



CONSTITUTION OF THE READING LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

2023 Model Constitution (England) (Localised)

Abstract

The text of this Constitution is that mandated for all local parties by the English Council of the Liberal Democrats, modified for local considerations and approved by South Central Region. It was adopted at the 2022 Reading Local Party AGM.



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The inaugural motion creating the Reading Liberal Democrats was passed at the IGM on the 17th of November, 2017. It is preserved here as a record of the Local Party's founding.

Inaugural Motion – Reading Liberal Democrats

Motion to constitute the Reading Liberal Democrats

Passed at Inaugural General Meeting, RISC Main Hall, London Street, 17th of November, 2017

The Liberal Democrats in the Borough of Reading,

NOTING the recent resolution of the South Central Regional Party to reconstitute local parties in Berkshire along local authority boundaries, and noting the recent resolution of the Greater Reading Liberal Democrats to fold, HEREBY RESOLVE:

1. To establish a new Local Party in the Borough of Reading in accordance with the party Constitution and as the successor within its area to the Greater Reading Liberal Democrats and its predecessors, to be known henceforth as the **Reading Liberal Democrats**.
2. That the Constitution of the Greater Reading Liberal Democrats, duly amended, be adopted as the Constitution of the Reading Liberal Democrats, subject to such amendments as may be agreed by this meeting, all such amendments being conditional upon approval by the Regional Party.
3. That the Reading Liberal Democrats shall be established as the Local Party for the Borough of Reading at 00:00 on Monday the 1st of January, 2018;

And,
4. That the principal objectives of the Reading Liberal Democrats shall be to:
 - a. deliver a Liberal Democrat majority on Reading Borough Council, and
 - b. ensure the election of Liberal Democrat Members of Parliament for the constituencies of Reading East and Reading West, through due cooperation with other local parties as may be determined by future arrangements.

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1. Name and Area

- 1.1 The name of the Local Party body governed by this Constitution shall be the **Reading Liberal Democrats**.
- 1.2 The area of the Local Party shall be coterminous with the local government Borough of Reading.

2. Definitions

In this Constitution:

"the Local Party" means the Reading Liberal Democrats;

"the Party Constitution" means the Constitutions of the Federal Party, the Liberal Democrats in England, and the South Central Regional Party;

"the Party" means the Liberal Democrats;

"the Regional Party" means the South Central Region Liberal Democrats;

"the Constituencies" means the Parliamentary Constituencies of Reading East and Reading West, and any successor constituencies that include any portion of the Borough of Reading;

"the Party's Youth and Student Organisation" means the Affiliated Organisation representing youth and students;

"Majority" at any meeting means the 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 or Metropolitan Mayor;

"ALDC" means the Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors and Campaigners.

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3. Objects

3.1 The objects of the Local Party shall be:

- (a) To be the successor within its area to the Reading Liberal Association, the Reading SDP Area Party, the Greater Reading Liberal Democrats, and for any other Liberal Democrat Local Parties in the Local Party area; 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 its locality.

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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, subregional 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 AO, 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.

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- 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.
- 4.8 If it suspects or becomes aware of grounds for which a member of the party in its area may be subject to disciplinary procedures, the Executive Committee shall notify the Standards Officer at Liberal Democrat Headquarters directly. The Local Party shall not initiate any form of investigation or action, other than reporting to the Standards Officer.

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5. Officers and Executive Committee

The Secretary shall, within seven (7) 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) Treasurer;
- (c) Vice-Chair;
- (d) Secretary;
- (e) Elections Officer;
- (f) Membership Development Officer;
- (g) Membership Engagement Officer;
- (h) Diversity Champion

The roles of Local Party Officers are set out in the Appendix.

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

Additional Single Responsibilities roles may be assigned to people recruited from among, or co-opted to, the Executive Committee, to perform the following one-off roles:

- (i) Data Officer / Connect Coordinator;
- (j) Youth and Student Coordinator
- (k) Press Officer(s);
- (l) Campaign Organiser(s) / Agent(s);
- (m) Fundraising Coordinator(s);
- (n) Chair(s) of sub-committees, where appropriate;
- (o) 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.

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- 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) Three (3) Ordinary Members, to be elected annually in the same manner as the Officers;
 - (c) The Party's Members of Parliament for the Constituencies covered by the Local Party, and Prospective Parliamentary Candidates, when in post;
 - (d) The Local Party's approved Parliamentary/Single Large Seat Agent or Organiser;
 - (e) A representative of the Police (Fire) and Crime Commissioner candidate's campaign team, when in post;
 - (f) The representative of the party's Council Group on Reading Borough Council, elected by and from such Councillors, or their elected leader;
 - (g) One (1) representative elected by and from the Party's local Youth and Student Organisation.
- 5.4 The Executive Committee may co-opt up to five (5) additional members, for a term expiring not later than December the 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)-(f) 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 Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be open to members of the Local Party, as space permits.

The Honorary President, when in post, is entitled to attend all meetings of the Executive Committee.

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- 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 by the Vice-Chair, if in post, or otherwise 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 Committee shall designate an Officer to deputise for the Chair if the Chair and Vice-Chair are both 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.

The Secretary shall give at least seven (7) days' notice of meetings to all members of the Executive Committee. One-third of its members shall form a quorum. A meeting of the Executive Committee 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 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 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 own 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, the Vice-Chair, in conjunction with 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.

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- 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 Police (Fire) and Crime Commissioners, with the intention of standing a candidate in every available seat;
 - v. using 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 after 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 full postal or electronic ballot following the meeting, in which all Local Party members are sent a ballot or a personal link to an electronic voting system within seven (7) days after the AGM, and which must be returned to the Returning Officer within twenty-one (21) days after the AGM.

The term of office of Officers and Ordinary Members shall be from the 1st of January following their election until the following 31st of December. They shall be eligible for re-election, save that the Chair shall not serve for more than three (3) consecutive one-year terms, and shall not be eligible for re-election as Chair for two (2) 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, except that the Office of Vice-Chair may be held by the holder of any Office listed in Section 5.1 (e)-(o). 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 voter's 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

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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 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 an 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.

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7. General Meetings

- 7.1 The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be on a day appointed by the Executive Committee, between the 1st of October and the 30th of November. The Executive Committee may postpone the AGM if it would conflict with a Parliamentary election in the Local Party area, or for another 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 a 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 calling 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 members at least twenty-one (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 a hybrid AGM. Such notice shall specify all business to be conducted at the meeting.

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- 7.4 The AGM may, on notice 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 (EGM) may be convened by the Officers, or by the Executive Committee; and shall, on receipt of a requisition signed by at least twenty (20) members of the Local Party (or one-fifth of the membership if less), be convened by the Secretary so as to be held within twenty-eight (28) days from the receipt of such requisition.

At least fourteen (14) days' written notice shall be given to all members. The EGM shall only consider business stated in the notice convening it. Failure to convene a validly requisitioned meeting within fourteen (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 (20) members (or one-fifth of the membership, if fewer) shall form a quorum at any general meeting. A quorum is not required in order 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 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 present 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.

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8. (Section not in use)

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9. Candidates for, and Elections to, Public Office

9.1 When it is necessary to select a Prospective Parliamentary or Single Large 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 thirty (30) members, the vote on selection for a Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for that constituency shall be by the members registered in that constituency.

Where a constituency falls both under the Local Party's own area and that of another Local Party, the Executive Committee shall liaise with those other Local Parties to establish a joint committee for the purposes of coordinating selection of Prospective Parliamentary Candidates and exercise of other duties under this procedure.

For any Parliamentary constituency with fewer than thirty (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 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 thirty (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 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.

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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/ward, the Local Party shall hold a general meeting in which all members in that area/ward may vote. The timetable shall be agreed by the Executive Committee.
- 9.4 The Elections Officer (or Data Officer, if in role) 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 website, 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 (commonly called a “tithe”) 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/ward in which the eligible electorate for voting in the selection does not exceed ten (10), the electorate shall be expanded to constitute the members living in the electoral area/ward, plus the members of the Executive Committee.
- 9.7 In any case in which time does not permit the holding of a general meeting, the Executive Committee 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

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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 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.

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10. Finance

- 10.1 The Local Party's accounting period shall be annual, starting on the 1st of January and ending on the 31st of December, each year.
- 10.2 The Treasurer shall keep, maintain for six (6) 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 PERA rules in the manner designated by the Federal Party no later than the 31st of 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 (2) 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

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cash movements both at Executive meetings and by a minimum of two (2) 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 the 15th of 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 three (3) Trustees to manage the asset on behalf of the Local Party who shall hold office for a period of five (5) years but be eligible for re-appointment by the Executive, and if at any time the number of trustees shall fall below three (3), 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 by the appointed trustees.

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

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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 six (6) months of receiving notice of the amendment not to accept it.
- 11.4 A copy of the constitution shall be deposited with the Secretary / Administrator of the Regional Party; and a copy 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.

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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 the 30th of 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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12. Appendix

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 (such as a Data Officer / Connect Coordinator), ensure compliance with data protection law,
 - e. Ensure compliance with the 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,

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- 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. Encourage members to move on to Direct Debit payments,
 - d. Secure accurate records of local party membership in the Federal Party's central membership system,
 - e. Inform the Executive Committee of new members, in accordance with Section 4.4 of this Constitution.
- vi. The role of the Membership Engagement Officer is to:
 - a. Ensure there is a range of events, social and political to keep members engaged (in co-operation with the Secretary),
 - b. Check regularly for new members, welcome them and organise new member interviews (in co-operation with the Membership Development Officer),
 - c. Ensure there is a range of campaigning events to keep members active in campaigns (in co-operation with the Elections Officer),
 - d. Produce a regular members' newsletter with the support of the Executive.
- vii. 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

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(in co-operation with the Data Officer / Connect Coordinator, if the ASR has been assigned),

- e. Provide support to the Chair in the selection of Parliamentary candidates.
- viii. 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 groups in the area of the Local Party.