than four weeks after any result has been declared.

5. Any amendment to this Constitution shall take effect at the end of the meeting of Conference at which the amendment is adopted or, if Clause J.4 is invoked, once the result of an all-member ballot has been counted and the result declared by the Returning Officer save that any changes to the composition of a Committee shall not take effect until the next set of elections to that Committee.

ANNEXES to the CONSTITUTION

ANNEXE I: Election Rules

APPENDIX 1: Election Rules for Annual Elections by Conference (October 2008)

A. Introduction

1. As laid down in the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats, annual elections for all officers, Committee members and representatives save for those for Leader of the Party, Leader of the Assembly, Leader of the Parliamentary Party and Returning Officer shall be held in conjunction with the autumn Meeting of the Conference.
2. Eligibility to stand for these offices or positions is defined by the Constitution.
3. The election of the Returning Officer shall be held at the Spring Meeting of the Conference in accordance with the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats, (Clause D.2), and, so far as relevant, these Rules shall apply to that Election.

B. Timetable

1. The Returning Officer shall, in consultation with the Chair of the Conference Committee and the Party's Chief Executive, draw up a timetable for the Annual Elections.
2. Such timetable shall provide:
 - a. for the invitation of nominations to be circulated to all Conference Members, Local Parties and Specified Associated Organisations;
 - b. that a period of at least three weeks shall be allowed between the opening and closing of nominations;
 - c. for nominations to close no later than the end of the autumn meeting of the Conference;
 - d. that ballot papers for any contested election shall be distributed within two weeks of the closing date for the receipt of nominations;
 - e. that the final date for the return of ballot papers shall be no less than five weeks after the closing date for the receipt of nominations.

C. Nomination

1. As required by the Party's Constitution, nomination shall be by five members of the Conference.
 2. Each nomination shall be on the prescribed nomination form which shall bear the name of each nominator, in clear print, along with the name of their Local Party , their membership number and their signature. This form shall also contain the
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Candidate's name, Local Party, address, Membership Number and telephone number and shall be countersigned by the Candidate as a consent to nomination.

3. Each candidate shall send to the Returning Officer with the nomination form a manifesto. The manifesto shall cover no more than one side of an A5 piece of paper (two sides if one is a direct translation into English/Welsh of the other, a photograph may be included and any artwork must be the same in both) for distribution with the ballot papers.

4. Directly elected individual membership is limited to two Committees including the National Executive Committee.

5. Any person who is a candidate for direct election to more than two Committees shall indicate to the Returning Officer their order of preference for the purposes of the conduct of the count under Section F of this set of Rules, below.

6. The Returning Officer shall, as soon as practicable, inform a Candidate whether a nomination is valid.

D. Campaign

1. The Returning Officer shall send out with the ballot papers a statement (as defined above) from each Candidate for each election. No other statement shall be issued by any Candidate.

2. The Conference Committee, shall, with the ballot papers, publish and circulate to all members of the Conference a list of actual versus possible attendance's of Officers and position holders for the previous year.

3. No Constitutional body of the Party shall make or circulate any endorsement or other recommendation relating to any Candidate.

4. The Editor of any official publication of the Welsh Party shall seek to ensure that any coverage of the elections gives equal prominence to all candidates.

E. Ballot

1. When the number of validly nominated candidates for a post is less than or equal to the number of positions advertised for election, the Returning Officer may declare those persons elected.

2. When there are more candidates than offices or positions to be filled, a postal ballot shall be conducted by the Single Transferable Vote in accordance with the currently published rules of the Electoral Reform Society.

3. Those entitled to vote in these elections shall be those registered as members of Conference (and not their substitutes) for the Annual Meeting of the current year.

4. The ballot shall take place immediately after the Autumn Meeting of the Conference.

5. There shall be no requirement for any elector to sign the ballot paper, and any ballot paper signed by an elector shall be rejected as invalid.

F. Counting of votes.

1. As soon as practicable after the close of the ballot the Returning Officer shall ensure that the votes are counted according to Annexe 1, Appendix 1, F.2, below.

2. The Returning Officer shall determine the order in which the ballots are to be counted, in such a way as to ensure that:

- a. any candidate elected to an office carrying ex-officio membership of a particular Committee (including the Executive Committee) shall be deemed to have withdrawn his/her candidature for that Committee;
- b. effect is given to the order of preference expressed by candidates as in Annexe 1, Appendix 1, C.5.

3. Candidates or their representatives shall be entitled to be present at the count, the time and place of which shall be notified to them by the Returning Officer.

4. In the event of any dispute as to the validity of the count, the ruling of the Returning Officer shall be final, save only for the right of appeal as in Section H below.

G. Declaration of result

1. At the completion of the count the Returning Officer shall compile a full list of persons elected, and shall send copies to the Officers of the Party and the Party's Chief Executive.

2. The Returning Officer shall, as soon as practicable, inform each Candidate of the result of the relevant election(s).

3. A summary of results shall be made available to the National Executive Committee, and shall be circulated with the next mailing to all members of the Conference. The results shall also be published in the next issue of any appropriate official publication of the Welsh Party. Candidates shall be entitled to receive, on request, a full report of the count.

H. Appeals

1. Any Candidate aggrieved at the result of an election may lodge an appeal with the Party's Appeals Panel following the processes specified in Section L of the Welsh Party Constitution, save that the accidental failure to deliver invitation of nomination or ballot papers to any member shall not invalidate the result of the election except if the Party's Appeals Panel considers the scale of such a failure to have been capable of materially affecting the declared result.

APPENDIX 2:

Election Rules for Annual Elections by other Groups (October 2008)

1. The election of the representatives of Welsh Liberal Democrat of Unitary Authorities (hereinafter referred to as Principal Councillors) to the National Executive Committee, Policy Committee and Campaigns and Candidates Committee shall be held in conjunction with, and under the same timetable as, the annual elections by Conference.
2. The remaining provisions of the Election Rules for Annual Elections by Conference (Annexe I, Appendix 1, Sections B to H) shall apply, save that the invitation for nominations shall only be circulated to Principal Councillors and that the nominators for these elections shall themselves be Principal Councillors.

APPENDIX 3:

Rules for Postal Ballots of the whole Party including the Election of the President, Deputy President, Leader and Deputy Leaders of the Welsh Liberal Democrats (October 2008)

A. Introduction

These rules cover the elections to the posts of President, Deputy President, Leader and Deputy Leaders of the Welsh Liberal Democrats as laid down in the Constitution. The relevant section of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats (Section E: Officers of the Party) defines the eligibility for these posts and the required nominations. These rules shall in no way prevent the Candidates from fulfilling their responsibilities as MPs, AMs, MEPs, Leaders of their respective Groups or Ministers.

B. Timetable

1. The Party's Returning Officer shall, in consultation with the National Executive, draw up a timetable for the elections.
 2. Such a timetable shall provide:
 - a) For the invitations of nominations to be circulated to all Local Parties and Specified Associated Organisations, AMs MPs. MEPs.
 - b) That a period of at least three weeks shall be allowed between the opening and closing of nominations.
 - c) That ballot papers for contested elections be circulated within 15 working days of the closing date for the receipt of nominations
 - d) That the final date for return of ballot papers shall be not less than five weeks after the closing date for the receipt of nominations
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C. Nomination

1. Nomination shall be as required by the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats
2. Each nomination shall be on the prescribed form, shall bear the printed name, Local Party and Signature of every nominator, together with the name of the Candidate and the chamber in which he/she sits. The form shall be countersigned by the candidate as a consent to nomination.
3. The Party's Returning Officer shall, within 24 hours, inform a candidate whether a nomination is valid.

D. Campaign

1. The Party's Returning Officer shall send out with the ballot paper a manifesto from each Candidate. Artwork for the Manifesto shall be provided by the candidate. The Manifesto shall be printed by the Party at its cost. Each candidate shall be entitled to two sides of an A4 piece of paper in the English language and two sides of an A4 piece of paper in the Welsh language. Each should be a direct translation of the other and any photograph or artwork should be the same in both.
 2. The editor of any official Party publication shall seek to ensure that any coverage of the elections gives equal prominence to all candidates, save that each candidate may have routine or regular reports on their work as MP, AM, MEP, Group Leader or Minister covered without other candidates having to be given equal status.
 3. The Election Expenses shall be limited to £5,000. No Candidate, or their Agent, shall exceed this limit in the production of publicity material and any other expenditures connected with the campaign not including travel and subsistence. All donations to their campaign above £200 must comply with the provisions of Schedule 7 of PPERA.
 4. Each Candidate and/or their Agent shall complete and lodge with the Chief Executive an election expenses return form. The form must have attached receipts or invoices for all expenditure and must be lodged with the Chief Executive by midday on the 35th day following the declaration of the election result. The Chief Executive will hold the expenses returns of each Candidate on file and these may be examined by any Party Member. The expenses form shall also contain the necessary information to prove compliance with the provisions of Schedule 7 of PPERA.
 5. Each candidate may use campaign material in electronic or paper form, save that all material electronic or paper sent to members must be seen and approved by the Returning Officer before distribution and expenditure on the campaign shall not exceed the limit.
 6. Each Candidate may have access to the list of members of the Welsh Liberal
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Democrats and is free to contact them by letter, electronic means, telephone or in person, save that the costs of such communications must be included in the campaign expenditure of that candidate.

7. The Welsh Party's Returning Officer shall arrange Hustings Meetings for members to hear and question the candidates. There shall be a minimum of three such meetings which shall be located after taking into consideration the dispersed nature of the population of Wales. The Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee will appoint the chair for the Hustings.

E. Ballot

1. If only one nomination is received for any Leadership or Presidential position, the Party's Returning Officer may declare that person elected and inform the Chief Executive.

2. When there are more than one candidate for any post there shall, (as stipulated by the Constitution) be a ballot of all members. Such a ballot shall be conducted by STV in accordance with the current published rules of the Electoral Reform Society. The Party's Returning Officer may appoint assistant Returning Officers to help her/him with the conduct of the ballot.

3. The Ballot shall be counted within 48 hours of the close of the Ballot.

4. Candidates and their representatives shall be entitled to be present at the count, the time and place of which shall be notified by the Party's Returning Officer.

5. In the event of any dispute as to the validity of the Count the ruling of the Party's Returning Officer or her/his nominee shall be final, save only for the right of Appeal as in F below).

6. The Party's returning officer shall as soon as possible notify each candidate of the result.

7. The Party's Returning Officer or her/his nominee shall declare the result immediately at the close of the ballot and advise the Chief Executive.

8. A summary of the results shall be circulated to as many party members as possible through the party's email list.

F. Appeals

1. Any Candidate aggrieved at the result of an election may lodge an appeal with the Party's Appeals Panel following the processes specified in Section L of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats, save that the accidental failure to deliver invitation of nomination or ballot papers to any member shall not invalidate the result of the election except if the Party's Appeals Panel considers the scale of such a failure to have been capable of materially affecting the declared result.

ANNEXE II

Membership Rules

(October 2008)

A. Recruitment, registration and acceptance

1. All members of the Party are encouraged to recruit new members. Upon receipt of an individual's subscription of not less than the minimum, for which a receipt shall be issued, the individual's application can be by the enrolling body without delay to Membership Services for registration.

2. New membership applications shall be advised that their application is subject to acceptance by their Local Party. All applicants shall be registered and lists of new members shall be sent to Local Parties as regularly as possible, and not less than every two months.

3. a. New membership applicants shall be given an address ("Registered membership Address") which shall be the address where the applicant lives, works or studies. For this purpose:

"Lives" means the address at which the applicant ordinarily resides;

"Works" shall be defined in the same terms as for qualification for nomination as a candidate for a principal local authority election

"Studies" means either the Student's term time residential address as defined in Rule A.3.a or the address of the institution where the student studies.

b. Subject to registration and approval the applicant shall become a member of the Local Party covering the Registered Membership Address

4. Local Parties may initiate refusal of membership in accordance with section C.7 of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats within 6 weeks of receipt of notification of registration. After that period, if membership is not refused the applicant shall be deemed to have been accepted and shall be deemed to have been accepted and shall be a member of that Local Party.

5. Until membership has been registered the applicant shall not be a member of the Party and able to participate in the functions of membership, including voting in internal Federal and State elections. In internal Local Party elections all registered members must be accepted before they may participate.

6. a. The Finance and Management Committee shall have the power to initiate an investigation into any irregularities in membership Recruitment or payments in Local Parties under Section H.17 of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats.

b. This can be done on one or more of the following grounds:

(i) failure to pay the correct subscription amounts;

(ii) failure to pass on the correct subscription amounts to other parts of the Party;

(iii) fraudulent membership applications; or

(iv) the National Executive Committee believes that under Section H.11 of

the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats, events may have taken place which are or may be seriously detrimental to the Local Party or the Party as a whole Members subject to such an investigation may be suspended pending the result of the enquiry.

The results of any investigation may be subject to appeal to the Welsh Appeals Panel.

B. Re-registration of membership

1. A member may re-register their membership from one Local Party to another in accordance with Section C.5 of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats and shall inform Membership Services.

2. A member who changes Registered Membership Address shall automatically be re-registered as a member of the Local Party covering the new Registered Membership Address, unless the member requests in writing to retain membership of the old Local Party in which case Rule B.3, below shall apply.

3. A member who wishes to be a member of a Local Party other than that covering the Registered Membership Address may do so with the consent of the Local Party of which they want to be a member. If that Local Party wishes not to grant consent, the process of refusal must be initiated within 6 weeks notification of registration and must be completed within 14 weeks of initiation, and the procedure set out in Rules F.3.ii to F.3.viii, below shall be followed. If the process is not initiated or completed within these periods, the Local Party shall be deemed to have consented and the member shall be a member of that Local Party.

C. Issue of membership cards

1. Members shall receive a party membership card from Membership Services within five weeks of when the appropriate part of their subscription is received by Membership Services and their membership registered.

2. a. Members who are recruited by the Youth and Student SAO shall receive a party membership card and also become members of that SAO. Their names shall also be included as members of the Local Party in whose area they live or study.

b. Such members shall not vote in internal Local Party elections for Federal and Welsh Conference Representatives if they vote for these representatives through their SAO.

3. The Youth and Student SAO shall receive a service fee of a percentage of the subscription paid as agreed with the Party on the recruitment and / or renewal of these members The minimum subscription of the Party shall be the minimum subscription of the SAO.

D. Start date for membership and dates for renewal

1. Membership shall commence for new members on the date of receipt of the subscription and application by the enrolling body or membership services, whichever is earlier, subject to acceptance by their Local Party.

2. Membership will be due for renewal:

- a. For new members on the quarter day (March 31, June 30, September 30 or December 31) one year after the quarter day immediately following the date of their first joining;
- b. For renewing members of the Party, annually on their quarter day

3. Membership for lapsed members who rejoin shall commence on the date of receipt of their subscription and application by the enrolling body or Membership services, whichever is the earlier.

E. Renewals and lapsing of membership

1. Members shall be sent renewal reminders by Membership Services not later than the end of the month before their subscriptions fall due. At least two reminders shall be sent and the Local Party shall be notified of non-renewers.

2. Resignations shall not be acted upon unless received in writing by Membership Services from the member resigning.

3. Members who do not renew their subscriptions shall retain their rights as members for three months beyond their renewal state, after which time, if no subscription has been received, their membership rights shall be deemed to have lapsed.

F. Refusal or revocation of membership

1. The grounds for refusal (Section C.6) and revocation (Section C.7) of membership are set out in the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats. Refusal of membership is just as serious and exceptional a course of action as revocation.

2. Both refusal and revocation can be initiated by the Local Party, the State Party or the Youth and Student SAO (where the individual is a member of the party through the SAO and determined by the internal procedure of that SAO).

3. The following procedure shall be followed by Local Parties and shall be completed, unless referred to the Appeals panels, within fourteen weeks from its initiation by the Local Party. The reasons for refusal or revocation have to be those considered appropriate and must only be from those given in the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats (Sections C.6 and C.7)

For new members only:

- i. When the Membership Secretary receives a list of applicants registered for membership, the Local Party shall operate a system approved by the Local Party Executive committee meeting within the time proved for the approval of their membership. If the Local Party through this procedure determines to initiate refusal of membership that person shall be informed. No formal action shall be taken until a meeting of the Executive Committee which shall be held in not more than five weeks from the date when this process has been initiated. At that Executive Committee meeting this item of business shall appear formally on the Agenda.

In all other instances:

- ii. Refusal or revocation can only be discussed formally at an Executive Committee meeting of the Local Party which shall be held not more than five weeks from the date when this process has been initiated. At that Executive Committee meeting this item of business shall appear formally on the agenda.
 - iii. Any person whose membership is being refused or revoked shall be given the motion including the reasons for the possible revocation or refusal, the date, time and place of the Executive Committee meeting at which it is to be discussed, information regarding their right to speak or be represented and details of how any appeal against refusal or revocation can be made. Amendments to the motion shall not be allowed.
 - iv. The motion may be taken notwithstanding the absence of the person concerned if this procedure has been followed.
 - v. The Executive Committee shall debate the motion but there shall be no comment supporting refusal or revocation of membership not relevant to the reasons given in the motion. The person whose membership is being refused or revoked or their representative shall be allowed to speak.
 - vi. When the discussion is completed a vote shall be taken at the meeting on the motion as published in the agenda by secret ballot of those present and eligible to vote.
 - vii. The outcome of the motion must be transmitted in writing by the Secretary to the person concerned within seven days of the meeting at which the motion was voted on and copied to Membership Services and the State Party, supported by all relevant documents.
 - vii. Any person whose membership is revoked by the Local Party Executive Committee shall have the right of appeal to a General Meeting of that Local Party called in accordance with the constitution of the Local Party when Rules F.3.iii to F.3.viii shall apply. Such appeal must be submitted to the Secretary of the Local Party within one calendar month of the Executive Committee meeting and the General Meeting shall be held within one further calendar month from the receipt of request for the appeal.
 - ix. The above procedure shall be completed within fourteen weeks of initiation. If the procedure remains uncompleted after this time the individual shall become or remain a member of the Party.
 - x. Nothing in this procedure shall override or take precedence over the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats or the rights of any members to the Welsh Appeals Panel including Rule F.4, below.
4. Any person who is refused membership or whose membership is revoked has the right of appeal to the Welsh Appeals Panel. If no such appeal is received in writing by the Secretary of the Local Party, the Welsh Liberal Democrats in Wales or the Clerk to the Welsh Appeals Panel within one calendar month from the date of the General Meeting of the Local Party when the refusal or revocation was agreed, the decision of the General Meeting shall stand.
5. A member may be suspended by the body undertaking the refusal or revocation procedure in accordance with the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats (Section C.7) for not more than the full period set out under these rules for this
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procedure whilst the procedure is in progress, and subject to notification with reasons in writing to the State Party and Membership Services. During the period of suspension the Local Party Executive Committee shall meet to consider revocation of membership under Rule 6.3, above. If no such procedure occurs or is not completed within the timetable, suspension is automatically ended.

6. In cases where the above procedure is followed by the State Party or the Youth and Student SAO, the procedure set out above shall be followed with appropriate changes, save that rules F.3.ix shall not apply.

7. A person whose membership has been refused or revoked under these rules or the Federal or other state party constitutions shall not be admitted or readmitted to membership without the consent of the National Executive Committee and the Local Party which that person would become a member of.

G. Rights of members to participate in elections

1. a. For all Local Party elections, including local authority candidate selections and Annual General Meetings, the Executive Committee shall determine and agree the date for the closure of nominations before which members not both registered by the Local Party and accepted shall not be eligible to participate in the elections

b. Local Parties are requested to co-ordinate with Membership Services in advance of the agreed date to ensure that lists and labels of registered members can be provided to meet this election timetable

2. a. For Candidate selections to the National Assembly, Westminster and European Parliaments the cut-off date shall be no later than the closing date for submission of applications as laid down in the Party's Rules for these selections (Annexe IV, Appendices 1 and 2 of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats).

3. Any members subject to an investigation under section 1.6 of these rules may be excluded from the selection concerned by the National Executive subject to appeal to the Welsh Appeals Panel.

H. Changes to these rules

1. These Rules have been agreed by Conference under Section C.9 of the constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats. Conference may amend these rules by a simple majority of those present and voting at Conference

2. The operation of the Membership system on an ongoing basis will be subject to the direction of the Finance and Management Committee and the Party's Chief Executive.

ANNEXE III: FUNCTIONS OF PARTY COMMITTEES

Appendix 1 The National Executive Committee (October 2008)

1. The National Executive shall direct and administer the work and finances of the Party. In particular it shall:
 - a. receive reports from the Party committees;
 - b. take such steps as may be necessary to promote the cause of the Party in Wales and to encourage members and Local Parties to campaign vigorously on its behalf;
 - c. take up its representation on all appropriate Federal bodies;
 - d. be responsible for the political aspects of the Party's presence within the Federal Party;
 - e. appoint a nominating officer for the purpose of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000;
 - f. ensure the compliance of the Party at all levels with the provisions of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000;
 - g. be responsible for all matters relating to the funding and internal administration of the party including the Budget;
 - h. be responsible for the appointment and employment of staff and the maintenance of such offices and premises as it considers necessary.
 - i. oversee the operation of the Party as an equal opportunities employer and the maintenance of a disciplinary and grievance procedure;
 - j. be responsible for the operation of the Membership System, including recruitment;
 - k. co-ordinate fund-raising throughout the Party;
 - l. To liaise continually with constituent bodies regarding the maintenance and expansion of the membership list as outlined in Section B.4 of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats; and
 - m. To administer the division of membership income between Local Parties, the Party and the Federal Party.

 2. The Party Treasurer shall be responsible for the Party's compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.

 3. The National Executive shall have the power to borrow money for the general purposes of the Welsh Party and to secure monies borrowed in such a manner as it thinks fit upon the assets of the Welsh Party; provided always that the total amount of monies borrowed shall not exceed such amount as may from time to time be determined by the National Executive and approved by the Conference.
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Appendix 2

The Finance and Management Committee

(October 2008)

The Finance and Management Committee shall be responsible to the National Executive Committee for:

1. The regular monitoring of the Party's finances;
2. Ensuring that the Party complies with UK and Welsh legislation;
3. Drafting the Party's Annual Budget in consultation with the relevant Committee Chairs and presenting the draft budget to the National Executive Committee for final approval;
4. Overseeing staffing issues and including arranging for the handling of grievances or complaints and ensuring that staff employment procedures, including staff terms and conditions of employment, comply with the relevant employment and equalities legislation;
5. Monitoring of Campaign expenditure; and
6. The discharge of such other functions as the National Executive Committee, or this Constitution, shall allocate to it.

Appendix 3

The Policy Committee

(October 2008)

The Policy Committee shall be responsible to the National Executive Committee for:

1. The development of the policy of the Party and the appointment of working groups to assist with this work;
 2. The co-ordination of the Welsh contribution to the policy work of the Federal Party;
 3. Liaison with the Conference Committee and Campaigns and Candidates Committees on the policy content of Conference meetings to facilitate the formulation of Party policy;
 4. The preparation and drafting of policy documents and publications and, in particular, the drafting of the Welsh Liberal Democrats manifesto for each General Election and election for the National Assembly for Wales;
 5. The provision of policy support for Welsh members of both Houses of Parliament, the European Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales, candidates and Councillors;
 6. The discharge of such other functions as the Executive shall allocate to it; and
 7. Presenting the views of the Party to outside bodies in Wales and elsewhere.
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Appendix 4

The Campaigns & Candidates Committee

(October 2008)

The Campaigns and Candidates Committee shall be responsible for:

1. Running election campaigns in Wales;
2. Making provision for lists of approved candidates for the National Assembly for Wales, Westminster Parliamentary and European Parliamentary elections;
3. The co-ordination and regulation of the procedure for the selection and adoption of candidates;
4. The identification and publication of criteria for the assessment of approved candidates and ensuring, so far as possible, their consistent application;
5. Promoting the Party in the media, including the co-ordination of Party Political Broadcasts;
6. Providing training for candidates and members;
7. Ensuring that there is a Parliamentary Candidates Association in Wales;
8. Drawing up proposals on Party campaigns and the communications strategy of the Party;
9. Liaising with the Campaign Organisers within the Welsh and Federal Parties;
10. From time to time, making proposals to Conference on varying the rules for the selection and adoption of prospective candidates for the National Assembly for Wales, Westminster Parliament and the European Parliament;
11. Electing one of its members to be the Welsh Representative on the Joint States Candidates Committee.

Appendix 5

The Conference Committee

(October 2008)

The Conference Committee shall be responsible for:

1. practical arrangements for meetings of the Conference;
 2. seeking to involve the host Local Parties in individual meetings of the Conference;
 3. maintaining an up-to-date list of members of the Conference and substitutes appointed for individual meetings of Conference;
 4. liaison with the Policy and Campaigns and Candidates Committees on the policy content of meetings of Conference;
 5. the Agenda for meetings of the Conference;
 6. keeping under review the Standing Orders for Conference and making recommendations for the amendment of such Standing Orders; and
 7. for the practical arrangements for the Welsh presence at the Federal Conference.
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Annexe IV

Candidate Selection Rules

Appendix 1

Rules for the Selection and Adoption of Candidates for the European Parliament Elections in the European Electoral Region of Wales (March 2007)

Note

- a. These rules relate to the conduct of the selection process in the European Electoral Region comprising the whole of Wales taking place separately from the process in the European Electoral Regions of England and Scotland.*
- b. It addresses gender balance through the shortlisting procedure rather than through the subsequent voting for the selection of candidates to the Party List.*

1. These rules will apply only to the elections to the European Parliament from the European Electoral Region of Wales, and shall be reviewed by the Party at a Conference between European Elections.
 2. The Welsh Liberal Democrat Campaigns and Candidates Committee will have responsibility for the approval of candidates who wish to submit themselves for selection as candidates to the European Parliament for the Welsh European Electoral Region, and shall be required to draw up detailed rules for candidate approval. The system of approval shall be no less rigorous than that which applies for the approval of candidates in for the Liberal Democrats in other Regions and States within Great Britain.
 3. No candidate may be approved for selection by the Campaigns and Candidates Committee, nor selected by the Party, if that candidate would be disqualified from being elected, save that any persons submitting themselves for approval who would be disqualified from standing because of the nature of their employment may be considered providing they sign a written statement, drawn up by the Campaigns and Candidates Committee of the Welsh Liberal Democrats for that purpose, that they will relinquish their employment at an appropriate time, and certainly prior to the Party's nomination being submitted to the Returning Officer. Such statement would be deemed to have the effect of removing this disqualification from candidature and election. All such written statements, and the identity of candidates providing such statements, are to be treated with confidentiality.
 4. A candidate seeking selection or approval, or standing for election, must be a current member of the Liberal Democrats, with a membership number recorded on the lists held for that purpose by the Party Organisation. The candidate seeking selection must be on the approved list of candidates held by the Welsh Liberal Democrats.
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5. It is a requirement that all candidates seeking party approval for selection as a European Candidate to sign a written declaration stating that, should they be elected, part of their available allowances will be dedicated to maintaining an MEP Office in Wales, and that they will abide by the rules of ELDR.

6. The official title on the list to be provided by the party for the Welsh European Region will be Welsh Liberal Democrats / Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru.

7. A Returning Officer will be appointed. He/She must not be a member of the National Executive Committee or the Campaigns and Candidates Committee and must not be seeking selection as a candidate.

a. The Returning Officer may be assisted by a number of Aides, who will receive the same training as the Returning Officer. These Aides will liaise between the Returning Officer and others involved in the selection and carry out functions delegated to them by the Returning Officer.

b. The selection process will be managed by a Selection Committee, which will also operate as the shortlisting committee and which will be responsible to the Returning Officer.

c. The Returning Officer's Aides should not be members of the Selection Committee for Wales.

8. Returning Officer

a. The Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee will appoint the Returning Officer and will nominate the Chair of the Selection Committee.

b. The persons appointed must receive training in selection procedures and the operation of shortlisting committees.

c. The Returning Officer, who must not have an interest in the selection, has the following overriding responsibilities:

To oversee the selection process

To safeguard the rights of the members

To ensure fair and equal treatment for all candidates

d. The Returning Officer must agree all communications before they are sent out to members or candidates, follow up verbal discussions in writing and retain copies in case of disputes.

e. Applications from candidates will be sent to the Party Manager at the Office of the Welsh Liberal Democrats, from where they will be forwarded to the Returning Officer at the date of the close of the applications. The Party Manager will send an applications pack to each candidate. (see 17 and 20c below)

9. Expenses

The Welsh Liberal Democrats will be responsible for the expenses of the Returning Officer and Aides, who should claim expenses from the Party Treasurer as soon as possible after completion of the selection process.

10. Candidate Approval

All applicants must be approved European Parliamentary candidates by the date of close of nominations.

11. Timetable

- a. The Chair of the Selection Committee must set up a meeting with the Returning Officer at which the timetable and other procedural matters are to be decided, including the date and venues for the hustings meetings.
- b. If it is necessary to change the date of hustings meetings later, because of the applicants shortlisted, this should be within the jurisdiction of the Selection Committee, with the agreement of the Returning Officer.
- c. The selection shall be conducted in a brisk and businesslike manner.
- d. The proposed timetable for the selection process is as follows:
 1. Appoint Returning Officer
 2. Returning Officer's timetable
 3. Place advert in *Liberal Democrat News*
 4. Advert appears = Day D
 5. Deadline for candidates to submit applications to the Returning Officer
D + minimum 14 days
 6. Shortlisting Committee training
 7. To interview and shortlist; provisional numbers, dates, venues of hustings
D + 28 days
 8. Shortlist to be finalised
D + 35 days
 9. Mailing to Members, including Manifesto 1
(post 15+ days before hustings) = M1.
 10. Selection campaign starts at day M1.
 11. Hustings = M1 + min 21 days
 12. Ballot papers with Manifesto 2 to be posted to membership, with Freepost return envelope, the day after the final hustings
 13. Last date for return of ballot papers 14 days after posting
 14. Count as soon as practical after closing date for return of ballot papers.

12. Selection Committee Membership

- a. The Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee shall appoint the members of the Selection Committee. The Selection Committee membership must be chosen according to criteria agreed with the Returning Officer, to represent fairly Party membership in Wales.
 - b. The criteria should provide for an equal number of men and women and a fair geographical, urban/rural, political, age and ethnic balance within Wales.
 - c. The number of members of the Committee should not be less than three or more than five - the intention being that the Committee should be representative, without being cumbersome.
 - d. The Committee should not include The Chair of the Candidates Committee, relatives or partners of applicants, and any member whose position as regards a particular candidate could be seen as making a difference to the decision he/she would make, should declare an interest and stand down.
 - e. If there are problems with membership of the Committee, which cannot be resolved by the Returning Officer, reference should be made to the Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee.
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f. The Returning Officer has a right of access to all Selection Committee meetings/interviews and has the right to intervene, including taking the chair if necessary but does not vote. If unable to attend a meeting, he/she may send his/her Aides as substitute, if he/she thinks it advisable to do so.

13. Training for Selection Committee Members

- a. All members of the shortlisting committee must be willing to be trained, and, ideally, have had approved training on the operation of Shortlisting Committees, especially as regards conducting interviews and ensuring equal treatment of applicants.
- b. The Returning Officer should ensure that those members of the Committee who have not received training are aware of the purpose of shortlisting and their responsibilities as regards equal opportunities and fairness to applicants.
- c. Priority should be given to training a representative Committee, rather than using a panel of unrepresentative 'experts.'
- d. The selection process will not be allowed to proceed unless the Returning Officer and the Chair of the Candidates Committee are satisfied that an appropriate number of Committee members have been trained.

14. Shortlisting Criteria

- a. There should be a meeting of the Shortlisting Committee at the time the advert is placed in *Liberal Democrat News*, attended by the Returning Officer, at which the criteria for selection are agreed.
- b. These criteria should define what Wales is looking for in a PEPC, based on considering which of the attributes needed by the Party's PEPCs are most important in Wales.
- c. The Returning Officer must send a copy of the shortlisting criteria to the candidates in advance, in time for them to prepare for the interview.
- d. The questions asked of applicants at the shortlisting interviews will be based on assessing applicants according to these criteria.
- e. The Selection Committee must not ask candidates if they intend to make a financial contribution towards the campaign for Wales, and candidates are prohibited from offering financial inducements.
- f. The Selection Committee must not ask questions which discriminate against groups of candidates, such as women. Guidance will be given on this in the Returning Officer's and Shortlisting Committee's training.
- g. The Returning Officer must be satisfied that the criteria chosen and the questions to be asked of candidates fairly reflect the requirements of Wales.
- h. The Selection Committee shall strive to include an equal number of male and female candidates in the shortlist for the Welsh European Election. Where this is not possible, advice should be sought from the Chair of Campaigns and Candidates Committee before proceeding.

15. Advertisement

The Campaigns and Candidates Committee of the Welsh Party, in agreement with the Returning Officer, will place an advertisement in *Liberal Democrat News*, and all Wales E-Mail giving relevant information,

16. Applications

- a. Applications are to be sent to the Party Manager with a stamped addressed postcard, which will be returned to confirm receipt of the application.
- b. At the date of the close of applications, the applications will be forwarded to the Returning Officer verifying that candidates are approved and eligible for selection.
- c. It is permitted for Party Members who already hold Public Office as:
 - i. A Councillor; or
 - ii. A Member of the House of Commons or the National Assembly for Wales; or
 - iii. A Member of the House of Lords,to offer themselves for selection as candidates for the European Parliament. However, candidates who are subsequently elected to the European Parliament and who fall into category (ii) above shall not be permitted to stand for election to the Parliaments listed under (ii) above at the next and subsequent elections whilst they remain elected members of the European Parliament.

17. Members eligible to vote

- a. Members eligible to vote are those who are paid-up members at the date of the close of applications, as shown in the advertisement of the *Liberal Democrat News* or All Wales E-Mail, and be over the age of ten years with a minimum six months continuous membership,
- b. Members whose subscriptions are not more than 3 months overdue at the closing date for candidate applications will be included in the list of those who may attend a hustings and vote in the postal ballot.
- c. A membership list will be prepared by the Membership Department as at the date of close of nominations showing members eligible to vote. This list is referred to subsequently as the Selection Register.
- d. The original date will be retained for the whole of the selection process, even if the process is delayed or applications remain open after the original closing date. A new date of closure for applications, and so a new membership list, will only be used if the Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee declares the selection process null and void, because, for instance, the response to the advertisement was so poor that it is decided to wait and re-advertise at a later date.
- e. All members of the Welsh Liberal Democrats whose names appear on the Selection Register shall have the right to vote by secret postal ballot for the Official Party List of candidates for the Welsh European Region, according to the timetable laid out above.

18. Application for Membership List

- a. The Welsh Party Office will provide the Returning Officer with a membership list (the selection register) as at the date of the close of applications.
 - b. The Returning Officer will be responsible for the membership list at the date of closure of applications, updated if necessary, and referred to as the Selection Register, which will be used as the definitive list of voting members.
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19. Candidate applications

Applicants will be sent a pack including the following:

1. An application form
2. Selection Rules
3. A copy of the Party's list of attributes for a PEPC and criteria for selection.
4. Notes on the work of an MEP
5. Introduction to the Standing Orders of the Liberal Democrat European Parliamentary Party
6. Biographical information request form.
7. A profile of Wales

This pack will also be sent to the Returning Officer and the Chair of the Selection Committee for information.

20. Confirming Selection to go ahead

If the number of applications passed to the Returning Officer is less than four the Returning Officer must consult with the Chair of the Welsh Campaigns and Candidates Committee before allowing the selection to proceed and place a reopen nominations box on the ballot paper.

21. Setting up the Selection Register

- a. The Chief Executive will inform Local Party Membership Secretaries that they should advise the Party Manager of any discrepancies in the Local Party's list and encourage their members to pay any overdue subscriptions before the date of close of nominations, as the list at that date will be used to decide who will be eligible to vote in the selections of the Party List.
- b. The membership as at the date of close of nominations will be sent to the Returning Officer within one week of that date.
- c. Local Parties cannot give voting rights to individuals who are treated locally as members but who are not registered as local members by the Membership Department.
- d. Local Parties should tell the Returning Officer of any deaths of members etc, and of any members who need to be dealt with sensitively or not visited, so that this information can be passed on to candidates.
- e. Any individual members or candidates who have queries over membership should consult the Returning Officer. Individual candidates must not contact the Welsh Party Office.
- f. The Returning Officer is responsible for approving the list (Selection Register) and he/she has the final decision as to who should be included (subject to the right of appeal)

22. Shortlisting Interviews

- a. The aim of the Selection Committee should be that the same panel should see all the candidates. Not more than five candidates should normally be seen by the Committee at one session.
 - b. If large numbers of applications are received, the agreed selection criteria should be used to decide which candidates are interviewed and which are rejected without interview. The maximum number of candidates interviewed should be approximately twice the number required for the shortlist, which
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itself should be no larger than twice the number of places on the Party List for the Welsh European Region. The number to be interviewed should be agreed between the Selection Committee and the Returning Officer.

c. If the number of applications received is more than is needed for the shortlist, but not more than approximately twice that number, the Selection Committee must interview all the candidates before drawing up the Shortlist, even if candidates are well known to the Committee.

d. If the number of applications does not exceed the number who can be included in the Shortlist, all the candidates can be shortlisted without interview, although Selection Committees are encouraged to interview applicants. If the Selection Committee wishes to exclude any of the applicants, all must be interviewed.

e. If some candidates are interviewed, then others may not be shortlisted without being interviewed.

f. The Returning Officer must be satisfied that the cut-off point for interviews and the size of the shortlist are not being used to discriminate against candidates.

g. If too few men or women have applied to allow a choice, every attempt should be made by the Chair of the Candidates Committee to encourage additional candidates to apply. The Chair of the Candidates Committee must endeavour to find at least enough candidates of the required gender(s) to fill all the slots.

h. The Campaigns and Candidates Committee should endeavour to find candidates from ethnic minorities to reflect the ethnic balance of the electorate in Wales, where such candidates have not come forward.

i. When interviewing candidates, Selection Committees must ask questions based on the agreed selection criteria and decide which applicants to shortlist giving objective reasons based on the selection criteria.

j. Selection Committees will be asked by the Returning Officer to complete a form to go to the Campaigns and Candidates Committee Chair, listing which of those who applied to Wales was rejected, interviewed and then rejected, or shortlisted, and why.

23. Drawing up a Shortlist

The shortlist should normally comprise no less than four. In the event of there being an insufficiency of candidates from one gender, the power to determine what action can be permitted to enable the shortlisting to proceed shall rest with the Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee.

24. Finalising the Hustings Meeting(s) Arrangements

The Returning Officer and Selection Committee should finalise arrangements for the campaign and format for the hustings meetings, considering, for instance, the order in which candidates should speak and for how long.

25. Informing Shortlisted Candidates

a. After shortlisting, the Returning Officer should notify the successful candidates that they have been shortlisted and tell them the date by which their written material for the mailing must be submitted and the arrangements

for the hustings and any special requirements for the campaign.

b. A diary of events and profile of Wales should be sent to all shortlisted candidates.

c. The Returning Officer must also notify the unsuccessful candidates, advising them of who on the Selection Committee will give them feedback based on the selection criteria.

26. Hustings Mailing to members

a. The selection register will be used to produce address labels for the mailing.

b. The mailing to members will be posted from a central point at least 15 days before the date of the first hustings meeting.

c. The full mailing must also be posted to the candidates and Returning Officer at the same time as it is dispatched to members.

d. The Returning Officer and Aides will be responsible for preparing all the non-candidate artwork and collating material for the mailing and ensuring that it is delivered to a central point by the specified deadline.

The full contents must be approved by the Returning Officer.

27. Contents of first mailing

The mailing should be made up of:

1. Names and biographical details/manifestos of the short listed candidates

2. Date, times and venue of hustings meetings Proxy vote reminder.

3. A reminder to members of the need to abide by the Rules

4. A copy of the Party's list of attributes needed by a PEPC

5. Where any candidate fails to supply artwork for a manifesto, the Returning Officer shall include a separate sheet in the mailing stating the following:

"From the Returning Officer. (Name of Candidate) is a candidate in this selection"

28. Arrangements for ballot mailing

a. The Selection Register will be used to produce address labels for the mailing

b. There will be a full postal ballot, with ballot papers sent to each eligible member.

c. The mailing to members will be posted from a central point the day after the last hustings.

d. The Returning Officer and Aides will be responsible for preparing all the non-candidate artwork and collating material for the mailing and ensuring that it is delivered to a central point by the specified deadline.

The full contents must be approved by the Returning Officer.

e. Where any candidate fails to supply artwork for a manifesto, the Returning Officer shall include a separate sheet in the mailing stating the following:

"From the Returning Officer. (Name of Candidate) is a candidate in this selection"

29. Content of a ballot mailing

1. This will contain Ballot paper, with instructions on how to return them as postal ballots

2. Proxy vote Reminder.

3. A second manifesto for each candidate
4. A Freepost envelope for the return of ballot papers

30. Voting procedure

Each Party Member on the selection register will be entitled to a Single Transferable Vote for those candidates placed on the shortlist by the Welsh Selection Committee.

31. Voting

- a. Ballot papers issued will be numbered and a record kept of recipients
- b. It will be the responsibility of members to return the ballot paper to an agreed central address by a stated date and time.
- c. Ballot papers should be returned in an envelope marked BALLOT, but should not be disqualified if not so marked.
- d. Candidates must not collect ballot papers to send in
- e. The Returning Officer has the authority to disqualify ballot papers, which have been issued in contravention of the Rules.

32. Proxy Votes

- a. In view of the relatively short time between dispatch of ballot papers and the closing date for receipt of completed ballots, proxy votes should be allowed, subject to an application in writing by the member.
- b. Proxy ballot papers should be sent by the Returning Officer to a named proxy at an address given to the Returning Officer in writing by the member who will be away.
- c. The ballot paper should include a letter explaining what the ballot paper is.
- d. "I have been notified by (name of member asking for a proxy to be issued) that you should be allowed to vote on his/her behalf in the selection for the Welsh Liberal Democrats List for the European Parliament Elections. Please complete the ballot paper according to (name of member) wishes and return it in the Freepost envelope provided."
- e. The proxy vote should be in all respects the same as the ballot paper that would have been issued to the member direct.

33. Ballot Papers

The Returning Officer is personally responsible for the safe custody of ballot papers returned until the completion of the process. They should not normally be released to others.

34. The Result

The list to be submitted by the Welsh Liberal Democrats to the official Returning Officer will contain, as a minimum, the names of 4 candidates, ordered 1 to 4, as decided by the electorate of the region

35. Keeping to the Rules

- a. Any infringement of these Rules will be investigated by the Returning Officer and may lead to the disqualification of a candidate (see 'Penalties' below).
An individual candidate who is unsure if an action he/she is about to take
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could lead to an appeal by another candidate or Party member should consult the Returning Officer first. Candidates are reminded that actions by their agents or proxies may be regarded as their actions.

- b. No written material may be circulated apart from that agreed with the Returning Officer. Individuals should not take it upon themselves to circulate material in support of a candidate. Comments in Local Party Newsletters or similar communication should be agreed in advance with the Returning Officer and will be prohibited if they favour particular candidates.
- c. The Welsh Executive and Local Parties should be careful to promote all the candidates standing in Wales when promoting the selection.

36. Candidates' Manifestos and other written materials

- a. Literature will be reproduced centrally and circulated from a central point.
- b. Shortlisted applicants may provide written material in support of their candidacy for distribution to Party Members in Wales. The Returning Officer, in consultation with the Selection Committee, shall determine the limits to such materials which are to be produced or distributed. Where written material is produced, the English and Welsh versions should be direct translations of the other.
- c. The Party Manager shall make available to all shortlisted candidates a list of volunteer and professional translators who can provide a translation service for candidate manifestos.
- d. Candidates should provide camera ready material. Literature will be reproduced by a printer by a designated method of production to ensure an acceptable quality of reproduction.
- e. The Returning Officer may give permission for the use of out leaflets when canvassing members.
- f. E-mail The use of electronic mailing lists is to be regulated by the Returning Officer. The only mailing list allowed to be used for campaigning will be a list approved by the Returning Officer and made available to all candidates.
- g. Content of all e-mails and attachments must be approved by the Returning Officer.
- h. Web sites may be used but that content must be approved by Returning Officers before being open to general access. In order to ensure parity of web space between candidates, web sites may be generated by candidates specifically to promote their candidature but shall not contain links to other pages or sites. If a candidate already has his/her own site, this shall not be used to promote candidature unless it meets these specifications.
- i. Written material must not include endorsements of the candidate, by word or implied by photograph, by anyone holding party office.
- j. All written material must be approved by the Returning Officer before it is sent out.

37. Candidates' Contact with Members

- a. Candidates will be sent a list of the Local Party officers for Constituencies within Wales, plus a note of the number of Party members in each constituency, together with a copy of the Selection Register, from the date of the first member mailing.
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- b. The Selection Register is confidential and must only be used for the canvassing of members on behalf of candidates.
- c. Canvassing of Party members should be encouraged, as this is a key attribute of a PEPC, and this is an important way to enable Party members to become familiar with all the candidates and not just those who may already be well known.
- d. The Selection Committee, in association with the Campaigns and Candidates Committee together with Local Parties within Wales, should set up a diary of campaigning and social events to give applicants an opportunity to meet members and demonstrate their campaigning and people skills. The Returning Officer should ensure that if such a diary is drawn up, that there is at least one event in each part of Wales and at least one event per week until the hustings. Individual candidates or their supporters should not organise social events specifically for that candidate to meet members.
- e. Canvassing - the systematic contacting of members as part of a campaign - should not begin until the date of the first mailing to members. Evidence of such a campaign beginning before this, would constitute a breach of the rules and render the candidate liable to disqualification or other action by the Returning Officer.

38. Candidates' Contact with the Locality

The selection committee should arrange for a profile of Wales to be drawn up for the benefit of applicants. This should include contact details of people willing to provide applicants with local information. This role should continue after the hustings to ensure that candidates on the Party List have a good knowledge of the Euro Region.

39. Candidates' Contact with the Press

Press comment and releases relating directly to a selection itself (rather than general campaigning which might happen to refer to a particular candidate) must be made by the Returning Officer or his/her nominee, by agreement with the Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee, and not by candidates themselves. Candidates must not contact the press or comment to the press on what is an internal Party election.

40. The Hustings Meetings

- a. The Returning Officer must approve the arrangements for the hustings meetings at which all shortlisted applicants shall be invited to speak and answer questions. There should usually be one hustings in each region of Wales.
 - b. ((Region as defined by the National Assembly for Wales)) and ((taking into account the distance members would have to travel to each Hustings))
 - c. The Returning Officer should ensure that candidates know when to arrive and have a phone number to use in emergency. He/she should ensure that Local Parties, not candidates, arrange lifts to the hustings.
 - D. The Chair would normally be the Chair or President of the Party in Wales, although sensitivity should be used if senior Party Officers are standing. The Returning Officer has a right of veto over the choice of Chair for each hustings meeting. It is preferable, but not essential, that the same person
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chairs all meetings.

e. The Returning Officer has the right to appoint aides to help with the administration of the hustings.

f. Candidates should be advised that they are each allowed to bring a partner or friend to support them. No candidate may be in the hall to listen to other candidates' speeches, neither may partners etc move in and out of the hall to report on opponents' performances.

g. The Ballot There will be a full postal ballot as described above.

h. The Count The ballots for Wales will be counted centrally after the closing date for receipt of ballots.

i. The Returning Officer will be responsible for the ballot papers returned by post and for overseeing the count for the Welsh Euro Region.

j. Each Liberal Democrat Assembly Electoral Regional Committee and the Campaigns and Candidates Committee will be entitled to send a representative to the count, and each shortlisted candidate will be entitled to attend or send an observer.

k. The ballots will be kept in a locked and sealed box at the central point, until the count.

l. Detailed arrangements for the count will be issued separately.

m. The hustings will go ahead as planned with no options to re-open nominations, even if candidates drop out.

41. Announcing the Result

The results will be announced through the Party's Press Office and the Welsh Party Office

42. Breach of rules

a. Any breach of the rules contained in this document shall be investigated by the Returning Officer, who will have a duty to report his/her findings, within two weeks of the matter being raised, to the Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee of the Welsh Liberal Democrats. The Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee may refer it to The Appeals Panel which is empowered to take such action as it thinks fit to regularise the breach of rules, including declaring the selection process null and void and requiring a re-run.

b. Any breach of these regulations by a shortlisted candidate may render that candidate disqualified from the selection

43. Penalties

a. If Candidates, Party members in Wales or the Executive of the Welsh Liberal Democrats are, in any way, unhappy with the conduct of the selection they should make their concerns known, in writing, to the Returning Officer, who will establish if there has been an infringement of these Rules.

b. If an infringement has taken place, the Returning Officer may take action he/she deems appropriate. This may involve disqualification of a candidate or postponement, cancellation or restart of the selection process at any point, even after the hustings have taken place.

c. An appeal against a Returning Officer's ruling should be made in writing to

the Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee within two weeks of the decision and, in any event, not more than two weeks after the final hustings.

d. The Candidates Committee shall consider any such appeal, investigate the facts and take the action deemed appropriate.

e. The Returning Officer shall report instances of gross abuse under the Rules to the Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee, who, as a result, may ban candidates from further selections.

Note: Because of the difficulty of cancelling Euro selection, if there are problems it is more likely that they will be resolved by disqualifying candidates.

44. Costs

The cost of reproduction of the election addresses of shortlisted candidates shall be borne by the Welsh Liberal Democrats

45. Method of counting

The counting of votes for the Welsh European Region will be carried out in the following manner:

a. Under the jurisdiction of the Returning Officer, the preferences shown on individual voting paper will be recorded within the official computer programme to be supplied by the Campaigns and Candidates Committee of the Welsh Liberal Democrats, and meeting the specification of the relevant parts of the computer programme to be used by the Federal Party for these European Elections.

b. The computer programme will then conduct the count by STV, thereby determining the specified number of candidates whose names will appear on the Party Official List. The computer programme will then recount the votes as if there were a requirement for only the specified number less one candidate. In this way, the name of the candidate whose name will be placed last on the list will be determined. The computer programme will then recount all votes as if there were a requirement for the specified number less two candidates. In this way, the name of the candidate whose name will be placed last but one on the list will be determined. The computer programme will then recount all of the votes as if there were a requirement for the specified number less than three candidates. In this way, the name of the candidate whose name will be placed last but two on the list will be determined. The process will be repeated again, to determine as far as the name of the person whose name will be placed third on the list. The names of the final two candidates will then be subject to another count, using the Alternative Vote method, which will determine the order on the list of these two candidates.

46. Death, disqualification or resignation of a selected candidate

a. The procedure for filling a vacancy caused by the death, disqualification or resignation of a selected candidate for any party list prior to the list being deposited with the official Regional Returning Officer will be determined by the Campaigns and Candidates Committee of the Welsh Liberal Democrats. The Committee, should it so choose, is empowered to determine any

changes to the list which may be required as a result of such a vacancy or to require a re-run. Such procedures will be reviewed on an individual case-by case basis.

b. The Selection Committee is required to report the vacancy to the Party Returning Officer within 3 days of such a vacancy being notified to them, who in turn is required to report it to the Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee of the Welsh Liberal Democrats without delay.

47. Appeals

Any appeal not agreed shall as a final step be heard by the Welsh Appeals Panel who shall have the power to call a re-election if the procedures outlined in this document have been shown not to have been followed.

**Appendix 2:
Rules for the Selection of Assembly Candidates
and Parliamentary Candidates
(March 2007)**

Definitions

“CCC” means the Campaigns & Candidates Committee of the Welsh Liberal Democrats

“The Party” means the Welsh Liberal Democrats

“PPC” means Prospective Parliamentary Candidate

“PAC” means Prospective Assembly Candidate

“LDN” means the *Liberal Democrat News*, published by the Federal Party

“enews” means the regular email issued by the Welsh Liberal Democrats to members who’ve notified the party of their email address

“Regional List” means the list for each Assembly region

“English Rules” means the Rules for the selection of Parliamentary Candidates produced by the English Liberal Democrats

Preamble

This document is the basis for the selection of PPCs and PACs. Where this document is silent, the English Rules shall be referred to for guidance and where both are silent the basic principles of the Party and the discretion of the individual Returning Officer and/or of the CCC as applicable shall be referred to.

These Rules replace all arrangements for selection that have gone before but nothing in these Rules overrules any functions of the CCC or of the Welsh Liberal Democrats Constitution.

Only candidates on the Approved Lists of the Welsh and other UK Liberal Democrat parties; or Candidates licensed by the CCC can stand for election as a Welsh Liberal Democrat Candidate.

A. Constituencies with a Sitting Member

1. A Sitting Member may be reselected by a resolution passed by a simple majority at a Special General Meeting of the Local Party. Such a proposal to be circulated to all members of that Local Party with a minimum of three weeks notice.

2. Should such a resolution not be carried, the procedure should be that for a constituency where the Sitting Member is retiring. In such circumstances the Sitting Member is free to apply for selection.

B. Constituencies where a Sitting Member is retiring and all other constituencies

Advert

1. An advert for selection of a PAC or PPC must be placed in enews and may be placed in LDN. The CCC may place a block advert in both or either LDN or enews for any Welsh selections and for both Parliamentary and Assembly selections.
2. The closing date for applications to the Returning Officer shall not be less than three weeks from publication of the advertisement, unless agreed with the Returning Officer and the Chair of the CCC.

Returning Officer & Selection Panel

3. The Chair of the CCC shall appoint a Returning Officer.
4. The Local Party Executive shall appoint a Selection Panel, consisting of a minimum of three and a maximum of seven members, to oversee the selection. These members should be chosen to represent the membership in the constituency at large, following the guidance in the English Rules. One member shall be appointed to chair meetings and to be a Liaison Officer, liaising with the Returning Officer.
5. Where the Chair of the CCC, in consultation with the Local Party feel that this poses difficulties they may, by agreement, appoint a Liaison Officer from the constituency to carry out the functions alone. In such circumstances it is especially important for the Returning Officer to ensure that all members of the Local Party have the opportunity to participate in the selection.
6. The Returning Officer shall ensure that all members of the Selection Panel and all Applicants are aware of the Rules. The Returning Officer shall have access to all meetings of the Selection Panel. The Returning Officer shall ensure that the selection is carried out fairly and in accordance with these Rules and the principles of democracy.

Training for Selection Panel Members

7. The Returning Officer should ensure that those members of the Panel who have not received training are aware of the purpose of shortlisting and their responsibilities as regards equal opportunities and fairness to applicants.
8. Priority should be given to training a representative Panel, rather than using a group of unrepresentative 'experts.'
9. The selection process will not be allowed to proceed unless the Returning Officer is satisfied that an appropriate number of Panel members have been trained.

Number of Applications

10. In the absence of valid applications, the Returning Officer shall have the power to suspend the selection process until such time as an application is received. In such circumstances, or where only one valid application is received, the Selection Panel shall consult the Chair of the CCC, who shall have the power to authorize a shortlist of one.
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11. In exercising the power set out in Rule 10, the Chair of the CCC shall have regard to the efforts made to encourage applications and to the desirability of encouraging under-represented sections of the membership to apply. He/she shall report on such decisions, and all other decisions under these rules, at each meeting of the CCC and, when in doubt, should seek the views of that Committee before deciding.

12. If a constituency has received only one application and the Chair of the CCC agrees to the selection proceeding with only one candidate, a postal ballot of all members of the constituency eligible to vote will be held. The date of the appointment of the Returning Officer would be used to determine members eligibility to vote. The ballot would be conducted under the guidance of a Returning Officer appointed by the chair of CCC and will be sent by and returned to the Party. The candidate would have the right to a manifesto as set out in the rules. A letter explaining the voting procedure will accompany the ballot paper. The cost of the mailing would be borne by the Local Party

13. In the event of there being more than three valid applications, the shortlisting guidance set out in the English Rules shall be followed. Where there are no more than three valid applications, all applicants shall be interviewed. Where there is no Selection Panel, the Returning Officer shall authorize the Local Party Executive, or the Chair of the Campaigns & Candidates Committee and the Liaison Officer jointly, to draw up the shortlist

14. In all cases, three weeks notice of the Hustings Meeting shall be given, together with details of the arrangements for postal voting, to all members entitled to vote. A manifesto provided by each shortlisted applicant shall be included with the notice of hustings.

Timetable

15. The below is the model timetable for a contested selection, following the close of application or the appointment of a Returning Officer. This may be varied by the Returning Officer in consultation with the Chair of CCC and the Selection Panel.

Day 1 Advert published in LDN / enews (as applicable)

+ 3 weeks minimum Closing date for receipt of completed applications

+2 weeks Time for selection committee to produce short list

+2 weeks to prepare hustings mailing and manifestos

Mailing date = Day A Campaign start

Evidence of a campaign beginning before Day A would constitute a breach of the rules and render the candidate liable to disqualification or other action by the Returning Officer.

A +21 days = Hustings

Conduct of Selection Campaign

16. To have a manifesto included with the notice of Hustings, a shortlisted applicant must provide the Liaison Officer with a copy of the manifesto, approved by the

Returning Officer, at least three days before the date of mailing. Such a manifesto shall cover no more than one side of A4 (two sides if one is a direct translation into English / Welsh of the other).

Applicants are reminded of the desirability of producing all such material bilingually.

17. No other written material shall be circulated, other than an “out leaflet”, without the agreement of the Returning Officer. The text of an “out leaflet” must be agreed by the Returning Officer.

18. The use of electronic mailing lists is to be regulated by the Returning Officer. The only mailing list allowed to be used for campaigning will be a list approved by the Returning Officer and made available to all candidates.

Content of all e-mails and any attachments must be approved by the Returning Officer.

19. Web sites may be used but that content must be approved by Returning Officers before being open to general access. In order to ensure parity of web space between candidates, web sites may be generated by candidates specifically to promote their candidature but shall not contain links to other pages or sites. If a candidate already has his/her own site, this shall not be used to promote candidature unless it meets these specifications.

Eligibility to Vote in selection

20. Members entitled to vote shall be over the age of ten years and with a minimum six month continuous membership, at the date of the appointment of the Returning Officer. Members whose subscriptions are less than three months overdue shall be included but where those with subscriptions outstanding are more than three months overdue at the date of the Hustings, they must pay outstanding subscriptions in order to be able to vote. The responsibility for identifying members participating in the selection who fall outside these rules does not lie with the Returning Officer, but with Local Party Officers and other interested parties. Any such issue or complaint shall be raised with the Returning Officer as soon as possible, but in any event prior to the beginning of the counting of votes.

In the case of a Local Party including two or more constituencies, if the constituency under selection has fewer than fifteen members the Chair of the CCC in consultation with the Returning Officer and the Selection Committee will decide the process to follow; which can include all postal ballots; voting by membership of the Local Party as a whole; and other processes.

21. The list of eligible members shall be obtained from the Party by the Returning Officer

22. There shall normally be one Hustings, unless the selection panel (or Liaison Officer and Returning Officer) agree otherwise.

23. At the Hustings, the Returning Officer shall explain the voting system and proceedings. Each shortlisted applicant shall be given an equal amount of time to address the meeting, with a further equal time for questions.

Other applicants shall be accommodated in a place where they cannot overhear

proceedings. Each applicant may be accompanied by a non-voting supporter who must stay with the candidate.

24. Applicants shall draw lots for the order of appearance.

25. Voting shall be by Alternative Vote where there are three or more shortlisted applicants; by simple majority where there are two. Where there is a shortlist of one applicant, the choice shall be by simple majority between the single applicant and a motion to “reopen nominations”.

26. The Returning Officer shall send out and receive postal votes by dates set out in the notice and shall add such votes to the ballot before counting.

27. The vote shall be counted by the Returning Officer and he/she shall announce the result. Seven days notice of the time and place of the count shall be given to all applicants and members of the selection panel/the Liaison Officer. Members of the selection panel/the Liaison Officer and the applicants and one representative of each shall be entitled to attend the count.

28. The Local Party shall defray the expenses incurred by the Returning Officer.

C. Regional Lists

29. The selection shall follow the Rules for the selection of constituency candidates in (B) above, excepting the provisions below

Role of the AERC

30. Local Assembly Electoral Region Committees, hereinafter referred to as AERCs, are to coordinate and supervise the selection of Assembly list candidates within their electoral region. The formula for determining constituency representation on the AERC shall be that each constituency with a membership of up to 50 shall have 2 representatives and constituencies with a membership of more than 50 shall have 3 representatives.

31. The selection for each Assembly Region shall be carried out by the AERC, which shall carry out the functions of a Local Party Executive in the Constituency Rules, using a trained Returning Officer appointed by the Chair of CCC

32. The AERC shall defray the expenses incurred by the Returning Officer.

Shortlisting

33. Gender balance shall be sought by the encouragement of applications from both men and women and, particularly for the time being, the encouragement of applications from women to become approved candidates. Zipping of separate lists for men and women shall not be used. Selection committees should ensure gender balance in the shortlisting process. At least one third of the names on a shortlist to be women. If the shortlist is to be six, then at least two, with a target of three, on the shortlist should be women.

Where there are insufficient applicants for this to be possible, the English rules for gender balance and shortlisting should be followed.

34. A sitting Assembly List Member shall have the right to be shortlisted for selection to the party list where he/she is sitting.

35. The maximum and minimum number of applicants on the party list shall be determined in advance by the CCC. The CCC, may add further names to the bottom of the list at any stage after selection.

36. The end product of the selection process should be a ranked list of up to six names.

Because a hustings meeting with more than six candidates would be unwieldy, selection committees should shortlist six candidates to present to the region's members. It may not be possible to shortlist six. If this is the case, the selection committee should offer a shortlist of no fewer than three to be ranked by the vote of the region's members. The Returning Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee can vary this requirement in exceptional circumstances.

37. If the selection Panel can compile a shortlist of 6 candidates, all of whom are Grade A candidates, then they should do so. If there are fewer than 6 Grade A candidates who apply for selection then the selection committee may choose to select candidates Graded A, B and C. The Panel should make it clear to each candidate that in putting forward these names for the membership electoral process that those graded A at the point at which the result is declared, shall occupy the top places on list, regardless of how many votes they receive.

Timetable

38. The Returning officer may vary these deadlines in consultation with the chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee

Day 1 Advert published

+ 3 weeks minimum Closing date for receipt of completed applications

+2 weeks Time for selection committee to produce short list

+2 weeks to prepare hustings mailing and manifestos

Mailing date = Day A Campaign start

A +16 days First hustings can take place

Day of first hustings is Day B

B + 7 days Last date for hustings (i.e. eight days available for hustings)

Day of last hustings is Day C

C+ 1 day Ballot papers posted to members with second manifesto

C + 13 days For receipt of late ballot papers. Eg by noon on 'x' date (The closing date for this may be fixed by the Returning Officer. The suggested 13 days would allow members a second manifesto in the mailing with ballot papers. to vote by post)

39. The number of Hustings meetings shall be agreed by the Selection Panel and the Returning Officer and shall reflect the size of the Region.

The Conduct of the selection

40. There will be a full postal ballot of all members in each electoral region

41. In order to ensure that candidates have an opportunity to conduct their campaign before members cast their ballots, ballot papers will be posted one day after the last hustings. A second manifesto will be sent with ballot papers.

42 The timetable includes a campaigning period from day A in the timetable above (The date on which notices of hustings are mailed) until the closing date for receipt of completed ballot papers. Systematic contacting of members as part of a campaign should not begin until day A. Evidence of such a campaign beginning before day A would constitute a breach of the rules and render the candidate liable to disqualification or other action by the Returning Officer.

Proxy votes

43. In view of the relatively short time between dispatch of ballot papers and the closing date for receipt of completed ballots, proxy votes should be allowed, subject to an application in writing by the member. It is possible that members may be on holiday for the relevant period. Proxy ballot papers should be sent by the Returning Officer to a named proxy at an address given to the Returning Officer in writing by the member who will be away.

The ballot paper should include a letter explaining what the ballot paper is.

“I have been notified by (name of member asking for proxy to be issued) that you should be allowed to vote on his/her behalf in the selections for the Welsh Liberal Democrat list for the National Assembly elections. Please complete the ballot paper according to (name of member)’s wishes and return it to: (insert address and closing date).”

The proxy ballot paper should be in all respects the same as the ballot paper that would have been issued to the member direct.

Count

44. The count shall use the procedures set out by the Federal Party for the counting of list votes. The result will, therefore, be announced, and conveyed to each Local Party, by the AERC and the Party, as soon as possible.

45. Returning Officers should ensure safe and secure storage of ballot papers until the count takes place.

D. Miscellaneous

Elections/Selections within a 6 month period either side of an election

46. The Chair of the CCC has the responsibility to license candidates in seats where the local party has failed to provide a candidate or where there is no active membership, within six months of a pending Assembly Election.

47. For Westminster Parliament elections the date where this licensing can start will be determined by the Leader of the Parliamentary Party and The President of the Welsh Liberal Democrats in consultation.

48. Before licensing a candidate for a constituency the Chair of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee may consult the Chair of the local Party or members.

49. Under licensing, a short process for assessing candidates may be adopted. A candidate licensed under this process can only sit in a seat determined by the CCC and for one election only.

50. In the event of a the nomination date for a Parliamentary or Assembly election falling within a six month period following a similar election a constituency may choose to reselect a candidate on a simple majority vote. Provision for this form of selection expires within 6 months of the previous election. In the circumstances where the nomination date for Assembly or Parliamentary election does not fall within the 6 month period, all constituencies need to select a candidate under the provisions of A or B as appropriate.

51. To cover the possibility of the winning candidate being disbarred, resigning or dying, a candidate will remain selected for a period of six months after an election for the Assembly or Parliament.

Maintenance of the Welsh Liberal Democrats Candidates List

52. The Party will maintain a list of approved candidates, their grading following development days, and their recent candidate history.

53. An A grade candidate has the responsibility to maintain a current knowledge of campaigning and Welsh/Federal Policy. They will be required to attend an interview on a four yearly cycle to maintain their A grade status and may be required to attend further training or a further development day.

(Elected Members of the House of Commons and Welsh Assembly are exempt)

54. If an approved candidate fails to stand for two consecutive Westminster or Assembly Elections they will be removed from the active candidates list and will have to reapply.

55. If a candidate's membership lapses they will be removed from the list and will have to reapply.

Dual Standing

56. Members may put forward their names to stand for both an Assembly List and an Assembly Constituency. However, in the event that both applications are successful they may not remain as the candidate for both longer than seven days. In these circumstances, they should write to the Chair of the CCC indicating which candidacy they intend to retain.

Miscellaneous

57. These Rules are concerned only with the selection of prospective candidates. Matters relating to the formal adoption of candidates are not addressed.

58. The CCC shall keep under review the position regarding the selection of both PPCs and PACs simultaneously, with regard to the campaigning, legal and human rights issues.

Annexe V
Specified Associated Organisations
(Autumn 2008)

The Organisations recognised as SAOs in accordance with Section K of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats are:

1. Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors (ALDC);
2. Association of Liberal Democrat Engineers & Scientists (ALDES);
3. Democrats for Lesbian and Gay Action (DELGA);
4. Ethnic Minority Liberal Democrats (EMLD);
5. Liberal Democrat Agents & Organisers Association;
6. Liberal Democrat Lawyers;
7. Liberal Democrat Youth & Students (LDYS);
8. Parliamentary Candidates Association (PCA);
9. Women Liberal Democrats (WLD)

This list shall expire, subject to the provisions of Section K of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats, following the Autumn Conference of 2012 unless deferred by the National Executive for a period not exceeding twelve months.

Annexe VI Appeals Panel

Appendix 1 Composition of the Welsh Appeals Panel (March 2006)

Name	Nominating Body	Appointment	Expiry
Mr Alan Masters (Chair) ++	National Executive	March 2006	31. 12.09
Mrs Cecilia Barton +	Ceredigion LP	March 2006	31.12.10
Cllr Keith Davies +	Aberavon & Neath LP	March 2006	31.12.10
1. Cllr Hugh Clark	Newport LP	March 2006	31.12.09
2. Cllr June Marshall	Gwynedd LP	March 2006	31.12.09
3. Mr Gareth Morgan	Montgomeryshire LP	March 2006	31.12.09
4. Mr Huw Price	Caerffili, Islwyn & Merthyr LP	March 2006	31.12.09
5. Mr Stephen Radford	Bridgend LP	March 2006	31.12.09
6. Mr Richard Tyler	Brecon & Radnorshire LP	March 2006	31.12.09
7. VACANT			
8. VACANT			
9. VACANT			
10. VACANT			

++ Serving as ex-officio member of the Federal Appeals Panel

+ Serving as the Welsh Party's nominees to the Federal Appeals Panel and therefore ex-officio members of the Welsh Appeals Panel until the expiration of their term of office (31 December 2010) in accordance with Section L of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Constitution.

Appendix 2

Procedural Rules of the Welsh Appeals Panel (March 2002)

Jurisdiction

1. The Appeals Committee deals principally with appeals on constitutional matters only, i.e. on the basis of natural justice, breach of the constitution and unfairness, an example may be an allegation of vote rigging. Many disputes are outside the jurisdiction of the Committee. For instance any candidates selection disputes would go at first instance to the appropriate Candidates Appeals Committee - unless the selection involved a breach of the constitution.

2. The Committee should not hear allegations of a breach or unfairness that has not occurred or where another remedy exists that has not been exhausted. [An example was where a party member approached the Federal Appeal Committee with an allegation that a selection panel who had not reached its decision had acted unfairly. However until a decision had been reached no appeal could be brought and in that example other remedies would then exist before the matter came before the Federal Committee]

Appeal

3. The procedures adopted must be patently fair open and transparent. If there is any dispute about this the Welsh Appeals committee can be appealed to the Federal Appeals Committee but ONLY on a matter of breach of natural justice.

Complaint Procedure

4. The Chief Executive's department of the Party should receive the complaint. They act as a first filter passing on the appropriate complaints to the appropriate bodies. Any complaint should be marked specifically for the attention of the Welsh Appeals Panel and should be passed onto the Chairperson of the Panel- promptly or in his absence to the Deputy Chairperson.

Initial Assessment

5. The Chairperson of the Appeal Panel will assess the complaint, initially for jurisdiction, i.e. is it a complaint that the panel can hear. If necessary he will seek assistance of other members to decide jurisdiction. Once jurisdiction has been decided the Chairperson will select a three person committee to meet and deal with the appeal, one of whom will be appointed as the panel chairperson; this will necessarily involve liaison with the Chief Executive's Department for administrative backup. No member of the local constituency party of the parties, to the dispute should sit as a member of the Panel.

Pre-hearing Matters

6. The Chairperson in consultation with the panel will decide on the procedure and timetable in respect of the complaint. In difficult cases a Pre Hearing Review may be necessary (with or without the complaining parties) to decide format and what if any investigations are necessary. In some cases, investigations may be carried out

by appointing independent persons to submit reports to the panel and not done by the members themselves. The procedure and timetable must be adhered to.

7. The parties to the complaint will be required to put their complaint and submissions down on paper, which will be circulated to the other parties involved for their reply and vice versa. There may then be (if directed) an oral hearing in which final submissions are made and questions asked, thereafter the Panel will reach a decision. No decision will be announced at such a hearing. The Parties shall be informed that they will receive a decision in due course (once the report had been agreed).

8. In dealing with any complaint the Panel will have regard to Human Rights Act 1998 and in particular to Article 6 of the European Convention of Human Rights.

Report

9. Once the panel has reached a decision, the chairperson of the panel should prepare a report, which must be circulated to the other members of the panel for amendment/agreement. The final version should then be sent to the parties and circulated to all the members of the Welsh Appeal Panel and for information to the Chairperson of the Federal Appeals Panel. The Chief Executive's Department shall be informed of any decision.

Report to Conference

10. The Report will be a matter of record. A sanitised version giving the facts but not identifying the parties* would normally be sufficient to go before Conference (*in the interests of protecting the parties to unnecessary publicity), together with any recommendations that have been made. Another safeguard may be that this is done during a session of Conference where members of the press are excluded.

Annexe VII Composition of the Constitutional Review Panel

Name	Capacity	Appointment	Expiry:
Christine Humphreys	President	October 2008	Dec 2009
John Last	Chair of NEC	October 2008	Dec 2009
Roger Burley	Returning Officer	October 2008	Spring 2011*
Elgan Morgan	Chair, Conference Committee	October 2008	Dec 2010
Vacant+	Representative of Parliamentary/Assembly Groups		
Vacant++	Ian Walton	April 2009	Spring 2011*
Vacant++	Carole O'Toole	April 2009	Spring 2011*
Vacant++	Pete Roberts	April 2009	Spring 2011*

* Post open for re-election at the end of the relevant Conference
+ Nomination currently being sought (April 2009)