

GWCLP Standing Orders and Rules for branches

Clause I.

1. These model procedural rules are designed to provide a framework for well-ordered Party meetings. Party units will want to adopt local standing orders to reflect their specific method of operation; however, local arrangements must not conflict with the provisions of these model rules which have the full authority of the NEC and form part of the rule book.
2. Based on Model 'B' these Standing Orders are for meetings of individual members (e.g. CLPs, Branches, Women's Branches, Young Labour Branches, BAME Branches).
 - A. Annual General Meetings
 - i. The Annual General Meeting of this branch shall be held each year in the month of May.
 - ii. A formal notice of the annual meeting shall be sent by the secretary to all Party units and organisations entitled to be represented at least 28 days prior to the meeting. A notice detailing the business of the annual meeting shall be sent to all duly appointed delegates or eligible members at least seven days prior to the meeting.
 - B. Ordinary meetings
 - i. Ordinary meetings shall be held on the following regular basis in the second week of the month, except in August and December when branches may choose to meet on a social basis. There shall be no meetings to transact ordinary business during the period of a national election campaign.
 - ii. Formal notice of all meetings shall be sent out by the secretary to all those entitled to attend at least seven days prior to the meeting. Such notice shall as far as possible include an indication of the business to be transacted at the meeting.
 - iii. A record of attendance at meetings shall be kept and those attending may be required to show a credential and/ or proof of membership card to gain entry to the meeting room.
 - C. Meeting times
 - i. Meetings shall commence at a time agreed by members, normally between 1900 and 2000. Business meetings shall not be held if a quorum is not present within 30 minutes of the appointed time; always provided that in special circumstances members present may agree to transact pressing business subject to the ratification of the proceedings by the next quorate meeting. Meetings shall close two hours from the notified starting time, except that a particular meeting may be temporarily extended for a specified period with the support of two-thirds of the members present.
 - D. Quorum
 - i. The quorum for branches shall be 5 per cent of members of the party unit or 6, whichever is the lower, and 10 for Annual General Meetings (AGM).
 - ii. The proceedings and resolutions of any quorate meeting shall not be held to be invalid simply through the accidental failure to give notice of the meeting to, or the non-receipt of such notice by, any person entitled to attend.
 - E. Entitlement to attend
 - i. All members must be fully paid up individual members of the Party residing and registered as electors or, exceptionally if they are not eligible to be registered to vote, residing only within the area covered by this branch. Only those members who have been elected to it may vote at meetings of the branch Executive Committee.
 - ii. When an annual or special meeting is not held for any reason or is abandoned without completing the business on the agenda, such meeting must be reconvened as soon as practicable in order for any necessary outstanding business to be transacted. Only those eligible to participate in the meeting as first convened, whether or not held, shall be entitled to participate in any further reconvened meeting.
 - F. Chair

- i. The elected chair of this branch shall preside at all meetings, except where otherwise provided for in the rules of the Party unit.
- ii. In the absence of the chair the vice-chair shall preside and in the absence of both the secretary or other officer shall call on those present to elect a member to take the chair of the meeting. Should the office holder arrive once a member has been elected to preside in her or his place then she or he may claim, if they wish, the right to preside at the meeting once the current item of business has been disposed of.
- iii. At the annual meeting the chair shall preside until a successor is elected, except where the chair is not a duly appointed delegate to the meeting; in which case the election of chair shall be taken as the first item on the agenda. The new chair shall take over the conduct of the meeting forthwith and proceed to the election of other officers and further business.

G. Party business

- i. The prime function of Party meetings is to provide delegates and members with the opportunity to participate in Party activities through social contact, political debate and policy discussion; and to establish objectives for the Party in the area for campaigning, the development of Party organisation and the promotion of links with sympathetic individuals and bodies within the wider community.
- ii. Plans for campaigning on local issues, the development of community engagement and the strengthening of both links and communication with individual members, affiliates, supporters and community groups should be central to all business.
- iii. The agenda of all Party meetings shall be drawn up to give due priority to the Party business highlighted above, the endorsement and introduction of new members and/ or delegates, the discussion of resolutions, Party policy items and other matters of interest to Party members and the receipt of reports from public representatives.
- iv. Nominations for delegates and representatives to other bodies should be sought as widely from among Party members as possible. Wherever practicable, any vacancies to be filled shall be advertised to all members as they arise and any Party member who has indicated willingness to accept nomination shall be considered for any post, unless otherwise stated in the rules.
- v. Party business shall in general have precedence at all business meetings of this body. As far as possible the officers and/ or Executive Committees should deal with routine items of correspondence, finance and reports from other Party bodies or functional officers, provided that the general meeting shall have the opportunity to question, amend and/ or ratify any recommendations put to them.

H. Notice of motion

- i. Original motions for the general meeting of this branch shall be accepted only from members entitled to attend and participate in the meeting and must be received by the secretary in writing not less than 14 days prior to the meeting for which they are intended.

Motions for discussion shall be made available to those entitled to attend with the notice and agenda of the relevant meeting, except for emergency motions which must be sent in writing to the secretary as soon as the nature of the emergency allows before the commencement of the meeting. Emergency business may be accepted by the majority of the meeting on the recommendation of the chair who shall interpret the term 'emergency' in a bona fide manner.

I. Discussion of motion

- i. No motion shall be discussed at a meeting until it has been moved and seconded. Where a motion has been submitted by a Party unit or organisation it must be moved by a delegate from that Party unit or organisation.
- ii. Speakers shall address the chair and shall only speak once on any motion except by permission of the chair, providing that the mover of a motion or an amendment may reply to the discussion without introducing new matter for debate; such reply shall close the discussion. No speaker shall be allowed more than five minutes, unless agreed by the meeting to be 'further heard' for a specified period.
- iii. Amendments to any motion may be moved and seconded from the floor of the meeting but shall be handed to the secretary in writing. Amendments shall be taken in order with one amendment being disposed of before another is moved. If an amendment is carried, the amended resolution becomes a motion to which further amendments may be moved.

J. Procedural motions

- i. A motion of 'next business' shall not be taken until the mover and seconder of a motion have been heard. Any motion 'of next business', 'that the vote be taken', 'to adjourn', 'of no-confidence in the chair' shall be moved, seconded and put to the vote without discussion; after such a vote the chair need not accept a further procedural motion for a period of 20 minutes.

K. Motion to rescind resolution

- i. No motion to rescind a resolution of this body shall be valid within three months from the date on which the resolution was carried. Notice of rescinding motion must be given in writing and made available to those entitled to attend the relevant meeting in line with rule H above.

L. Voting on motions

- i. Voting shall be by show of hands except where the constitution of the Party provides for a ballot vote or where this body decides otherwise. In the event of there being an equality of votes on any matter decided by a show of hands, the chair may give a casting vote provided that s/he has not used an ordinary vote. If the chair does not wish to give a casting vote, the motion is not carried.

M. Ballot votes

- i. The election of officers and/ or representatives of this body shall be by secret paper eliminating ballot either in rounds or by preferential vote. The election of Executive Committee members or large delegations may be by secret paper ballot using a multiple vote where members may not cast more votes than the number of positions to be filled. Any quotas for women laid down in the Party constitution which apply to this body shall be incorporated in the arrangements for the secret ballot.
- ii. Ballot votes shall be held at meetings to select candidates and where otherwise provided for in the Party constitution; and where requested by any member supported by at least two others.
- iii. In the event of a tie on a secret paper ballot the chair shall not have a casting vote. Where appropriate, the ballot shall be retaken and in the event of a continual tie lots may be drawn. In a preferential ballot the tie shall be broken by establishing which candidate had the highest number of first preference votes or took the earliest lead on transfers.

N. Chair's ruling

- i. Any breach of or question to the rules or standing orders may be raised by a member rising to a point of order. The chair's ruling on any point arising from the rules or standing orders is final unless challenged by not less than four members; such a challenge shall be put to the meeting without discussion and shall only be carried with the support of two-thirds of the members present.

O. Miscellaneous

- i. Party meetings and events shall be conducted in a friendly and orderly manner and organised in such a way as to maximise participation from members. No member shall be precluded from attendance because they cannot gain access to the meeting place for any reason. Harassment or intimidation of any member is unacceptable as is any form of discrimination on the basis of gender, age, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability or race. Smoking is not permitted at any Party meeting.
- ii. Any member acting in an unruly or disruptive manner, in contravention of the standing orders, may be removed from the meeting by action of the chair. The chair shall put such a motion to the meeting, which to be carried shall require the support of two-thirds of those present and voting. Any member who has been removed from two meetings during a 12-month period shall, with the approval of the appropriate Regional Director (General Secretary), be ineligible to attend meetings of this body for the next 12 months.
- iii. This branch accepts the principle of minimum quotas for women at all levels of representation within the Party and shall take steps to ensure that at least 50 per cent of any delegation shall be women and, where only one delegate is appointed, a woman shall hold the position at least every other year.
- iv. The conditions under which job shares are allowed are as follows:
 - a. A job can be shared by a maximum of two members.
 - b. Those members must be specifically nominated as a job share, by whatever system of nomination is being used by that Party unit.

- c. Chair cannot be a job share, nor can Treasurer, due to the statutory responsibilities of these roles.
- d. Any members sharing a role will only have the equivalent of one vote between them either as:
 - 1. One vote each, where only one member will be attending any meeting at any given time; or
 - 2. 0.5 votes each, where both members will be in attendance; or
 - 3. Both members agree to nominate one of them as the voting member.
- e. Where a man and a woman are job sharing, the woman would not count towards the minimum quota for women, unless a woman is part of another job share.
- f. For positions requiring access to data, a personal data form must be signed and returned by each job sharer.
- v. The general provisions of the constitution and rules of the Party shall apply to this body. No changes shall be made to the rules and standing orders of this organisation except at an annual or special meeting called for this purpose and carried with the support of two-thirds of the members present. No alteration shall be effective until it has received the approval of the appropriate officer of the NEC of the Party.

Rules for Branches

Clause II.

Name

The {} Branch of the Greenwich and Woolwich Constituency Labour Party (this branch)

Clause III.

Objects

1. The objects of this branch shall be to provide an opportunity for members to participate in the activities of the Party within its area with the approval of the Executive Committee of the CLP and in line with its agreed development action plan; to play their part in the Party's policy-making processes; to work together to run effective election and issue-based campaigns; to maximise the Party's engagement with organisations and individuals in the branch area and join with them in working for social justice. Work to meet these objectives shall always have priority in this branch's plans and meetings.
2. This branch shall cover such area as may be decided by the CLP and approved by the NEC in accordance with Chapter 7 Clause VI.1 above of the CLP's rules.

Clause IV.

Membership

1. Membership shall consist only of those individual members of the Party who are registered as electors in the area covered by this branch with exceptionally those individual members who are not eligible to be registered to vote but who reside in the area.
2. The conditions of membership for, method of enrolment of, and level of subscription payable by individual members in this branch shall be as laid down in the membership rules of the Party in Chapter 2.
3. A proportion of members' subscriptions may be allocated to this branch as determined by the CLP General Meeting, or by the Executive Committee if given such delegated authority by the General Meeting.

Clause V.

Officers and Executive Committee

1. The officers of this branch shall be chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer and women's officer (where established). At least two of the officers shall be women. This branch shall appoint two auditors and other functional officers as required.
2. This branch executive shall consist of the officers and, if required, not more than four other members.
3. Elections for these posts shall be held at the annual meeting.

Clause VI.

Meetings

1. The annual meeting of this branch shall be held in May of each year. In the event of the annual meeting not being held in that month for any reason it shall be held as soon thereafter as possible.
2. Seven days' notice of the annual meeting shall be given to the CLP and to all individual members in this branch.
3. This branch shall raise and hold funds to support activities within the objects of this branch. The financial year of this branch begin on 1 January and end on 31 December. The annual accounts of this branch shall be forwarded to the CLP Treasurer no later than the end of February each year so they can be incorporated into the CLP's Annual Statement of Accounts.

4. Where the CLP requires delegates to be appointed to the General Meeting of the CLP they shall be elected at the annual meeting, but may be changed as necessary at subsequent ordinary meetings. A minimum quota of 50 per cent women shall apply to these elected delegates. Unless otherwise decided, the term of a General Committee delegate elected at the annual meeting shall commence at the annual general meeting of the CLP.
5. Where the CLP requires delegates to be appointed to the General Meeting of the CLP and there are three or more members under the age of 27, this branch may appoint one of them as an additional Young Labour delegate to the CLP's General Meeting.
6. Ordinary meetings shall be held at such intervals and on such notice as may be laid down in the standing orders, or as determined by this branch from time to time. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of this branch executive or at the written request of 20 per cent of the members.
7. Notice of ordinary and special meetings shall be sent to all members a minimum of seven days in advance.

Clause VII.

Local government candidates

1. Local government candidates shall be selected in accordance with the rules for selection of local government candidates laid down in the rules of the Party and in the selection guidelines appended thereto along with any other regulations approved by the NEC (Chapter 5).

Clause VIII.

Miscellaneous

1. The general provisions of the constitution and rules of the Party shall apply to this branch.
2. This branch shall not enter into affiliation or give support financially or otherwise to any political party or organisation ancillary or subsidiary thereto declared ineligible for affiliation to the Party by the annual Party conference or by the NEC.
3. It shall be the duty of this branch to take all necessary steps to safeguard the constitution, programme and principles of the Party within its area. Any decision taken under this clause proposing the expulsion or exclusion of any individual from membership shall be in the form of a recommendation to the CLP which shall determine the matter in accordance with the disciplinary procedures laid out in the rules of the Party (Chapter 6).
4. For the avoidance of doubt, the Labour Party Financial Scheme recognises the assets of this branch as the assets of Greenwich and Woolwich CLP, of which they are a constituent part. It shall be the duty of this branch to co-operate with the CLP regarding the CLP's obligations under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. Should this branch fail to co-operate with the CLP, the NEC will not hesitate to take appropriate disciplinary action against individual members &/or suspend this branch.
5. The Officers of this Branch shall use all reasonable endeavours to procure that legal title to any leasehold and freehold property presently held by or in trust for this Branch by individual Trustees shall be transferred forthwith to Labour Party Nominees Limited to be held by it as Trustee for the relevant Constituency Labour Party upon the standard terms of Trust from time to time approved by the NEC.
6. Every CLP and BLP of the Party and as a pre-condition to continued membership thereto shall with effect from forthwith do and execute such acts and deeds to transfer the beneficial ownership of their respective freehold and leasehold properties legal title to which is presently held either by individuals or by Labour Party Nominees Limited to and for the benefit of The Labour Party subject only to the CLPs' and BLPs' existing rights of occupation thereof and to their continued receipt of all rents and profits there from and the right to license and to lease the said properties from time to time subject to the prior written consent of The NEC but subject to the CLPs' and BLPs' continuing respective obligations in respect of any borrowings secured on such properties. (Note- For clarity this rule is repeated in rules for CLPs)
7. Saving 5 and 6 above this branch shall not have the power to enter into property-related transactions or to employ staff
8. Should this branch be dissolved or cease to exist for any reason its assets, after the payment of any outstanding liabilities, shall be transferred to the CLP.

9. This branch shall adopt standing orders and may make such changes in the procedural rules and these rules as may be agreed by the CLP and the Regional Director (General Secretary) of the Party. Such changes shall not contravene the spirit or intention of the model rules as accepted by Party conference or the NEC.

Updated by John Galloway

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