

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS FOR ELECTORAL REFORM – CONSTITUTION

1. TITLE

- 1.1. The Group shall be known as Liberal Democrats for Electoral Reform, hereinafter referred to as "the Group".

2. AIMS

- 2.1. To act as a forum for those wishing to promote the cause of electoral reform within the Liberal Democrats.
- 2.2. To promote the cause of electoral reform within the Liberal Democrats through influencing party policy, lobbying the party leadership and educating party members.
- 2.3. To promote the Liberal Democrats externally as being at the forefront of the wider electoral reform movement and to work with other organisations to promote our aims.
- 2.4. To promote our aims both within the party and externally, being to secure an electoral system which delivers maximum power to the voter, fair representation of individuals and communities, elected members that are genuinely accountable to electors and a representative body that proportionately reflects the wishes of the electorate.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1. Membership of the Group shall be open to any current member of the Liberal Democrats, provided that they subscribe to the Group's stated aims, on payment of the prescribed annual subscription.
- 3.2. Individuals or Organisations who are not members of the Liberal Democrats but who support the cause of electoral reform may become Associate members, subject to their approval by the Executive Committee. Associate members may attend Group events but may not vote at any Group General Meetings or other meetings, nor may they be act as Officers or Ordinary Members of the Executive Committee. Associate membership may be withdrawn at any time at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- 3.3. Hereinafter, "members" means full Group members excluding Associate members.

4. AFFILIATIONS

- 4.1. The Group shall seek and maintain the status of an Associated Organisation within the Liberal Democrats.
- 4.2. The Group may also affiliate to other organisations within the Liberal Democrats, and to external organisations that promote our aims.

5. GOVERNANCE

- 5.1. The governance of the Group shall lie with its membership through General Meetings; between General Meetings, and subject to the decisions of those meetings, the general and financial business of the Group shall be controlled and carried on by the Executive Committee.
- 5.2. Only members of the Group who are current members at the date when a General Meeting is called shall be eligible to vote, or to stand for election, at that General Meeting.
- 5.3. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Group shall be held each year between the 1st September and 30th November at a date and venue determined by the Executive Committee.

- 5.4. The AGM may also be called by a written requisition received by the Secretary, signed by at least one current member, if an AGM has not been held during or since the preceding calendar year.
- 5.5. The business of the AGM shall include:
 - 5.5.1. The receipt of reports from the Executive Committee;
 - 5.5.2. Consideration for approval of the examined annual accounts together with the determination of the annual subscription for the ensuing year;
 - 5.5.3. Acceptance and close of nominations for the election of Officers and Ordinary Members of the Executive Committee;
 - 5.5.4. The appointment of an examiner of the Group's accounts for the ensuing year;
 - 5.5.5. Discussion of the activities of the Group.
 - 5.5.6. Debate and voting on any properly submitted and relevant policy motion.
- 5.6. Notice of the AGM shall be sent to all members at least twenty-one days in advance together with copies of the proposed agenda, examined accounts, and requests for nominations for all Executive Committee places.
- 5.7. An Additional General Meeting may be called, with not less than fourteen days' notice, either by the Executive Committee or by a written requisition received by the Secretary signed by at least 20 members or one quarter of the current membership. Any summons to an Additional General Meeting shall specify the reason(s) for which it is being called and the precise business to be transacted, which shall be the only business of that meeting. Members unable to attend shall be encouraged to appraise the Secretary of their views on the matter to be considered.

6. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 6.1. The Executive Committee shall comprise the following Officers: Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary; together with up to five Ordinary Members of the committee.
- 6.2. These Officers and Ordinary Members of the committee shall be elected by the general membership of the Group. Each nomination for election to the Executive Committee must be submitted to the Secretary in advance of the AGM, or to the AGM, by two members after obtaining the nominee's consent.
- 6.3. In the case of non-contested elections:
 - 6.3.1. the nominee or nominees shall each be subject to election by a simple majority of those members present and voting at the AGM, immediately after close of nominations for the relevant position;
 - 6.3.2. the elections shall take effect at the start of the seventh day after the AGM.
- 6.4. In the case of contested elections:
 - 6.4.1. the Executive Committee shall appoint a Returning Officer, who shall not be a candidate in any of the contested elections, and who shall be responsible for the preparation and distribution of ballot papers, their receipt and counting on return and the declaration of the results;
 - 6.4.2. the elections shall be decided by a secret postal ballot of all Group members, by the Single Transferable Vote method, to take place within six weeks of the date of the AGM;
 - 6.4.3. each election shall take effect from the declaration of the relevant result by the Returning Officer.
- 6.5. The terms of office of Officers and Ordinary Members shall run until the relevant elections at the following AGM take effect.
- 6.6. The Chair shall be eligible for election to that position no more than three times consecutively.

- 6.7 The Executive Committee may fill any vacancy occurring among its Officers or Ordinary Members.
- 6.8 The elected Officers and Ordinary Members may also annually invite up to three additional, Co-opted Members to join the Committee, as voting members. Co-options must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the elected Executive, and are effective until the election of Ordinary Members at the following AGM takes effect.
- 6.9. The Executive Committee shall appoint one of its members as Vice Chair.

7. PRESIDENT

- 7.1. The Executive Committee may nominate an Honorary President or Honorary Co-Presidents to be approved individually on an annual basis at the AGM, by at least two thirds of those members present and voting.
- 7.2. The Honorary Co-President or Co-Presidents are entitled to attend (but not to vote at) all meetings of the Executive Committee.

8. FINANCE

- 8.1. The finances of the Group shall be managed by the Treasurer subject to regular reports to, and guidance by, the Executive Committee.
- 8.2. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer and the Committee to ensure that the funds of the Group are utilised solely in accordance with the Group's stated aims and that the Group never has debts beyond its available resources.
- 8.3. A legitimate use of the Group's funds shall be to reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred by Officers, Ordinary and Co-opted Members, in carrying out duties laid on them by the Committee.
- 8.4. The group's financial year shall be the calendar year.

9. SUBMISSION OF POLICY MOTIONS

- 9.1. Policy motions will be debated if relevant to the objectives of LDER, deemed by the Chair to be in order and received by the Secretary in time to be included in the Calling Notice for the relevant AGM.
- 9.2. Emergency Motions will be accepted up to the start of the AGM if deemed in order by the Chair and including something that was not apparent at the time of the Calling Notice.

10. WINDING UP

- 10.1. In the event of it being considered by the Executive Committee that the Group is no longer viable a Special General Meeting shall be called to consider a proposal that the Group shall be wound up and its remaining assets would pass to the Liberal Democrats. Such a proposal must receive the support of at least two thirds of those members present to be passed.

11. AMENDMENT OF THIS CONSTITUTION

- 11.1. This constitution may only be amended by a decision of a General Meeting after details of the proposed change have been given in the notice calling the meeting and an opportunity afforded to any members unable to attend to submit their views to the Secretary for report to the meeting. Any change must then be agreed by a vote of at least two thirds of those present and voting.

Version	Author	Status
1	C Allard	Draft for comment
2	C Allard	Adopted by a resolution of the Inaugural AGM held on 10 March 2012
3	C Allard	Amended by a resolution at the AGM held on 18 September 2016
4	P Hirst	Amended by a resolution at the AGM held on 27 October 2020