

MINUTES OF THE FYLDE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024

Held at St. Margaret of Antioch on Thursday 21st November 2024, 19:00 – 20:00

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Chair called the Meeting to Order and welcomed the attendees.

2. Apologies

- 2.1. The Secretary advised the Meeting of the apologies, and these were noted.

3. Adoption of Agenda

- 3.1. The Agenda was adopted as read.

4. Approval of the AGM 2023 Minutes

- 4.1. The AGM 2023 Minutes were adopted as read.

5. Reports

5.1. Chair's Report

- 5.1.1. Phil Morgan presented the Chair's Report (see Annex A).
- 5.1.2. There was a wide-ranging discussion about the proposed Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Windfarm transmission route and the effects it will have on Fylde.
- 5.1.3. The Chair's Report was adopted as read.

5.2. Treasurer's Report

- 5.2.1. Dan Gardner presented the Treasurer's Report (see Annex B).
- 5.2.2. The Treasurer's Report was adopted as read.

5.3. Membership Development Officer's Report

- 5.3.1. Cllr. Joanne Gardner presented the Membership Development Officer's Report (see Annex C).
- 5.3.2. The Membership Development Officer's Report was adopted as read.

5.4. St. Anne's Town Council Report

- 5.4.1. Cllr. Joanne Gardner presented the St. Anne's Town Council Report (see Annex D).
- 5.4.2. The St. Anne's Town Council Report was adopted as read.

5.5. Fylde Borough Council Report

- 5.5.1. Cllr. Karen Henshaw presented the Fylde Borough Council Report (see Annex E).
- 5.5.2. The Fylde Borough Council Report was adopted as read.

6. Motions to the AGM

- 6.1. There were no Motions to the AGM.

7. Approval of the Constitution of the Fylde Liberal Democrats

- 7.1. Stephen Phillips presented the proposed Constitution of the Fylde Liberal Democrats (see Annex F).
- 7.2. After being proposed and seconded it was resolved to approve the Constitution of the Fylde Liberal Democrats [change to reflect Liberal Democrat federal policy for local parties to reflect district / unitary authority boundaries and not Westminster constituency boundaries].

8. Election of Honorary President

- 8.1. After being proposed and seconded it was resolved that the Rvd. Brian Bullick be appointed Honorary President.

9. Nomination and Election of Officers

- 9.1. After being proposed and seconded it was resolved that Cllr. Phil Morgan be appointed Chair.
- 9.2. After being proposed and seconded it was resolved that Andrew Holland be appointed Vice Chair.
- 9.3. After being proposed and seconded it was resolved that Cllr. Stephen Phillips be appointed Secretary.
- 9.4. After being proposed and seconded it was resolved that Dan Gardner be appointed Treasurer.
- 9.5. After being proposed and seconded it was resolved that Cllr. Joanne Gardner be appointed Membership Development Officer.
- 9.6. After being proposed and seconded it was resolved that Duncan Cairns be appointed Elections Officer.
- 9.7. After being proposed and seconded it was resolved that Cllr. Karen Henshaw JP be appointed Diversity Officer.

10. Nomination and Election of 3 (three) Ordinary Members to the Executive Committee

- 10.1. After being proposed and seconded it was resolved that Bob Fielding be appointed Ordinary Member #1.
- 10.2. After being proposed and seconded it was resolved that Christine Marshall be appointed Ordinary Member #2.
- 10.3. After being proposed and seconded it was resolved that Prof. Bill Winlow be appointed Ordinary Member #3.

11. To Note the accounts for the Financial Year 2023

- 11.1. The Accounts for the Financial Year 2023 were noted.

12. Appointment of Independent Examiner for the 2024 accounts

- 12.1. Neil Harrison was appointed as Independent Examiner for the 2024 accounts.

13. Close of AGM Business

- 13.1. The Chair thanked all the attendees for their contributions, and the Meeting was closed.

Prepared by

Stephen Phillips
Secretary
Fylde Liberal Democrats

ANNEX A: Chair's Report

Chairs Report

This is my second annual report as Chair of Fylde Liberal Democrats. The most obvious change over the past year has been the General Election with the thankful and overdue removal of the inept and useless Conservative government. It was pleasing to see so many Liberal Democrat MPs elected.

I would like to thank Mark Jewell for being our candidate. He ensured we had a credible candidate, with leaflets and canvassing taking place in places throughout the seat. Standing good candidates with support is a vital strand of our local work. I would like to thank all those who supported the campaign.

As Chair I have chaired the monthly Executive Committee meetings, which doubled as the more frequent Campaign meetings during the run up to the General Election. I'm pleased to pay tribute to all who contribute to those meetings running well and in particular Cllr Steve Phillips, our secretary, for all his continuing hard work and good sense.

I remain as a Parish Councillor and Vice Chair of Newton with Clifton Parish Council. In that role I was part of a small working group who sought to persuade the Conservative leadership of Fylde BC to withdraw their unilateral imposition of the Conservative Chair of Planning over Cllr Gordon Smith, the elected Chair, on the Planning District Liaison Panel. This was unsuccessful but showed that as Parish and Town Councils we would challenge the Borough Council.

I have also been closely involved with working with a very wide range of people on the proposed wind farm transmission routes and substations where it is clear that an alternative route is viable, cheaper and less damaging to the environment.

In an era where our democratic and liberal values are increasingly challenged it is important that we stand up for those values and support our civic society. I look forward to upholding those values with you all in the coming year.

Phil Morgan

ANNEX B: Treasurer's Report

FYLDE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS CONSTITUENCY PARTY – CP 258 **TREASURER'S REPORT 2024**

Summary

2023

The main expenses for 2023 were £1050 for the production of the annual calendars and £2500 for Fylde Borough Council local election leaflets.

The main income were the members' regular contributions (the 50/50 club) and members' individual donations, including some large very generous donations for election funding.

Total income was £3802, total outgo was £4132, and the account balance decreased from £2104 to £1774.

To Date in 2024

2024 saw a General Election.

Costs for the Local Party were £1333 (the Candidate was able to source revenue himself which assisted with the overall campaign).

In addition to the General Election there was a St Anne's Town Council by-election with costs at £485. With some further larger members' contributions the account balance has increased back up to £3043 at the end of October. We will need a significant balance as we have a Fylde Borough Council by-election to fight and next year's crucial Lancashire County Council elections. This report excludes the estimated costs for the Fylde Borough Council by-election in Kilgrimol.

Everything was transferred to the Lloyds Bank account from the old TSB bank account during 2023 but the TSB bank account has not been shut down yet, so it is still possible for members to accidentally pay money into it as did happen once this year, so I keep a regular eye on it.

We have also been informed by Lloyds Bank that the Lloyds account is being changed to a Community Account, probably because it is too small, and we will be charged £4.25 a month plus £0.50 for cheques paid out.

Dan Gardner
Treasurer
November 12th 2024

FYLDE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS CONSTITUENCY PARTY – CP 258
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY – 2023 cf 2022

	This year 2023 £	Last year 2022 £
<u>INCOME:</u>		
Election donations	2687.44	187.44
Annual Dinner ticket sales	n/a	n/a
Annual Dinner raffle receipts	n/a	n/a
Fund raising from social events	282.00	24.05
Income from 50/50 club	688.00	692.00
Subscription rebates	144.67	87.44
Donation for printing calendars	-	150.00
Other donations	-	75.00
Transfer from Election Account	-	-
General Election postal charge refund	n/a	n/a
<u>TOTAL INCOME</u>	3802.11	1215.93
<u>EXPENDITURE:</u>		
Transfer to Election Account	0.00	0.00
Annual Dinner catering cost	n/a	n/a
Prize Monies 50/50 Club	340.00	210.00
Website operation costs	242.00	420.00
Local election funding	2500.00	-
Printing and distribution of calendars (2021 & 2022)	1050.00	355.00
Printing and distribution of 'Thank you' leaflets	n/a	n/a
Purchase of Marked registers	n/a	n/a
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u>	4132.00	985.00
<u>Excess/(Deficit) of income over expenditure</u>	(329.89)	230.93
<u>Closing balance at December 31st 2023</u>		£1774.22
<u>Closing balance at December 31st 2022</u>		£2104.11

D. Gardner
Treasurer

P. Morgan
Chair

January 22nd 2024

FYLDE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS CONSTITUENCY PARTY – CP 258
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY – 2024 ytd cf 2023

	This ytd 31/10/24 £	Last year 2023 £
<u>INCOME:</u>		
Election donations	2798.20	2687.44
Annual Dinner ticket sales	n/a	n/a
Annual Dinner raffle receipts	n/a	n/a
Fund raising from social events	n/a	282.00
Income from 50/50 club	662.00	688.00
Subscription rebates	353.92	144.67
Donation for printing calendars	-	-
Other donations	-	-
Transfer from Election Account	-	-
General Election postal charge refund	n/a	n/a
<u>TOTAL INCOME</u>	3814.12	3802.11
<u>EXPENDITURE:</u>		
Transfer to Election Account	0.00	0.00
Annual Dinner catering cost	n/a	n/a
Prize Monies 50/50 Club	310.00	340.00
Website operation costs	417.55	242.00
General/Local Election funding	1333.00	2500.00
Printing and distribution of calendars (2023)	485.00	1050.00
Printing and distribution of 'Thank you' leaflets	n/a	n/a
Purchase of Marked registers	n/a	n/a
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u>	2545.55	4132.00
<u>Excess/(Deficit) of income over expenditure</u>	1268.57	(329.89)
<u>Closing balance at October 31st 2024</u>		£3042.79
<u>Closing balance at December 31st 2023</u>		£1774.22

D. Gardner
Treasurer

P. Morgan
Chair

November 12th 2024

ANNEX C: Membership Development Report

Membership Report - Fylde Lib Dems AGM November 2024

This is a brief outline of the current situation regarding our Members.

We currently have:

57 Members, this is a reduction of 10 Members since 2023.

The primary reason for this reduction is the loss of membership numbers due to the boundary changes for the Parliamentary Party this year. Overall though this is a much more stable situation, since steadily losing members after the 'Membership Peak' in 2019. We have 4 new members to date in 2024.

A call out from me - if you know of anyone who would like to join the Lib Dems, please don't hesitate to encourage them. We are especially looking to encourage younger people to become members. There is no doubt members are the life blood of our Party.

I contact each member to remind them that their membership is due for renewal, however there are many circumstances why people decide not to renew.

We did also lose the wonderful Barbara Shardlow this year, a lady I had become very close to. I used to visit her regularly and read the Guardian and Observer to her. Barbara had been a life long member, who contributed so much to the Lib Dem cause, and it was lovely to see so many Lib Dems from across Fylde at Barbara's funeral earlier this year.

This year was a very busy year in the run up to the General Election and I would like to thank all those members who were active in our campaign. We were also busy fighting 2 local by elections in Kilgrimol St Annes. Thank you to Mark Jewel and Christine Marshall for being excellent Candidates.

We held one or two social events throughout the year and Id like to thank all Members who supported these. I'd also like to thank all Members for supporting Karen in her Mayoral year too. If you haven't been to one of her Charity events yet, I'm sure there will be something to suit you soon.

Finally whatever your reasons for joining the Lib Dems, we thank you for doing so.

Joanne Gardner - Fylde Lib Dems Membership Secretary

ANNEX D: St. Anne's Town Council Report

Fylde Liberal Democrats AGM - St Annes Town Council Report November 2024

From Cllr Joanne Gardner (Kilnhouse Ward)

Cllr Stephen Phillips and I continue to fight above our weight on the Town Council.

I am a member on:

Policy and Resources

CAN (The Community and Neighbourhood and the Environmental group)

I represent the Council at Blundell Road Allotments and am the Outside body representative for St Anne's in Bloom

Steve is also a very active and vocal member of the CAN committee

We have both been involved with several one off working groups

CAN

This newly formed committee now incorporates the Social and the Environmental aspects of the Town Councils strategy in one committee. I think this works to the detriment of the environmental side of the Town Council's responsibilities.

Events

All of which have been recognised by residents as being extremely successful
Community Events:

Sounds in the Square took place every Wednesday from May to September and this year, due to its popularity will take place twice per month, in the winter.

St Annes Music Festival, which is receiving many plaudits from all age groups and was extended to 5 days in 2024.

The Christmas Lights Switch On and Santa around St Annes.

The Summer Activity Sessions - Free events for children of all ages.

Preparing for the 150th Anniversary of St Annes, which will take place in March 2025.

The Environmental Projects

Maintenance and development at the Allotments.

Involving Community Groups at the Allotments.

Planters around the Town.

Improving Grot Spots.

Telecom Box Art.

Mural Art.

Casework from Steve and myself

Road and Pavement maintenance issues.

Speeding - Steve was really successful in bringing this important issue to the forefront of the Town Council earlier this year.

Drainage and drain concerns.

Street lighting issues.

Grot Spots.

Fly Tipping.

Planning Issues.

Disability Issues - Especially children with Autism.

Eviction concerns.

Answering questions and campaigning against the proposed Offshore Windfarm Project Route.

I feel Steve and I have used our time on the Town Council very effectively.

Being active on the main committee CAN, has allowed us to heighten our profiles on the Town Council. The more Councillors we get on the Town Council, the more we will get on Fylde.

ANNEX E: Fylde Borough Council Report

Fylde Borough Council report November 2024

I will be sending a copy of Allan Oldfield's Briefing as part of my report.

Sadly, after the death of Cllr Julie Brickles, the Conservatives won the Warton seat giving them 20 seats against 17 others. With the resignation of Tim Armitt , we hope to win the Kilgrimol seat for the Lib Dems.

Fylde is losing a number of Senior officers in 2025 and some are not being replaced. However, they are looking to recruit a Climate Officer – I wonder why !!!!!

There has recently been a Planning Advisory Scrutiny review and we are awaiting the report.

I have been extremely busy as Mayor because Howard had a total hip replacement and Jo broke both her wrists – they are both now well on the way to recovery.

Our fund-raising events have been well supported and we have been given £5,000 from George's Garage Trust.

Thank you to everyone who has helped me to keep going.

Allan Oldfield Briefing 13th November 2024

PAS Review

PAS team focussing on progress of recommendations – should be reporting back in two to three weeks

Peer Review

Draft report should have been received by 10th November, was expected by 15th.

Fylde don't have resources to meet all the aspirations in the Corporate Plan i.e. St Annes Masterplan which could take 15 to 20 years to deliver – some key sites not in the control of Fylde. Need for officers to market the Masterplan to attract investment.

Also a need for a climate change officer.

Head of Planning

Mark Evans' position has been advertised – did look to share with Wyre – their Head of Planning used to work for Fylde, but Wyre not interested.

New Post - Tourism and Leisure Head of Service

Darren Bell's position as Head of Technical Services not being replaced, building control is going with planning, some of technical services i.e. car parking going with T&L, land charges going to Land Registry and estates going to Charlie Richards.

St Annes Phase 1

Work has started – the Events Space is phase 1 of the regeneration of the square

Kirkham Public Realm

Haggling with Eric Wright over final fee - in dispute over delays etc.

TSB building out for tender – being offered on favourable terms, possible rent free period, the successful bidder will probably have to invest quite heavily.

The Hillside – total cost of purchase and improvements likely to be £1.2M, but will be valued considerably less – reason why government grants were needed.

St Annes Pool

Out for tender on 15th November – tenders to do the require £1.9M work and run the pool. If the successful bidder wants more then Fylde would reduce the annual subsidy

Kirkham Pool

Interested party being given to 17th February to improve their business case. They would be responsible for all on-going costs OR ownership returns to Fylde with the intention of completing design number 5, however no funding in place at the moment, officers are trying to identify grants etc.

Beach Management Strategy

Sand building up after sand winning ceased four years ago – licence out of date. 200k spent on feasibility of starting again. Environment Agency, Natural England and the Marine Management Organisation very opposed so little likelihood of obtaining licence from LCC. Proposed that the income would be ring-fenced for climate change. Used to profit up to 400k per year.

Three zones in estuary, salt marsh, developing salt marsh and grassed – grassed areas being managed.

ANNEX F: Constitution of the Fylde Liberal Democrats

Based on the MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR LOCAL PARTIES as of 1st January 2023

CONSTITUTION OF THE FYLDE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

1. Name and Area

- 1.1. The name of the body governed by this Constitution shall be the Fylde Liberal Democrats".
- 1.2. The area of the Local Party shall be that of Fylde Borough Council.

2. Definitions

In this Constitution:

- "the Local Party" means the Fylde Liberal Democrats;
- "the Party Constitution" means the Constitutions of the Federal Party, the Liberal Democrats in England and the North West Regional Party;
- "the Party" means the Liberal Democrats;
- "the Regional Party" means the North West Region Liberal Democrats;
- "the Constituency/ies" means Parliamentary Constituencies wholly or partly in the local party area;
- "Party's Youth and Student Organisation" means the Affiliated Organisation representing youth and students;
- "Majority" at any meeting means majority of those present and voting;
- "Executive Committee" means the Executive Committee of the Local Party;
- "In writing" includes communication by email;
- "Signed" includes communication by email from an email address registered with the Party to that member and stating that it was sent by that member;
- "Large Single Seat" means that of a Police (Fire) and Crime Commissioner or Combined Authority/Metropolitan Mayor
- "ALDC" means The Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors.

3. Objects

- 3.1. The objects of the Local Party shall be:
 - (a) To be the successor within its area to the Fylde Liberal Association and to the Fylde Social Democratic Party; and
 - (b) To promote and support the values and objects of the Party in its area and in particular through its members and registered supporters.
 - i. to secure the election of Liberal Democrats as Members of Parliament, members of regional, local and other elected public authorities and appointments to other public or community offices;

- ii. to admit and actively recruit new members and registered supporters to the party, encourage existing members to renew their membership and registered supporters to join the party or renew their registration;
- iii. to participate in the formulation of the policy of the Party;
- iv. to be recognised and approved by the Regional Party 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;
- vi. to campaign and work with local people to achieve the objectives set out in the Preamble to the Party Constitution; and
- vii. to promote diversity within the party and to represent the interests of under-represented groups in the locality.

4. Membership and Registered Support

- 4.1. The Local Party shall administer membership and registered support 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 Regional and Local Party Executive Committees; or
 - (c) They are an MP or prospective candidate for a parliamentary, regional, sub-regional or local election; or a member of a local authority for a seat wholly or partly within the area of the Local Party.
- 4.3. Eligible persons shall, subject to clauses 4.4 and 4.5 of this constitution, become members of the Local Party:
 - (a) on enrolment through the Local Party; or
 - (b) on enrolment through the party's online enrolment system; or
 - (c) on enrolment through the party's Youth and Student Organisation or any other enrolling Affiliated Organisation, giving an address within the Local Party area; or
 - (d) if already a member of the party, on re-registration as a member of the Local Party.

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.

An application shall be deemed accepted if not refused in accordance with the membership rules.

- 4.4. The Executive Committee may refuse membership to any person, on the grounds provided by the Party Constitution, using the procedure defined in the membership rules of the Party in England.
- 4.5. A membership application from a former member, previously expelled by the Party, must be approved by the Regional Party and the Party in England in addition to the Local Party.
- 4.6. Membership of the local party shall be interpreted according to the provisions of the Constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England and its Membership Rules, as recorded in the register kept by the Party in England. Membership will automatically lapse when the renewal subscription is three months in arrears.
- A member whose subscription is in arrears shall receive notices of meetings and elections for three months from the date at which their subscription became due.
- A member who does not renew their subscription before the end of the three-month period must reapply for membership.
- 4.7. 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

The Secretary shall within seven days notify any change of Officers to the Regional Party and to the Chief Executive of the Federal Party.

- 5.1. The Officers of the Local Party shall be the
- (a) Chair;
 - (b) up to two Vice-Chairs, who may hold Additional Single Responsibilities;
 - (c) Treasurer;
 - (d) Secretary;
 - (e) Elections Officer;
 - (f) Membership Development Officer;
 - (g) Diversity Champion.

The Executive should appoint members to ensure compliance of the Local Party with data protection law, and such other responsibilities as the Party may require from time to time.

Additional Single Responsibilities (ASR) roles may be assigned to people recruited from, or co-opted to, the Executive to perform the following one-off roles (some roles may be officer roles which would be delegated to the ASR):

- (a) Connect Co-ordinator;
- (b) Youth and Student Co-ordinator;
- (c) Press officer(s);
- (d) Campaign Organiser(s)/Agent(s);

- (e) Fundraising Co-ordinator(s);
- (f) Chair(s) of sub-committees where appropriate;
- (g) Representatives to joint committees with other Local Parties

5.2. There may be an Honorary President if duly nominated and elected in accordance with the rules for nomination and election of officers laid out in Section 6 of this constitution. The term of office for any such Honorary President shall be as laid out for officers in Section 6.1.

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 and the Data Protection Act 2018. The Executive Committee shall consist of:

- (a) The Officers;
- (b) up to 3 ordinary members to be elected annually in the same manner as the Officers;
- (c) The Party's Members of Parliament for constituencies covered by the Local Party, and Prospective Parliamentary Candidates, when in post;
- (d) The Local Party's approved Parliamentary / Large Single Seat Agent or Organiser.
- (e) A representative of any Combined Authority/Metropolitan Mayor candidate's campaign team covering the local party area;
- (f) A representative of any PCC/PFPC candidates' campaign team covering the local party area;
- (g) 1 representative(s) from each branch, and 1 representative(s) of members in parts of the Local Party area without branches;
- (h) One elected councillor from each principle authority covering the local party area for wards/divisions within the local party area, elected by and from such members;
- (i) one representative(s) elected by and from each local branch of the party's Youth and Student Organisation;

The number of representatives from (e) to (i) should not exceed the combined number of officers and ordinary members as at (a) and (b).

5.4 The Executive Committee may co-opt up to up to 3 additional members, for a term expiring not later than December 31st of the year in which they are co-opted. 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) - (i)), identify as the same gender, and that there is fair representation of under-represented groups in the locality, with the intention of creating an executive that reflects the community the Local Party serves.

5.5 The Honorary President is entitled to attend all meetings of the Executive Committee. 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.
- 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 neither the Chair nor any Vice Chair are available.
- 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.

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. Any decisions taken at such a meeting or by email between meetings must be ratified at the next quorate meeting of the executive.

- 5.9 The Executive Committee may appoint sub-committees for any specified purpose. No subcommittee 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 Chair or, (if unavailable, a Vice-Chair), in conjunction with a minimum of two other officers, may act on behalf of the Executive Committee. The Chair (or Vice Chair) shall report such actions to the next meeting of the Executive Committee.
- 5.11 The Executive Committee will set out a long-term development plan as to how it will achieve its objectives as set out in clause 3.1 (b) and in particular in the following areas:
- i. increasing its membership and the diversity of that membership
 - ii. a training plan to improve the skills and activity levels of those members
 - iii. improving its fundraising
 - iv. objectives for each set of local elections or shared local elections with neighbouring Local Parties that cover its area for Counties, Mayoral, Regional Assemblies and Police (Fire) and Crime Commissioners, with the intention of standing a candidate in every available seat
 - v. using local by-elections to train local activists and develop campaigning skills
 - vi. improving its performance at each Parliamentary election

That plan should as a minimum be reviewed and updated in conjunction with the Regional Party after each full cycle of local elections and each Parliamentary election. The Executive should report on the progress of the plan at each AGM.

6. Election of Officers and Executive Committee

- 6.1 The officers and ordinary members shall be elected by and from members of the Local Party at the time of the Annual General Meeting (AGM), provided that, with the prior agreement of the Regional Party, a member of the party who is not a member of the Local Party may be elected to the office of Treasurer. If an election is contested, there shall be a ballot at the AGM or an electronic ballot following the meeting, in which all Local Party members are sent a personal link to an electronic voting system within 7 days after the AGM and which must be returned to the Returning Officer within 21 days after the AGM. The method of ballot shall be one permitted by the English Party rules and any choice determined by the returning officer.

The term of office of officers and ordinary members 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 one-year terms and shall not be eligible for re-election as Chair for two terms after leaving office.

- 6.2 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 and Treasurer's 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.
- 6.3 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.
- 6.4 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 constitutions.
- 6.5 The Executive Committee shall appoint some disinterested person to act as Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall be entirely responsible for running the elections, including the receipt of nominations and for the preparation and distribution of ballots, their receipt and counting on return, and the declaration of the results.

Accidental failure to dispatch notice of the AGM or a ballot 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 ballots at all or have received them too late to make it practicable to attend the meeting or return the ballot in due time.

- 6.6 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 constitutions. Subject to any order made after such an investigation, no irregularity shall invalidate an election.
- 6.7 The Returning Officer may extend the time for distribution and return of ballots where there are special circumstances making it necessary to do so.

7. General Meetings

- 7.1 The AGM 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/local authority area, 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, including progress with the development plan;
 - (b) to note 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 a statement of the current financial position and 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 each Liberal Democrat council group on which Local Party members serve;
 - (e) to transact any other business specified by the constitutions or directed by the Executive Committee;
 - (f) 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;
 - (g) to receive nominations for the election of officers, ordinary members of the Executive Committee and any elected sub-committees or joint committees;
- 7.3. The Secretary shall give all members at least 21 days written notice of the time and place of the AGM (or access links and codes for an online AGM or online access to an AGM). Such notice shall specify all business to be conducted at the meeting.
- 7.4. The AGM may (on notification to the Secretary prior to the start of the meeting) by a two-thirds majority agree to consider urgent or important business which has arisen since notice of the AGM was given.

- 7.5. An Extraordinary 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. Twenty members (or one-fifth of the membership if fewer), 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 Sections 5.8 and 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. A hard copy must be made of any electronic Minutes files and retained in a Minutes book/file. The Minutes book must be retained and handed on to successor Officers by the start of each term of office. 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. Hard copies shall be made and retained as for general meetings.
- 7.9. Details of any proposed amendment to this constitution shall be sent to all members with the notice of the General Meeting.

8. Local Branches

- 8.1 The Executive Committee may authorise the setting up of branches except that no branch shall be formed with fewer 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.
- 8.2 The membership of the Branch and the rules for operation of the Branch shall be as detailed in Appendix LP2 of this constitution.
- 8.3 The Executive Committee may authorise the dissolution of branches, subject to the provisions of 8.4 of this constitution.
- 8.4 A Branch may 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, the Data Protection Act 2018, its Constitution, this Constitution or 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.

8.5 If a Branch is dissolved or suspended, any member of the branch may request that the Regional Party conduct an investigation if they believe that the process has not been conducted in accordance with the correct constitutional process or without valid evidence. The Local Party shall not dissolve a branch until the branch has been given an opportunity to hold its own general meeting.

8.6 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 or Large Single Seat candidate, the procedure shall be as provided by the Party constitutions. The Executive Committee may appoint a subcommittee to carry out its duties under this procedure.

For each Parliamentary constituency which has at least 30 members the vote on selection for a Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for that constituency shall be by the members registered in that constituency.

For any Parliamentary constituency which has fewer than 30 members,

- (a) Either: the constituency lies in more than one local party, in which case the vote on selection for a Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for that constituency shall be by all the members of each Local Party which covers part of the constituency;
- (b) Or: the constituency lies wholly within a single local party area and the local party has more than thirty members then all the members of that local party;
- (c) Or: the local party/parties is/are a branch of the Region, or qualify to be so because of an overall Local Party membership of fewer than 30 people, in which case the vote on selection for a Prospective Parliamentary Candidate shall be by all the members living in that constituency and all members of the executive committee of the Regional Party.

9.2. The Local Party Executive Committee shall seek to ensure that, so far as practicable, all seats within the constituencies and seats in local authority wards and divisions wholly or partly within the local party area are contested by Liberal

Democrat candidates, unless the Executive Committee, Regional Party and, in the case of Large Single Seats or Westminster elections, the Liberal Democrats in England, are satisfied that it is in the best interests of the party in any specific case not to do so. If the Local Party wishes not to stand a candidate, the Executive must have the agreement of the Regional and English Parties in the case of Westminster and Large Single Seat elections or the Regional Party in the case of local authority elections.

- 9.3. When it is necessary to select one or more local government candidates for an electoral area, the branch or if there is no branch, the Local Party shall hold a general meeting / online ballot at which all members who are resident in the electoral area concerned may vote. The timetable shall be agreed by the branch committee and the Executive Committee, or where there is no branch by the Executive Committee.
- 9.4. The Elections Officer will maintain a list of members approved to stand as candidates in local elections, according to the rules of the Party in England and guidance provided on the Federal Party web site, and following the procedures approved by ALDC. The executive may select any other member, conditional upon subsequent approval by the executive or delegated approvals panel.
- 9.5. As a condition 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 set at a minimum of 10% of the individual's gross allowances from the relevant local authority. There shall be a mechanism by which cases of hardship/financial distress are identified, and only through this mechanism may a contribution be lowered or exempted. Town and parish council candidates are exempt from this condition.
- 9.6. In any local 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 members of the Executive Committee
- 9.7. In any case in which time does not permit the holding of a general meeting / online ballot at the branch committee, or if there is no branch the Executive Committee or sub-committee thereof may appoint the candidate.
- 9.8. Where an elected authority covers more than one Local Party area or crosses Local Party boundaries, the Executive Committees of the Local Parties concerned must agree to form appropriate joint arrangements to co-ordinate candidate approval and selection, campaigning, fund-raising and publicity and be responsible for the formulation of policy on that authority. Such arrangements must be minuted by each of the Local Parties involved and shall remain in force, notwithstanding any subsequent change of officers or Executive Committee.

- 9.9. The Local Party will submit to the Federal Party's Nominating Officer the name of a suitable person to act as the Delegated Nominating Officer (DNO). The DNO shall act in accordance with the Rules made by the Party for DNOs.
- 9.10. If a member of the Local Party stands at any public election as a candidate or agent, in opposition to a properly nominated candidate of the party, an officer of the Local Party shall immediately inform the Standards Officer at Liberal Democrat HQ as their membership may be revoked under the English and Federal Constitutions.
- 9.11. Any candidate for election to public office standing as a representative of the party must be a current member of the party from the point of nomination throughout the campaign.
- 9.12. If at any time the Local Party considers entering into an electoral pact, the Executive Committee must obtain the prior agreement of the Regional Party before any negotiations take place; the final outcome must meet objectives agreed under protocols established by the Party in England and be approved by the Regional Party.
- 9.13. A Local Party wishing to de-select a candidate for a Westminster or Large Single Seat must contact the Chair of the regional candidates committee and proceed according to their protocols.
- 9.14. A Local Party wishing to de-select a candidate for a local election must contact ALDC and follow their advice.

10. Finance

- 10.1 The Local Party's accounting period shall be annual, starting on 1st January and ending on 31st December each year.
- 10.2 The Treasurer shall keep, maintain for six years and pass to their successor accounting records which shall be available for inspection in accordance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA).
- 10.3 The Treasurer shall ensure that no donation greater than that permitted by PERA is accepted except from a permissible donor and shall keep records and submit donations reports to the Executive Committee and to the Chief Executive of the Federal Party.
- 10.4 The Treasurer shall annually produce accounts for Local Party finances which shall be approved by the Executive Committee and if required by the Political Parties, Elections & Referendums Act 2000 shall be audited.
- 10.5 The Treasurer shall submit the accounts of the Local Party together with an independent report to a meeting of the Local Party executive for approval. When signed, the Treasurer and the Local Party Chair shall submit them to the Federal

Party for reporting under PPERA rules in the manner designated by the Federal Party no later than 31st March following the end of the financial year. A copy of the accounts shall also be sent to the Regional Party.

- 10.6 (a) 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
- (b) The Local Party may take advantage of electronic banking facilities if they are provided by its bankers as long as appropriate safeguards are put in place by the Executive Committee to agree expenditure and cash movements both at Executive meetings and by a minimum of two officers in between meetings in advance of such expenditure or movements taking place. Where such action is taken between meetings it will be reported back to the next Executive meeting.
- 10.7 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.
- 10.8 [Such property as the Local Party may own or lease (whether physical or held in long-term investments) shall be acquired, held and disposed of through a Trust.

For a new trust, the Local Party Executive Committee shall appoint (insert number no less than three and no more than five) Trustees to manage the asset on behalf of the Local Party who shall hold office for a period of five years but be eligible for re-appointment by the Executive and if at any time the number of trustees shall fall below (insert number no less than three and no more than five) immediate steps shall be taken by the Executive to appoint a new trustee. A document (which may be the trust deed) shall be drawn up setting out the responsibilities and indemnification of the Trustees in carrying out their duties on behalf of the Local Party. This document should be signed by the Chair and Treasurer of the Local Party and the appointed trustees.

For an existing trust, the Executive Committee shall follow the above procedure as closely as possible, consistent with the trust deeds.]

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 constitutions of the Party or of the Regional Party. Any amendment to this constitution shall not come into force until approved by the Regional Party.

- 11.2 Details of any proposed amendment to this constitution 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.
- 11.4 One copy of the constitution shall be deposited with the Secretary / Administrator 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, subject to decisions of the English Council, Articles 3 and 9 of the constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England and Article 4 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 any 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.
- 11.8 A Local Party, by agreement at a general meeting, may dissolve itself in order to facilitate the creation of one or more new Local Parties, subject to the approval of its Regional Party and prior notification to the Compliance function at party headquarters; HQ must be notified no later than 30th November in the year preceding the proposed change, in order that appropriate adjustments made be made to data and other systems held by the party.
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APPENDIX LP1
ROLES OF LOCAL PARTY OFFICERS

- i. The role of the Chair is to:
 - a. Chair Local Party, general and executive meetings
 - b. Act as the point of communication with HQ and the region
 - c. Ensure compliance (along with the Treasurer) with PPERA
 - d. If another member is not so appointed, ensure compliance with data protection law
 - e. Ensure compliance to party constitution
 - f. Manage the local development plan and ensure it is fulfilled
 - g. Oversee Parliamentary candidate selection with the support of the Elections Officer
 - h. Ensure that the Local Party maintains the standards and practice expected
- ii. The role of the Vice-Chair is to:
 - a. Deputise for the Chair if they are ever unavailable or at the request of the Chair,
 - b. Chair Local Party, general and Executive Committee meetings if and when the Chair is absent or otherwise unable to chair such meetings, or at the request of the Chair
 - c. Proactively assist the Chair in the fulfilment of their responsibilities to and on behalf of the Local Party,
 - d. Proactively work with the other officers to assist them in their duties as necessary,
 - e. Be responsible for the fulfilment of responsibilities associated with any vacant officer position until it is filled, reporting to the Executive Committee on such responsibilities whilst it remains vacant.
- iii. The role of the Secretary is to:
 - a. Produce agendas and minutes for meetings
 - b. Manage the diary of events to avoid clashes
 - c. Inform the Chief Executive of the Federal Party and the secretary of the Regional Party of executive officer appointments and other matters required by this constitution apart from finance
 - d. Consult the Local Party constitution
 - e. Other administrative tasks
- iv. The role of the Treasurer is to:
 - a. Prepare and monitor the yearly budget
 - b. Submit PPERA reports
 - c. Oversee fundraising targets
 - d. Liaise with election agents
 - e. Keep accounts ready for audit
- v. The role of the Membership Development Officer is to:
 - a. Organise and run recruitment campaigns
 - b. Follow up 'At Risk' members

- c. Ensure there is a range of events, social and political (in co-operation with the Secretary)
 - d. Encourage members to move on to Direct Debit payments
 - e. Secure accurate records of local party membership in the Federal Party's central membership system
 - f. Check regularly for new members, welcome them and organise new member interviews
 - g. Inform the Executive Committee of new members, in accordance with Section 4.4 of this Constitution
 - h. Produce a regular members' newsletter (work with others)
- vi. The role of the Elections Officer is to:
- a. Ensure the Local Party has top-line electoral objectives agreed for at least five years ahead to guide campaigning activity
 - b. Ensure the Local Party has an agreed annual campaign plan, and supporting budget in consultation with the Treasurer
 - c. Form and oversee the smooth running of a constituency campaign team charged with delivering the agreed campaign plan within the agreed budget
 - d. Ensure the Local Party obtains the marked registers after every election and that the data is entered into the party's system for recording electoral data
 - e. Provide support to the Chair in the selection of Parliamentary candidates
- vii. The role of the Diversity Champion is to:
- a. Develop an understanding of the diverse communities in the area of the Local Party
 - b. Identify under-representation of those communities within the Local Party and the executive/officer roles
 - c. Work with the Local Party executive to devise and promote a strategy to engage members of under-represented groups, to encourage them to join the party and to support them to become active in the management and decision-making processes of the Local and wider Party
 - d. Develop links with community group

APPENDIX LP2 RULES FOR BRANCHES

1. 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.

2. 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.
3. Each branch shall be governed by a constitution which shall provide for:
 - 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, 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 in Appendix LP3. 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.

4. 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.
5. 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.
6. A Branch may dissolve itself by a two-thirds majority at a General Meeting; 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 or with its Constitution, this Constitution or 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
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