From:	FOI
To:	[redacted]
Subject:	FOI 161/18 - Constitutions of major parties 2018 - response
Date:	09 November 2018 09:24:00
Attachments:	2016-09-Liberal Democrats-Constitution.pdf Conservative and Unionist Party constitution.pdf

Dear [redacted]

Our Ref: FOI 161/18

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission dated 15 October 2018.

The Commission aims to respond to requests for information promptly and has done so within the statutory timeframe of twenty working days.

Your request is in bold below followed by our response.

1. **Please could you provide me with the latest editions of the constitutions/rulebooks of the Conservative Party, Scottish National Party and the Liberal Democrat Party. Please provide them as separate PDF files.**

Our response is as follows:

We hold some of the information you have requested.

- **Please find enclosed the constitution we hold for the Conservative and Unionist Party and the Liberal Democrats.**

- **We do not hold a copy of the Scottish National Party constitution.**

I trust that this information satisfies your request. The Commission strives to be an open, transparent authority, but in some circumstances we cannot responsibly release requested information, and we ask for your understanding in this regard.

If you are not satisfied with this response, please note that the Commission operates a review procedure, details of which can be found on the Commission website at: http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/about-us/freedom-of-information-requests/how-do-I-make-an-foi-request

Please also note that if you have exhausted all internal Commission review procedures and you are still not satisfied you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner. Details of this procedure can be found on the ICO website: https://ico.org.uk/

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]
Access to Information Officer (FOI and DPA)

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The Federal Constitution of the Liberal Democrats



Revisions

The Constitution was last amended in September 2016.

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September 2016

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The Constitution of the Federal Party

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As amended, Federal Conference, Brighton, September 2016

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PREAMBLE

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

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

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

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

Our responsibility for justice and liberty cannot be confined by national boundaries; we are committed to fight poverty, oppression, hunger, ignorance, disease and aggression wherever they occur and to promote the free movement of ideas, people, goods and services. Setting aside national sovereignty when necessary, we will work with other countries towards an equitable and peaceful international order and a durable system of common security. Within the European

Community we affirm the values of federalism and integration and work for unity based on these principles. We will contribute to the process of peace and disarmament, the elimination of world poverty and the collective safeguarding of democracy by playing a full and constructive role in international organisations which share similar aims and objectives. These are the conditions of liberty and social justice which it is the responsibility of each citizen and the duty of the state to protect and enlarge. The Liberal Democrats consist of women and men working together for the achievement of these aims.

ARTICLE 1: Name, Objects and Succession

1.1 The name of the Party shall be the Liberal Democrats. It may be additionally known in Welsh as Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol. It is referred to in this Constitution as "the Party".

1.2 The objectives of the Party shall be:

(a) to be the successor to the Liberal Party and the Social Democratic Party ("the Former Parties");
(b) to seek to achieve the objects set forth in the Preamble to this Constitution; and
(c) in order to achieve such objects, to secure the election of Liberal Democrats as Members of Parliament, UK Members of the European Parliament and members of local and other elected public authorities.

ARTICLE 2: Provisions Relating To The Constitution

2.1 The Party shall be a federation constituted by the Scottish Liberal Democrats, the Welsh Liberal Democrats/Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru and the Liberal Democrats in England (the State Parties).
Regional Parties in England may seek recognition as State Parties (any such recognition requiring a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the Conference).
The Federal Conference may, upon the recommendation of the Federal Board, resolve to establish and/or recognise a State Party in Northern Ireland.

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

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

2.3 The following functions are reserved to the Federal Party (subject to the rights of consultation afforded to State parties and others by this Constitution):
(a) the determination of policy in the areas specified in Article 8;
(b) the Party's overall strategy;
(c) overall preparations for Parliamentary and European Parliamentary Elections;
(d) the overall presentation, image and media relations of the Party; and
(e) international relationships.

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

2.4 The provisions of this Constitution shall be implemented with regard to the principle that men and women shall have an equal opportunity of participating at every level of the Party subject to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 (the Act).

2.5 Whenever this Constitution provides for the election by party members to a Federal Committee, not less than 40% or, if 40% is not a whole number, the whole number nearest to but not exceeding 40% of those elected shall self-identify as men or non-binary people, and self-identify as women or non-binary people respectively.

2.6 Whenever this Constitution provides for the election by party members of ten or more persons to any Federal Committee or other Federal body:
(a) not less than 10% or, if 10% is not a whole number, the whole number nearest to but not exceeding 10% shall be from underrepresented ethnic backgrounds;
(b) not less than 10% or, if 10% is not a whole number, the whole number nearest to but not exceeding 10% shall be disabled people; and
(c) not less than 10% or, if 10% is not a whole number, the whole number nearest to but not exceeding 10% shall be people from under-represented sexual orientations and gender identities, including trans and non-binary identities.

2.7 The provisions of this clause shall not prevent places being filled if diversity requirements are not met due to insufficient candidates with the stated characteristic being nominated. Such

elections shall take place from a common list and in accordance with the election rules made by the Federal Board as from time to time in force. Where this Constitution or any Standing Orders made thereunder appear to conflict with the Act, the provisions of the Act shall prevail.

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

2.9 Any candidate for election to public office standing as a representative of the Party must be a current member of the Party.

2.10 This Constitution may only be altered:

(a) by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting at the Federal Conference;

(b) where any such alteration has been submitted in accordance with the Standing Orders of that Conference by the Federal Board or any other persons or bodies entitled to submit motions or amendments under Article 8.6 and notified to Local Parties at least six weeks in advance; and

(c) in the case of any alteration to the relative powers and functions of the Federal Party and the State Parties or to this paragraph (c), it is passed by the internal procedures of each State Party.

ARTICLE 3: Membership

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

(b) As a Member of the Liberal Democrats, you must treat others with respect and must not bully, harass, or intimidate any Party member, member of Party staff, member of the Parliamentary staff, Party volunteer, or member of the public. Such behaviour will considered to be bringing the Party into disrepute.

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

(a) a Local Party in the area of which the member lives, works or studies (or, with its consent, another Local Party);

(b) a Specified Associated Organisation representing youth and/or students; or

(c) a State Party in accordance with its internal procedures (and so that any overseas member in a location where there is no Local Party may become a member via a State Party designated by the Federal Board to act as agent for the Federal Party).

(d) any Specified Associated Organisation or Associated Organisation that the Federal Board considers ought to be entitled to enrol members of the Party.

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

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

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

(i) where, in any part of the United Kingdom, provision is not made in any of these respects by the State Party concerned, Articles 3.5 to 3.7 shall apply;

(ii) a right of appeal pursuant to Article 21 of the Constitution, once any procedures internal to the State Party concerned have been exhausted, cannot be excluded in relation to the interpretation of Article 3.1 of the Constitution; and

(iii) each state party shall give notice to the other state parties of any revocation of membership.

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

(a) where the enrolling body is a Local Party, that Local Party or, where the enrolling body is not a Local Party, an appropriate Local Party in terms of Article 3.2 (a); and

(b) any applicable State Party and/or Regional Party; and

(c) the Federal Party.

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

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

Any person aggrieved by such a refusal shall, subject to having exhausted the internal procedures of the relevant State Party, have a right of appeal pursuant to Article 21 on any matter relating to the interpretation of this Constitution.

3.7 Membership may be revoked by a Local Party (or, where appropriate, a Specified Associated Organisation which acted as the enrolling body) or a State Party on one or more of the following grounds:
(a) material disagreement, evidenced by conduct, with the fundamental values and objectives of the Party;
(b) conduct which has brought, or is likely to bring, the Party into disrepute;
(c) standing against the candidate of the Party in any Parliamentary or European Parliamentary election;
(d) standing against the candidate of the Party in any local authority election; and
(e) membership of or support for another political party in Great Britain.

Membership shall not be revoked unless the member has been notified of the grounds on which revocation is to be considered and has been given a reasonable opportunity to reply. Where paragraph (c), (d) or (e) of this Article 3.7 applies, membership shall be automatically and immediately suspended, and in other cases of urgency the body with powers of revocation may suspend membership while revocation is being considered. Any person aggrieved by such a revocation shall, subject to having exhausted the internal procedures of the relevant State Party, have a right of appeal pursuant to Article 21 on any question relating to the interpretation of this Constitution.

3.8 A register of members shall be maintained by each State Party. A register of members resident outside Great Britain shall be maintained by a State Party designated by the Federal Board to act as agent for the Federal Party. Any body entitled to maintain a list of members may use the list for its own internal purposes. The Federal Party shall have direct access to such lists. Any body holding or having access to such lists shall ensure that the information contained in them is not disclosed to any person other than for the proper purposes of the Party. Party bodies shall comply with the directives of the Federal Board in relation to the Party's Data Protection Act registration.

ARTICLE 4: Local Parties

4.1 There shall be Local Parties so far as possible throughout Great Britain. Local Parties may be formed in Northern Ireland or places outside the United Kingdom. Save as provided for in Articles 4.2, 4.3, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, and 4.12, all matters relating to the formation, operation, suspension or dissolution of Local Parties shall be determined by the Constitutions of the State Parties or by rules made under them, except that where, anywhere in Great Britain, provision is not made in any of these respects by the State Party concerned the relevant parts of the following Articles 4.2 to 4.8 shall apply.

4.2 No Local Party shall be formed unless it will, on formation, have at least 30 members.

4.3 Save as hereinafter provided, each Local Party in Great Britain shall contain one parliamentary constituency. The members in each of two or more adjacent parliamentary constituencies may agree to combine into a single Local Party, in which case the combined Local Party shall be deemed for all the purposes of this Constitution to be a Local Party, save that:

(a) the selection of a prospective parliamentary candidate and the adoption of a parliamentary candidate shall be made:
  (i) where for any constituency in a Local Party there are 30 or more members, by those members; and
  (ii) where for any constituency within a Local Party there are less than 30 members, the Local Party Constitution shall specify whether all the members of the Local Party shall participate or only those from the constituency concerned.

4.4 A Local Party containing two or more constituencies may divide into new Local Parties, provided that none of them will have less than 30 members.

4.5 The objects of a Local Party in Great Britain shall be to be the successor to the Former Parties in its area and to promote and support the values and objects of the Party in the constituency or constituencies which it contains and in particular, through its members:

(a) to secure the election of Liberal Democrats as Members of Parliament, UK Members of the European Parliament and members of local and other elected public authorities;
(b) to admit and actively to recruit new members of the Party and encourage members to renew their membership;
(c) to participate in the formulation of the policy of the Party;
(d) to play a full part in the democratic processes of the Party;
(e) to play a full part in the campaigning activities of the Party at all levels;
(f) to campaign and work with local people to achieve the objectives set out in the Preamble to this Constitution; and
(g) to help all local people, without regard to party or any other factor, to secure their rights and to protect them against oppression.

4.6 Each Local Party shall have a constitution, which must comply with the following principles:

(a) the objects shall include those set forth in Article 4.5 of this Constitution;
(b) it must give effect to the provisions of Article 3 of this Constitution;
(c) all elections shall be in accordance with the election rules made under Article 8.4 of this Constitution;

(d) there must be an annual general meeting, and provision for the calling of other general meetings by the executive committee and by requisition of the members;
(e) proper accounts and accounting records must be kept as required by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and must be audited and delivered to the Election Commission as required by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, and submitted with an independent report to the annual general meeting for approval; and
(f) it must ensure compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.

4.7 The constitution of a Local Party is subject to this Constitution and to the constitution of the relevant State Party and, in the event of any conflict between them, this Constitution or as the case may be the constitution of the relevant State Party shall prevail.

4.8 A Local Party shall be suspended if its membership has remained below 30 for a continuous period of six months, and shall remain suspended until its membership reaches 30. A Local Party which has been suspended on this ground shall be dealt with by the relevant State Party in accordance with its internal procedures, and shall not while suspended have the rights conferred upon Local Parties by this Constitution.

4.9 The rights of a Local Party under this Constitution may be suspended by the relevant State Party in accordance with its internal procedures (or, in the case of a Local Party outside Great Britain, by the Federal Board), if it is not adhering to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, this (or its own) Constitution or if events have taken place or are about to take place which are or may be seriously detrimental to the Local Party or to the Party as a whole.

4.10 The constitution of a Local Party outside Great Britain and any amendment thereto shall be subject to approval by the Federal Board. Such approval may be withheld if the constitution or amendment:
(a) contravenes the principles set out in Article 4.6 or in the Preamble to this Constitution or is otherwise in conflict with any of the provisions of this Constitution; or
(b) is unworkable or defective, or omits or deletes provisions necessary to the proper functioning of the Local Party.

4.11 Before suspending a Local Party outside Great Britain, the Federal Board shall draw the attention of the Local Party to the grounds on which it is proposed to take this action, and shall give the Local Party a reasonable time to answer any allegations and/or take any necessary corrective action. A Local Party outside Great Britain which is suspended under Article 4.9 may appeal from that decision as provided by Article 21.

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

ARTICLE 5: Party Strategy

5.1 The Federal Board shall have the responsibility periodically, and at least once per Parliament, for preparing a document outlining the Party's strategy, in conjunction with the Leader's political strategy, for submission for debate and agreement by Conference.

5.2 The Federal Board shall publicise a timetable for the production of the strategy and its submission for debate by Conference. In preparing the strategy, the Federal Board shall consult widely within the party, including in particular the Parliamentary Parties (as defined in Article 9), all relevant Federal Committees, the State Parties and Specified Associated Organisations.

5.3 The Federal Board shall provide a report on its implementation of the strategy over the preceding year and its plans for implementing the strategy over the coming year, including all relevant activities and plans of the Federal Policy Committee, Federal Conference Committee, Federal Finance & Resources Committee, the Federal Communications & Elections Committee, the Federal People Development Committee and the Federal Audit & Scrutiny Committee, as part of its report to each conference following that in which the strategy is agreed.

5.4 The Federal Board shall have the right to receive a report from the Federal Policy Committee and Federal Conference Committee, not more frequently than twice a year, on each committee's contribution to the implementation of the strategy, including its response to any recommendations of the Federal Board, including, as appropriate, reasons for not implementing any such recommendation.

ARTICLE 6: The Federal Board

6.1. There shall be a Federal Board ("FB"), which shall be responsible for directing, co-ordinating and overseeing the implementation of the Party's strategy and the work of the Federal Party.

6.2. It shall consist of:

(i) voting members:

(a) the President, who shall act as its Chair;
(b) the Leader or, if the Leader so decides or the post of Leader is vacant, the Deputy Leader;
(c) a Vice-Chair of the Federal Policy Committee and a Chair of the Federal Conference Committee, each of whom may nominate a substitute;
(d) the Chair of any other Committee established under Article 7.1;
(e) three representatives of the Parliamentary Group as set out in Article 16.4;
(f) one principal local authority councillor, elected by principal local authority councillors of the Party from among their own number;
(g) one person elected by the Specified Associated Organisation representing youth and/or students from among their own number;
(h) one more person than the total number of voting members elected or appointed under paragraphs (a) to (g) above, who shall be party members elected by all members of the Party except that persons who, at the date of the close of nominations for election under this paragraph, are members of Parliamentary Parties set out in Article 16 shall not be eligible to be candidates for election under this paragraph. Casual vacancies amongst this group shall be filled in accordance with the election regulations;
(i) the Chair of the English Liberal Democrats, the Convenor of the Scottish Liberal Democrats, the Chair of the NEC of the Welsh Liberal Democrats, and the Chair of any other State Party recognised under Article 2.1 of this Constitution, each of whom may nominate a substitute; and
(j) one member elected by all members of each State Party according to their own procedures.

(ii) non-voting members:

(a) the Chief Whip of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons or their substitute from within the Parliamentary Group as defined in Article 16.4;
(b) the Federal Treasurer;
(c) the Federal Chief Executive;
(d) one representative of the staff employed by the Federal Party and by the Parliamentary Parties and elected by such staff; and
(e) a representative of local government jointly agreed between ALDC and the Liberal Democrat Group on the Local Government Association under a protocol agreed by both. In the absence of an agreed protocol, the Federal Board shall determine the method of appointment.

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

6.3. The Federal Board shall meet at least four times in each calendar year.

6.4. Following each election for the European Parliament and the House of Commons, the Federal Board shall commission a report on the Party's work in that election and shall report to the Party on the outcomes of that review. It shall report on its work, including the work of all committees and other bodies responsible to it, to each meeting of the Conference.

6.5. The Federal Board shall have power to establish a company limited by guarantee to acquire, hold and dispose of such assets of the Federal Party as the Federal Board may from time to time direct and to undertake such work as the Federal Board may from time to time decide. The Federal Board shall have power from time to time to appoint and remove the directors of such a company, who will otherwise be appointed for a period of five years, provided always that the Federal Board shall not so appoint any person holding any public office or office in the Party which may be incompatible therewith. The Federal Board may by resolution indemnify the directors from any liability arising from decisions by the Party. The directors shall present an Annual Report to Conference. Any such company shall oversee the Party's Major Donations Protocol and the operation of the Party's Legacy Fund, ensuring that the wishes of testators are fully respected and in line with direction by the Federal Board.

6.6. The Federal Board shall have power, after appropriate consultations and subject to ratification by the Conference, to make and from time to time vary rules as to:

(a) membership, subject to the provisions under Article 3;
(b) criteria for Associated Organisation and Specified Associated Organisation status and for the regular review of bodies holding such status;
(c) party elections, with any such rules providing for the use of STV (or, in the case of a single person vacancy, the Alternative Vote) and the secret ballot;
(d) compliance with any statutory or regulatory provisions that are relevant to the party's activities, including the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act and the Data Protection Act; and
(e) such other matters as it may consider necessary or desirable to give effect to or supplement the provisions of this Constitution, including those set out in Article 20.

6.7. The right of staff to join or not to join, an appropriate Trades Union shall be recognised.

6.8. The Federal Board may, at the request of the Federal Policy Committee or of its own accord, and having considered the financial and administrative implications, resolve to conduct a consultative ballot of all members of the Party on any fundamental question where, in its judgment, the values and objectives of the Party are in issue or it is otherwise in the essential interests of the Party. Such a consultative ballot shall be in a bilingual form for all members of the Welsh Liberal Democrats.

ARTICLE 7: Committees of the Federal Party

7.1. The Committees of the Federal Party shall be the Federal Board, the Federal Policy Committee, the Federal Conference Committee, the Federal People Development Committee, the Federal Finance & Resources Committee, the Federal Communications & Elections Committee, the Federal International Relations Committee and the Federal Audit & Scrutiny Committee. Each Committee may appoint one or more Vice Chairs to stand in for the Chair and to undertake such other tasks as the Committee may from time to time provide.

7.2. No person elected by all members of the Party to a Committee of the Federal Party may simultaneously be elected by the same method to any other such Committee.

7.3. Any member of a Committee who does not attend a meeting for 6 months without good reason shall be deemed to have resigned from that Committee.

7.4. The term of office for each Committee of the Federal Party shall last for three years. All elections to Federal Committees by party members and other Federal Committees shall be governed by this term of office. It shall commence from the first meeting of that Committee following a triennial election. The first meeting of that Committee shall take place no later than three months after the declaration of the results in the triennial election.

7.5. The Federal Finance & Resources Committee, the Federal Communications & Elections Committee, the Federal People Development Committee, the Federal International Relations Committee and the Federal Audit & Scrutiny Committee shall be accountable to the Federal Board and will report as required by the Federal Board. The Federal Board shall also have regard to the desirability of establishing a subcommittee responsible for the co-ordination of the Party's activities.

7.6. The Federal Board, the Federal Conference Committee and the Federal Policy Committee shall each table a written report at each meeting of the Conference, with time given at the conference to debate each report. All other Committees shall report to the Conference as part of the Federal Board's report.

7.7. Each Committee of the Federal Party shall make regulations to govern the operation of the Committee and anybody accountable to it. Such regulations must include:

(a) a transparency policy which sets out when discussions of the Committee, and papers submitted to it, shall be confidential and which keeps confidentiality to a necessary minimum;

(b) provisions for reports to be made to party members after the completion of each full meeting of the Committee, including the responsibility of the Chair to report on the meeting and the Committee's work in a manner deemed practical by the Federal Chief Executive within 14 days of the conclusion of the said meeting;

(c) a conflict of interests policy, which shall include the requirement for all members of any Committee or other body governed by this Constitution or by regulations made thereto to complete a Declaration of Interest in a prescribed form. It shall also require any member and any other person attending a meeting to declare any interest which might affect or be seen to affect their contribution to the work of that body, and in particular to declare any actual or potential conflict of interest or loyalty;

(d) provision for any sub-committees or other groups established under Article 7.10 also to have regulations covering the above three areas; and

(e) provision for:

(i) the election by the committee of a chair (unless specified elsewhere in this constitution) and, if the committee so chooses, one or more Vice Chairs;

(ii) limits on the number of terms officers of the committee can serve sequentially (this provision does not apply to the Leader, Deputy Leader or President).

7.8. The Federal Chief Executive shall make arrangements for the attendance of Party staff at meetings of Federal Committees who shall support the Committees and report to the Federal Chief Executive's management team.

7.9. The Federal Chief Executive shall be responsible for maintaining and making available to party members an up-to-date copy of this Constitution and any regulations made under any Article in it. At their discretion, this may also include rules from other parts of the Party.

7.10. Each Committee shall have the power by regulation to establish sub-committees and other groups which shall be accountable to it. They may also by mutual agreement and by agreed regulations establish such subcommittees or other groups jointly with other Committees and may include representatives of State Parties on such bodies subject to their agreement.

7.11. Any regulation establishing a sub-committee or other group shall normally set out terms of reference for that body, including the purpose of that body; its duties and powers; its accountability and reporting arrangements; its members and chair; any term limits for the body and its members; and administrative arrangements including where appropriate the member of staff responsible for providing support and reporting to the Federal Chief Executive and management team.

7.12. In all their work, committees and other bodies shall have full regard for the diversity of the Party, including in any appointments, co-options and quotas agreed by the Party. The chair of each such committee and body shall be responsible for promoting such diversity.

ARTICLE 8: The Policy-Making Process and Conference

8.1 The Federal Party shall determine the policy of the Party in those areas which might reasonably be expected to fall within the remit of the federal institutions in the context of a federal United Kingdom.

8.2 The State Parties shall by their respective internal procedures determine the policy of the Party on all other issues, except that any State Party may confer upon the Federal Party power to determine policy in any specified area or areas. Policy determined in this way by the Federal Party will not override the policy of those State Parties which have not conferred policy-making power in this area on the Federal Party. Where a State Party has conferred this power upon the Federal Party it shall not itself engage in the determination of policy in the specified area or areas until such time as the power has been revoked by it.

8.3 Any body that is not entitled to make policy on any specific issue may discuss and express its views upon it on a consultative basis.

8.4 The Federal Policy Committee (FPC), at its own decision or at the instruction of the Federal Conference, may undertake the commissioning, preparation, publication, circulation, and submission to Conference of policy papers, including options in cases where consultation has shown there to be substantial disagreement within the Party. Policy papers shall normally be preceded by consultation papers which shall set out policy options.

8.5 In the course of developing policy the FPC shall:

(a) consider policy proposals submitted to it by State Parties, Regional Parties in England, Local Parties, Associated Organisations, Specified Associated Organisations and individual members of the Party; together with the responses to the consultations carried out according to Article 8.5 (b); and

(b) ensure consultation generally with, including making consultation papers available to members, State Parties, Regional Parties in England, Local Parties and Associated Organisations. Such consultations shall include responses to references under Article 8.7.

8.6 Policy motions and amendments (including emergency motions and amendments) may be submitted for debate by Federal Conference (in accordance with its Standing Orders) by the Federal Policy Committee, party members, State Parties in accordance with their internal procedures, Regional Parties in England, Local Parties and Specified Associated Organisations. Amendments to motions accompanying policy papers may be submitted in the same way.

8.7 In order to ensure that all aspects of a proposed policy are fully considered, the FPC may request any motion before a Federal Conference to be referred to the next meeting of the Conference. The FPC shall, before such meeting, circulate its reasons for acting under this Article and its comments on the relevant motion and any amendments thereto accepted for debate.

8.8 Subject to the foregoing procedure, all Federal policy papers and motions approved by the Federal Conference shall thereby become the policy of the Federal Party.

8.9 The FPC shall prepare (and from time to time revise) statements as to the policy of the Party as produced by the foregoing process together with the provisions of Article 10.1.

8.10 The Conference shall consist of party members.

8.11 The Standing Orders of the Conference shall provide for consultative sessions of the Conference at which any member of the Party may speak, but such provisions shall not prejudice the right of the chair of a session to select speakers.

8.12 The Conference shall normally meet twice a year, for a week in the early autumn and a weekend in the early spring; additional meetings may be summoned upon the requisition of the Federal Board or the Federal Policy Committee or the Conference itself or 200 members, in not fewer than 20 local parties. A meeting may be cancelled by the Federal Board in exceptional circumstances.

8.13 Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the Conference shall be the sovereign representative body of the Party, and shall have power to determine the policy of the Party in accordance with and subject to the provisions of Article 8.

8.14 There shall be a business session at each Conference, to which the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons, the Parliamentary party in the House of Lords, the Parliamentary Party in the European Parliament, the Federal Board, the Federal Policy Committee and the Federal Conference Committee shall report. The business session at the autumn meeting shall constitute the Annual General Meeting of the Party, before which the Annual Report and Accounts shall additionally be laid. The Conference shall have the right to approve or reject each such report, or to refer it back with recommendations. Business motions may be submitted to the Federal Conference by the Federal Board, the Federal Conference Committee or any other persons or bodies entitled to submit motions or amendments under Article 8.6.

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

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

ARTICLE 9: The Federal Conference Committee

9.1 There shall be a Federal Conference Committee ("FCC") which shall be responsible for organising the Conference. It shall be subject to the control of the Federal Board in matters of financial and other resources. Standing Orders for the Conference shall be made by the Conference Committee subject to the approval of the Conference.

9.2 The Conference Committee shall consist of:

(i) Voting members:

(a) the President;
(b) the Chief Whip of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons or their substitute from within the Parliamentary Group as defined in Article 16.4;
(c) one representative of each State Party, elected by its internal procedures (State Parties may appoint a substitute member should the elected member be unable to attend a specific meeting of the FCC);
(d) one person elected by the Federal Board from amongst its members;
(e) two persons elected by the Federal Policy Committee from amongst its members;
(f) one person elected by the Federal Communications & Elections Committee from amongst its members;
(g) one person elected by the Federal People Development Committee from amongst its members; and
(h) 12 persons elected by party members. Casual vacancies amongst this group shall be filled in accordance with the election regulations.

(ii) Non-voting members:

(a) the Federal Chief Executive;
(b) one representative of the Federal Finance & Resources Committee; and
(c) one representative of the staff employed by the Federal Party or by the Parliamentary Parties and elected by such staff.

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

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

ARTICLE 10: The Federal Policy Committee

10.1 There shall be a Federal Policy Committee ("FPC"), which shall be responsible to the Federal Conference and shall have the duty of researching and developing policy and of overseeing the policy-making process in accordance with and subject to the provisions of Article 8. It shall also be responsible for:

(a) presenting the views of the Party to outside bodies, including political parties and groupings in the European Community and elsewhere;
(b) consulting outside bodies in relation to proposed policies of the Federal Party;
(c) approving official policy publications of the Federal Party;
(d) making interim policy on topical issues, subject always to this policy remaining the policy of the Federal Party only if it is approved by the first appropriate meeting of Conference on the basis of a motion to approve a report covering all such interim policy submitted to it by the FPC; and
(e) making detailed policy of the kind needed to implement the principles and broad policy outlines contained in a policy paper or motion that has already been adopted by Conference.

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

10.2 The FPC shall consist of the following:

(i) voting members:

(a) the Leader or Deputy Leader, who shall act as its Chair;
(b) six members of the Parliamentary Group as defined in Article 9.4, normally including at least one from each Parliamentary Party;
(c) the President;
(d) one person elected by the Federal Communications & Elections Committee from amongst its membership;
(e) two principal local authority councillors, elected by principal local authority councillors of the Party from among their own number;
(f) one representative of each State Party, elected by its internal procedures (State Parties may appoint a substitute member should the elected member be unable to attend a specific meeting of the FPC); and
(g) one more person than the total number elected or appointed under paragraphs (a) to (f) above, who shall be party members elected by all members of the Party except that persons who, at the date of close of nominations for election under this paragraph, are members of any of the Parliamentary Parties listed in Article 16 shall not be eligible to be candidates for election under this paragraph. Casual vacancies amongst this group shall be filled in accordance with the election regulations.

(ii) non-voting members:

(a) the Chair of the Federal Conference Committee; and
(b) one representative of the Liberal Democrat Group on the Local Government Association appointed through their internal procedures.

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

10.3 The FPC shall have the responsibility for preparing the Party's General Election manifesto for the UK and its manifesto for elections to the European Parliament in consultation with the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons and with the Parliamentary Party in the European Parliament. It shall have the right to be consulted upon, and in the case of a conflict (but after consultation with the State Party concerned) to over-ride any proposal to be contained in the General Election manifesto of any State or Regional Party unless the proposal relates solely to an issue which is the specific concern of the State or Regional Party.

10.4 The FPC shall have the power from time to time to set up policy working groups (whose members need not be members of the FPC) of which it shall appoint a chair and, in consultation with that chair, the membership, with such terms of reference as it may think fit (which shall include the like obligations of consultation as those set forth in Article 8.5(b)). The FPC shall be under similar obligations of consultation in relation to the composition of a proposed group.

ARTICLE 11: The Federal Finance & Resources Committee

11.1 There shall be a Federal Finance and Resources Committee ("FFRC") which shall be responsible to the Federal Board for:

(a) planning and administering the budget and finances of the Federal Party for the forthcoming year and in outline for following years;
(b) presenting the audited Annual Accounts to the Conference;
(c) overseeing the administration of the Federal Party including its Chief Executive, headquarters and other staff; and overseeing the role of the Party as an equal opportunities employer and the maintenance of staff grievance and disciplinary procedures; and
(d) overseeing the Party's risk management operations and its Risk Register.

The Committee shall report regularly to the Federal Board.

11.2 It shall consist of:

(a) the Chair of the FFRC who shall be appointed by the Federal Board;
(b) the Treasurer;
(c) the President;
(d) the person registered with the Electoral Commission as the registered Treasurer for each State Party under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and as later amended. (State Parties may appoint a substitute member should the elected member be unable to attend a specific meeting of the FFRC);
(e) the Federal Chief Executive;
(f) one representative of the staff employed by the Federal Party and by the Parliamentary Parties and elected by such staff;
(g) one representative of the Parliamentary Office of the Liberal Democrats ("POLD") appointed according to their own procedures; and
(h) five persons elected by the Federal Board. Casual vacancies amongst this group shall be filled in accordance with the election regulations.

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

11.3 The Committee shall meet at least four times in each calendar year.

11.4 Subject to agreement by the Federal Board, the FFRC shall have the power to borrow money for the general purposes of the Federal Party and to secure any monies borrowed in such a manner as it thinks fit upon the assets of the Federal Party: provided always that the total amount of monies borrowed shall not exceed such amount as may from time to time be determined by the Federal Board and approved by the Federal Conference.

11.5 The FFRC shall prepare budgets to deliver the strategy of the Party and shall consult fully with the Federal Board, State Parties and SAOs before submitting its draft budget for the Federal Board's approval.

11.6 The FFRC shall each year make proposals to the FB on the minimum rate or rates of subscription for the ensuing year and the proportion of subscription income which each State Party and overseas Local Party shall remit to the Federal Party. The FB shall submit proposals to Conference which shall determine those matters.

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

ARTICLE 12: The Federal Communications and Elections Committee

12.1 There shall be a Federal Communications & Elections Committee (FCEC) which shall be accountable to the Federal Board and shall report to each ordinary meeting of the Board. The Committee shall oversee the implementation of the Party's strategy in relation to elections, campaigns and communications.

12.2 The Committee shall consist of:

(i) Voting members:

(a) the Chair of the Committee who shall be elected by the Federal Board;
(b) the President;
(c) the Leader, who may nominate a substitute who shall have the power to vote;
(d) the Chief Whip of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons, or their substitute from within the Parliamentary Group as defined in Article 16.4;
(e) two representatives of the Parliamentary Group as defined in Article 16.4;
(f) one person nominated by the SAO representing councillors;
(g) one person appointed by each State Party according to their internal procedures, who will normally be the Chair of the relevant Committee of that State Party; and
(h) two members elected by the Federal Board from among its members. Casual vacancies amongst this group shall be filled in accordance with the election regulations.

(ii) Non-voting members:

(a) the Chief Executive of the Party as defined in Article 19.4; and
(b) the Chief Executive of ALDC.

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

12.3 The Committee shall be responsible for the organisation of all elections for the House of Commons and the European Parliament and the Chair of the FCEC shall chair any group responsible for the management of those elections.

12.4 The Committee shall manage as one of its functions a Joint Candidates Sub-Committee ("JCSC"), which shall include one representative, with a power of substitution, from each of the State Candidates Committees. The Chair of the JCSC shall be appointed by the FCEC from amongst its members.

(a) The JCSC shall maintain oversight of the Party's readiness to field candidates in all elections to the Westminster and European Parliaments and shall co-ordinate the maintenance of standards and the performance of the functions specified in Article 18.1 and 18.7, including for the first elections to the House of Lords (or any fully or partially elected replacement second chamber of the Westminster Parliament).
(b) If it is not possible for there to be an appropriate constitutional amendment before the first elections to the House of Lords (or any fully or partially elected replacement second chamber of the Westminster Parliament), the procedures to be adopted for the purposes of article 18.1 shall be based as far as possible on the provisions of clauses 18.4 and 18.8 as appropriate. It shall receive reports from States Candidates Committees to that end.

(c) In accordance with article 18.7 (a), the JCSC may instruct a State Candidates Committee to take appropriate action or may take over its functions if the Federal Board so decides, after due consultation with the relevant State Party.

ARTICLE 13: The Federal People Development Committee

13.1 There shall be a Federal People Development Committee (FPDC), which shall be accountable to the Federal Board and shall report regularly to it.

13.2 The functions of the FPDC, working with State Parties and other Party bodies as appropriate, shall be:

(a) Coordinating, planning and supervising the training strategy for the Federal Party;
(b) Coordinating, planning and supervising the diversity engagement strategy for the Party;
(c) Coordinating, planning and supervising the membership recruitment, retention and activation strategy for the party; and
(d) Working with AOs and SAOs as set out in Article 20 to support them in recruiting and maintaining membership and implementing the Party's policies on diversity.

13.3 The Committee shall comprise:

(a) the President;
(b) the Chairs of those AOs and SAOs as set out in Article 20 and the Annexe to this Constitution which represent under-represented groups and the Chair of the SAO which represents youth and/or students, each of whom may nominate a substitute who shall have the power to vote;
(c) six members elected by the Federal Board, one of whom shall be elected by members as Chair. Casual vacancies amongst this group shall be filled in accordance with the election regulations;
(d) one person nominated by each State Party according to its internal procedures; and
(e) the Chair of the Campaign for Gender Balance.

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

13.4 The FPDC shall meet at least four times in each calendar year.

13.5 The FPDC shall establish a sub-committee which shall include 2 representatives from each State Party and shall co-ordinate the promotion of membership throughout the United Kingdom.

13.6 The FPDC shall also have regard to the desirability of establishing sub-committees responsible for diversity; training; and membership recruitment, retention and activation each of which shall contain relevant representatives from each State Party appointed by their own procedures.

ARTICLE 14: The Federal International Relations Committee

14.1 There shall be a Federal International Relations Committee ("FIRC") which shall be responsible to the Federal Board for:

(a) generally managing the Party's relationships with like-minded parties and individuals in other countries and international institutions, including managing the Party's relations with the European and international organisations of which the Party is a member and the Party's participation in their meetings and events;

(b) overseeing the Party's relationship with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy and projects arising therefrom;

(c) advising the Party, including the Parliamentary Parties as set out in Article 16, on European and international policy;

(d) advising the Party on campaigning for European Parliament elections and other organisational matters which relate to the Party's international work;

(e) co-ordinating the work of internationally-minded organisations within the framework of the Party; and

(f) overseeing the organisation and provision of training for like-minded parties and individuals outside the UK.

14.2 The Committee shall consist of:

(i) Voting members:

(a) one person elected by the Federal Board from amongst its members;

(b) one person elected by the Federal Policy Committee from amongst its members;

(c) one person elected by each State Party according to its internal procedures;

(d) one person elected by the SAO representing youth and students;

(e) one person elected by Members of the European Parliament as set out in Article 9.3.

(f) one person representing Foreign Affairs spokespeople in the Westminster Parliament; and

(g) six members who shall be elected by all members of the Party. Casual vacancies amongst this group shall be filled in accordance with the election regulations.

(ii) Non-voting members:

(a) one representative of the Liberal International British Group;

(b) one representative of the Liberal Democrat European Group;

(c) one representative of the Committee of the Regions;

(d) one representative of the Brussels and Europe local party; and

(e) any member of the Bureaux of the Liberal International or the Alliance of Liberals & Democrats in Europe or the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe who is currently a member of the Liberal Democrats and normally resident in the UK.

The Chair of the Committee shall be elected by the Committee from amongst the members elected under Article 14.2(i)(g) above.

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

14.3 The Committee shall meet at least four times in each calendar year.

ARTICLE 15: The Federal Audit & Scrutiny Committee

15.1 There shall be a Federal Audit & Scrutiny Committee (FASC) which shall be responsible to the Federal Board and shall report regularly to it.

15.2 The FASC shall be responsible for commissioning the Party's auditors and for representing the Party in any matters arising from the annual external audit. It shall report through the Federal Board to Conference including comment on the annual audited financial statements. It may also commission and oversee internal audit work related to the work of the Federal Party either on its own initiative or as requested by the Federal Board. It shall oversee the Party's compliance with external regulatory bodies, including the Electoral Commission and the Information Commissioner, as well as associated risk management, and shall carry out the responsibilities established in Articles 6.6(d) and 19.2 of this Constitution in relation to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and as later amended.

15.3 It shall comprise:

(a) Six members, who shall be appointed by the Federal Board. Casual vacancies amongst this group shall be filled in accordance with the election regulations. Any company established under Article 6.5 shall also be entitled to make nominations for membership of the Committee. Members appointed under this clause may not have held office or been a member of any Federal Committee or a member of Federal Party staff during the two years preceding their nomination to the Committee.

(b) The following shall also be invited to attend meetings of the committee, but shall not have the right to vote:
- (i) the President;
- (ii) the Leader, who may nominate a substitute to act on their behalf;
- (iii) the Treasurer;
- (iv) the Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee; and
- (v) one person nominated by the Federal Communications & Elections Committee from amongst their members;

The Chair of the FASC shall be elected from amongst the members appointed under Article 15.3(a) above.

15.4 The Committee shall meet at least four times in each calendar year.

ARTICLE 16: The Parliamentary Parties

16.1 The Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons shall consist of all Members of that House in receipt of the Party's whip. Its Leader shall be the Leader of the Party elected as provided in Article 17. It shall be entitled to make such regulations (not being inconsistent with this Constitution) as it thinks fit for the conduct of its own proceedings. In particular, these regulations shall make provision for a Chief Whip and, if thought fit, a Deputy Leader of such Parliamentary Party.

16.2 Should the post of Leader become vacant before the election of a new Leader, the Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons or, if no such post exists, the Chief Whip of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons, shall assume the post of Acting Leader of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons until the new Leader is elected.

16.3 The Parliamentary Party in the House of Lords shall consist of all members of that House in receipt of the Party's whip. It shall be entitled to make such regulations (not being inconsistent with this Constitution) as it thinks fit for the conduct of its own proceedings, which shall make provision for a Leader and a Chief Whip of such Parliamentary Party.

16.4 For the purposes of representation on Federal Committees, the Parliamentary Parties listed in Article 16 shall form the Parliamentary Group. The Chief Whips of each Parliamentary Party shall agree how many places each Parliamentary Party shall occupy on each Federal Committee, having due regard to the size of each Parliamentary Party.

16.5 The Parliamentary Party in the European Parliament shall consist of all members of the European Parliament elected from constituencies from within the United Kingdom and in receipt of the UK Liberal Democrat Whip. It shall be entitled to make such regulations (not being inconsistent with this Constitution) as it thinks fit for the conduct of its own proceedings.

ARTICLE 17: The Leader

17.1 The Leader of the Party shall be elected by the members of the Party in accordance with election rules made pursuant to Article 6.6.

17.2 An election for the Leader shall be called upon:

(a) the Leader asking for an election;

(b) the death or incapacity of the Leader;

(c) the Leader ceasing to be a Member of the House of Commons (other than a temporary cessation by reason of a dissolution);

(d) the receipt by the President of the resignation of the Leader or of a declaration of intent to resign upon the election of a new Leader;

(e) a vote of no confidence in the Leader being passed by a majority of all Members of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons;

(f) the receipt by the President of a requisition submitted by at least 75 Local Parties (including for this purpose, the Specified Associated Organisation or Organisations representing youth and/or students) following the decision of a quorate general meeting; or

(g) the first anniversary of the preceding general election being reached without an election being called under any of paragraphs (a) through (f), provided that:

(i) the Federal Board may postpone such an election for no more than one year by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting; and

(ii) this paragraph (g) shall not apply if the Leader is a member of the Government.

17.3 Upon election, the Leader shall hold office until death, incapacity or resignation or the completion of an election called under this Article.

17.4 Upon the calling of an election, the Federal Board shall publish a timetable for nominations, withdrawals, despatch and receipt of ballot papers and the holding of ballots and shall appoint a disinterested person or body to receive and count the ballot papers.

17.5 Nominations must be of a Member of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons, who must be proposed by at least ten percent of other members of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons and supported by 200 members in aggregate in not less than 20 Local Parties (including, for this purpose, the Specified Associated Organisations representing youth and students as provided by Article 20.8) and must indicate acceptance of nomination.

17.6 Should the post of Leader become vacant before the election of a new Leader, the Acting Leader of the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons and the President of the Party shall jointly assume the responsibilities of Leader of the Party until the new Leader is elected.

ARTICLE 18: Parliamentary Candidates

18.1 Each State Party shall establish a Candidates Committee or provide for some or all of its functions to be discharged by another unit or units (and every such unit shall be deemed to be a State Candidates Committee for the purposes of this Article 18). The functions of a State Candidates Committee shall be:

(a) to make provision for there to be lists of approved candidates for Parliamentary and for European Parliamentary elections;

(b) to co-ordinate and regulate the procedure for the selection and adoption of candidates;

(c) to identify and publish criteria for the assessment of candidates in the course of the approval and selection processes and to ensure, so far as possible, their consistent application;

(d) to provide training for candidates; and

(e) to make and from time to time to vary rules for the selection and adoption of prospective Parliamentary and European Parliamentary candidates.

18.2 In deciding whether to enter an applicant on a list, each State Candidates Committee shall take into account:

(a) the support shown by the applicant for the fundamental values and objectives of the Party;

(b) the previous participation by the applicant in the work of the Party or a former Party, both generally and within the relevant State;

(c) the need to ensure that the list contains a reasonable balance between both sexes and different age groups, and includes representatives of different social and economic groups and of ethnic minorities; and

(d) such other considerations as may be relevant in the circumstances.

18.3 The name of any person may be removed from a list by the relevant State Candidates Committee if:

(a) the Committee has reason to believe that such person:

(i) no longer supports the fundamental values or objectives of the Party;

(ii) has behaved (whether personally or in connection with the affairs of the Party) in such a way as to be unsuitable to serve as an MP or MEP; or

(iii) is unfit, through ill health or otherwise, to conduct an election campaign or to serve as an MP or MEP; or

(b) the Committee is satisfied that it would for any other sufficient reason be contrary to the interests of the Party for that person to remain on the list.

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

(a) they shall provide for the appointment of a returning officer;

(b) only persons whose names are on the list of approved candidates of that State Party can be selected;

(c) adequate notice of the commencement of the selection process in each constituency must be given;

(d) there must be a procedure for the short-listing of applicants;

(e) short-listing shall be carried out by the executive committee of the Local Party or by a short listing sub-committee appointed by it;

(f) except where a special reselection process is permitted for a sitting MP or the previous candidate, all short-lists must include a specified minimum number of candidates;

(g) a system will be put in place to secure adequate representation of groups having protected characteristics within the meaning of the Equalities Act 2010;

(h) the Local Party shall arrange one or more (having regard to the geography of the constituency) hustings meetings at which all short-listed applicants shall be invited to speak and answer questions;

(i) the electorate for selection ("the eligible voters") shall subject to the provisions of Article 4.3 be the members of the Local Party at a specified date not later than the closing date for submission of applications;

(j) there shall be sent to each such member by a specified time (which must not be less than seven days) before the first hustings meeting:

i) the names of the short-listed applicants and such information about themselves as may be authorised by the rules;

ii) notice of the time and place of the hustings meetings;

iii) notice that ballot papers will be distributed to eligible voters present at hustings meetings and will also be delivered to eligible voters who submit a request, subject to such eligible voters being responsible for their return before or at the last hustings meeting, provided that a State Party by its internal procedures may direct that the provisions in this sub-paragraph iii) shall not apply and that instead ballot papers shall be sent to each eligible voter for return before or at the last hustings meeting.

(k) a procedure shall be provided for the removal of a candidate who has lost the confidence of the Local Party concerned.

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

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

(a) a general meeting of the Local Party shall be called and, if the MP is endorsed at the meeting by a majority of those members present and voting by secret ballot, the MP shall thereby be reselected; and

(b) if the resolution is defeated, the MP may request a ballot of all members of the Local Party, and shall be reselected if the proposition is supported by a majority of those voting.

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

18.7 (a) The requirements of Article 18.5 may be modified so far as necessary to accelerate selection if a general or by-election has been called or appears likely to be called in the immediate future.

(b) If necessary the Joint Candidates Sub-Committee shall produce an emergency set of

procedures for the first elections to the House of Lords (or any fully or partially elected replacement second chamber of the Westminster Parliament) if an election has been called or is likely to be called in the near future.

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

(a) they shall provide for the appointment of a returning officer;

(b) only persons whose names are on the list of approved candidates of that State Party can be selected;

(c) adequate notice of the commencement of the selection process in each region must be given;

(d) there must be a procedure for the short-listing of applicants;

(e) short-listing shall be carried out by a sub-committee approved by the Regional / State (in Wales & Scotland) Executive(s) of the Euro Region(s), known as the Selection Committee;

(f) all short-lists must include more than enough applicants to fill all the vacancies on the list;

(g) a system will be put in place to secure adequate representation of groups having protected characteristics within the meaning of the Equalities Act 2010;

(h) the Selection Committee shall arrange one or more (having regard to the geography of the region(s)) hustings meetings at which all short-listed applicants shall be invited to speak and answer questions;

(i) the electorate for the selection ("the eligible voters") shall be members of the Local Parties which make up the European Parliamentary Electoral Region at a specified date not later than the closing date for submission of applications;

(j) the candidates to be included on each list will be determined using STV, as provided in the current edition of "How to conduct an election by the Single Transferable Vote", published by the Electoral Reform Society. The order in which the candidates will appear on the list will be determined by selection rules which supplement the Electoral Reform Society's STV rules. The makeup and ordering of the list may be constrained to accommodate gender balance requirements specified by the selection rules of the State Party;

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

ARTICLE 19: Officers

19.1 The President shall be the principal public representative of the Party and shall chair the Federal Board. The President shall be elected by the members of the Party for a term of three years starting from 1st January in the year immediately following the election and shall hold office until death, incapacity, resignation or the election of a successor; the President shall be eligible for re-election once only. A candidate for the office of President shall require the nomination of not less than 200 members in not less than 20 Local Parties (including, for this purpose, the Specified Associated Organisations representing youth and students). The President shall report to the annual meeting of the Conference and may make reports to any other meetings of Conference. The Federal Board shall have the power, in the event of a casual vacancy, to elect an Acting President from any of the Vice-Presidents and to determine a convenient date for a ballot to elect a successor who shall serve for the remainder of the term, except that if the remainder of the term is less than twelve months, the successor shall serve for the remainder of the term plus a period of three years thereafter.

19.2 The Chair of the FFRC, who shall be responsible for the overall budget and finances of the Party, shall be its treasurer for the purposes of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and shall be responsible for its compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, shall be elected for a term of three years by the Federal Board and shall, upon election, become a member of any fund-raising committee established by the Federal Board.

19.3 The Treasurer, who shall be responsible for fund-raising, shall be elected by the Federal Board at its first meeting in every term and shall serve for a term of three years and shall, upon election, become a member of the FFRC and chair of any fund-raising committee established by the Federal Board.

19.4 The Federal Board shall appoint a salaried chief executive.

19.5 The Federal Board shall appoint a nominating officer for the purposes of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.

ARTICLE 20: Associated Organisations and Specified Associated Organisations

20.1 Any organisation of persons having a common link of interest which satisfies the following criteria:

(a) its membership is limited to members of the Party or non-members who support the fundamental values and objectives of the Party;

(b) its objects are consistent with those fundamental values and objectives;

(c) its internal procedures conform with the basic democratic principles set forth in Article 4.6;

may, subject to any criteria established pursuant to Article 6.6, be recognised as an Associated Organisation ("AO") at federal level by the Federal Board or at state level by the internal procedures of a State Party.

20.2 Any such organisation which, in addition to satisfying the criteria set forth in Article 20.1, consists solely (except in the case of youth and/or students) of members of the Party and is listed in the Annexe to this Constitution shall be recognised as a Specified Associated Organisation ("SAO") at federal level by the Federal Board or at state level by the internal procedures of a State Party. Other organisations may, subject to any criteria established pursuant to Article 6.6, qualify for status as a Specified Associated Organisation following a proposal from the Federal Board and a two-thirds majority of members present and voting at Federal Conference. Once so approved, an SAO shall be subject to the provisions of this constitution in the same way as those SAOs which are specified herein. A list of such added SAOs shall be appended to the constitution. The Annexe shall expire at the end of every fourth autumn conference from 2006 (although the Federal Board shall have the power to delay this each time by a further twelve months on a two-thirds majority) and must be renewed by means of an amendable motion from the Federal Board to the Federal Conference.

20.3 An AO shall have the rights conferred upon AOs by this Constitution, and an SAO shall have the rights so conferred upon AOs and SAOs. The Federal Board shall from time to time review the operation of AOs and SAOs in the light of the principles and practices established by and pursuant to this Constitution and shall report to the Conference on such reviews.

20.4 If an AO or an SAO is in breach of the criteria set forth in Article 20 or established pursuant to Article 6.6, it may be suspended from the exercise of its rights under this Constitution by the Federal Party or (as the case may be) the relevant State Party in accordance with its internal procedures. Before exercising any powers under this Article, the body proposing to suspend or recommend the suspension of the rights of the AO or SAO shall draw the attention of the AO or SAO concerned to the grounds on which it is proposed to take this action, and the AO or SAO shall be given a reasonable time to answer any allegations and/or take any necessary corrective action.

20.5 The suspension of an AO or an SAO at federal level may be effected by the Federal Board and shall be reported to the next meeting of the Federal Conference, which may revoke such suspension or, by a two-thirds majority, remove from an organisation the status of an AO or SAO.

20.6 Any suspension of an AO or SAO may be lifted by the suspending body if it is satisfied that corrective action has been taken.

20.7 For the purposes of exercising the rights conferred on SAOs by this Constitution, an SAO representing youth and/or students shall have the same rights as a Local Party.

20.8 A member of an SAO shall not be counted as a member or participate in exercising the rights of the SAO under Articles 8, 17, and 19 of this Constitution:

(a) if such member is not a member of the Party;

(b) in the case of the Youth and/ or Student Organisation, if such member has reached the age of 26 and is not a student;

(c) if such member, having been originally enrolled by an SAO, has elected to exercise the related constitutional rights through a Local Party; or

(d) if such member, having been originally enrolled by a Local Party, has not elected to exercise the related constitutional rights through an SAO: no person may exercise the related constitutional rights concurrently as a member of more than one SAO or as a member of both an SAO and a Local Party.

20.9 The recognition by the Party of Associated Organisations, and the conferring by this Constitution of rights upon Specified Associated Organisations, shall not prejudice the independence of such organisations.

ARTICLE 21: Resolution of Conflicts

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

(a) Nine elected by the Federal Board subject to confirmation by the Federal Conference. Each name shall be presented individually to Conference for confirmation. If any name is rejected by Conference, that name may not be re-presented to Conference for confirmation until at least eighteen months have elapsed; and

(b) three elected by each State Party according to its internal procedures.

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

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

21.3 The Panel shall adjudicate upon:

(a) any dispute over the interpretation of this Constitution;

(b) any claim that the rights under this Constitution of a member or of an organ of the Federal Party or of an AO or SAO recognised by the Federal Party have been infringed;

(c) any dispute, except one as to policy jurisdiction, between the Federal Party and a State Party;

(d) any matter expressly so provided by this Constitution or by rules made thereunder;

(e) any appeal from a like body in a State Party relating to an issue under this Constitution, except that no adjudication under this Article shall take place until any appropriate appeals procedures established within a relevant State Party have been exhausted; and

(f) any dispute or issue which shall be referred to it by a State Appeals Panel for adjudication.

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

(a) any dispute between a State Party and the Federal Party or between State Parties shall be heard by the Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel, three State appointees (one of whom, other than the Chair, being from the State or each of the States concerned) and three Federal appointees;

(b) at least three members shall be appointed to hear any other case (and an applicant may refuse to proceed unless at least three members are present), of whom at least one shall be an appointee of the State Party of which the applicant is a member and at least one shall be a Federal appointee;

(c) the members hearing any dispute relating to the composition of the Approved Candidates list shall if practicable include a former parliamentary candidate;
(d) the members shall not include any member of the Executive of a State Party in any case where the dispute is one in which the State Party is involved; and
(e) no member who heard the case at first instance shall hear the appeal therefrom.

21.5 The Panel shall decide whether or not a dispute or matter for adjudication falls within the jurisdiction conferred on it by Article 21.

21.6 The Panel shall determine and publish its own procedures (provided that the same are not inconsistent with this Constitution and subject to confirmation by conference). The Panel shall publish once a year, at the time of the party's autumn conference, a report containing its procedures, all of its decisions on its interpretation of this Constitution since the previous report, a summary of each of its other rulings since the previous report and any other matters the Panel shall see fit to include.

21.7 Any decision of the Panel shall be final and binding upon all those concerned.

ARTICLE 22: Support for a government which contains other political parties

22.1 This Article applies where the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons ('the Commons Party') enters into negotiations with one or more other political parties with a view to the formation of a government supported by the party and such party or parties; and sets out the procedures to be followed for the party to give its support for such an arrangement.

22.2 For this purpose:

(a) the Leader shall, with due regard to diversity, appoint a negotiating team to conduct such negotiations; and

(b) there shall be a reference group consisting of not more than nine people (none of whom shall be members of the negotiating team) appointed equally by (i) the Federal Policy Committee (ii) the Federal Board and (iii) the Westminster Parliamentary Parties (in the last case acting jointly).

22.3 The negotiating team shall report regularly to the Leader and the reference group, and shall have regard to their respective views.

22.4 If as a result of these negotiations the Commons Party determines, after further consultation with (i) the Federal Policy Committee (ii) the Federal Board and (iii) the Parliamentary Party in the House of Lords (together 'the consultees'), to support a government which contains members of one or more other political parties, it shall seek the approval of conference by submitting a motion to that effect. Such a submission shall state the final views thereon of each of the consultees, and such a motion shall require for its passage a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the conference.

22.5 Upon the submission of such a motion, the Federal Conference Committee shall convene a conference to consider the motion at the earliest practicable opportunity or shall include the motion in the agenda of a conference currently in session or imminently to start.

ANNEXE[1]: Specified Associated Organisations

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

a) Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors (ALDC)
b) Association of Liberal Democrat Engineers and Scientists (ALDES)
c) Ethnic Minority Liberal Democrats (EMLD)
d) LGBT+ Liberal Democrats
e) Liberal Democrat Lawyers' Association (LDLA)
f) Liberal Democrat Women
g) Liberal Youth
h) Parliamentary Candidates' Association (PCA)

[1] Annexe agreed at Federal Conference, Birmingham, September 2011– in force until 2015.

FEDERAL CONFERENCE STANDING ORDERS[2]

Glossary of terms

Business motion

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

Business amendment

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

Committee

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

Constitutional amendment

A proposal to change the constitution of the Party.

Secondary constitutional amendment

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

Consultative session

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

Day visitor

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

Emergency motion

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

Emergency amendment

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

Full session

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

[2] As amended March 2012

Point of order

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

Policy motion

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

Policy amendment

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

Policy paper

A paper prepared by the Federal Policy Committee and submitted to conference for debate under the terms of Article 8.4 of the Federal Party constitution.

Procedural motion

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

Move to next business

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

Reference back

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

Request for a count

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

Separate vote

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

Suspension of standing orders

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

Special conference

An additional meeting of the conference requisitioned by the Federal Board, Federal Policy Committee, conference itself or 200 members, in not fewer than 20 local parties under the provisions of Article 8.15 of the Federal constitution.

Standing order amendment

A proposal to change these standing orders.

Secondary standing order amendment

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

Topical issue discussion

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

Voting member

A member attending conference who has satisfied the requirements for attendance and has paid the registration fee presently in force for party members as agreed by FCC, and who is not a day visitor [or observer].

Standing Orders for the Federal Conference

1. The Conference Agenda

1.1 What is on the agenda

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

a) One or more consultative sessions; save that the Committee may decide not to hold any consultative sessions at a spring conference.

b) A business session or sessions for the consideration of reports from the Parliamentary Parties as listed in Article 9 of the Federal Party's Constitution, the Federal Board, the Federal Policy Committee and the Federal Conference Committee together with, when appropriate, reports from any other body the Committee considers appropriate, accounts, the annual report, a motion accompanying the proposed strategy of the party, business motions, constitutional amendments and standing order amendments.

c) Policy motions (including motions accompanying policy papers).

d) Emergency motions.

e) Topical issue discussions.

f) Any other business which the Committee thinks appropriate.

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

1.2 Conference or council of state parties

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

1.3 Right to submit agenda items

a) Reports to conference may be submitted only by the bodies listed in paragraph 1.1(b).

b) Business motions (including amendments and emergency business motions and amendments), constitutional amendments and secondary constitutional amendments, standing order amendments and secondary standing order amendments may be submitted by the Federal Board, Federal Policy Committee, state parties, regional parties in England, local parties, Specified Associated Organisations and 10 party members. Business motions, standing order amendments and secondary standing order amendments may also be submitted by the Federal Conference Committee.

c) Motions accompanying policy papers may only be submitted by the Federal Policy Committee.

d) Policy motions (including amendments, emergency policy motions and amendments) may be submitted by the Federal Policy Committee, state parties, regional parties in England, local parties, Specified Associated Organisations and 10 party members.

e) The Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons may submit a motion relating to supporting a government containing members of the other parties, in accordance with Article 22 of the constitution.

f) Proposals for topical issue discussions may be submitted by any party member.

1.4 How motions and amendments are submitted

All motions and amendments must be submitted to the Committee. They must identify a person authorised to agree to their being composited or redrafted. The detail of methods of submission will be notified for each conference via the party website.

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

The Committee shall specify:

a) The closing date for the receipt of policy motions (including motions accompanying policy papers), business motions, constitutional amendments and amendments to standing orders, which shall be at least eight weeks before the start of conference.

b) The closing date for the receipt of amendments to motions published in the Agenda and emergency motions, which shall be at least two days before the start of conference.

c) The closing date for the submission of written reports from the bodies listed in paragraph 1.1(b), which will be set so as to enable their distribution with the Agenda. Any supplementary report submitted later than this deadline may only be tabled at conference with the permission of the Committee.

d) The closing date for the submission of questions to any of the reports listed in the Agenda, which shall be at least two days before the start of conference except for questions to the reports of the Parliamentary Parties in the House of Commons, House of Lords and European Parliament, where the closing date shall be at least one hour before the start of the business session at which the report is due to be considered.

e) Notwithstanding 1.5(d), questions may always be submitted to any of the reports listed in the Agenda arising from events occurring after the deadline specified in 1.5(d). The deadline for these questions shall be one hour before the start of the business session at which the report is due to be considered.

f) The closing date for proposals for topical issue discussions, which shall be at least two days before the start of conference

1.6 Notification of deadlines

All dates specified under Standing Order 1.5 shall be publicised to party members and bodies entitled to submit motions. Publication in the party newspaper/magazine and website may be treated as notice for this purpose.

1.7 Later deadlines in special circumstances

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

2. Consultative Sessions

2.1 The subjects for consultative sessions

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

2.2 Speaking at consultative sessions

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

2.3 Voting at consultative sessions

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

3. The Agenda

3.1 The shortlisting of motions

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

3.2 Motions for the amendment of the constitution or standing orders

Save as detailed below in Standing Order 4.3, all proposed amendments to the constitution or standing orders must be selected for debate.

3.3 Balance between State and Federal policy debates

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

4. Selection of Motions and Amendments

4.1 Compositing or otherwise altering motions

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

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

4.2 Selection of amendments

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

4.3 Motions for the amendment of the constitution or standing orders

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

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

4.4 Emergency motions

The Committee may reject an emergency motion if:

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

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

4.5 Ballots for emergency motions

All emergency motions, except those rejected under Standing Order 4.4, must be placed either on the agenda for debate or in a ballot for selection by Conference. The Committee may hold separate ballots to select which of a range of emergency policy motions and which

of a range of emergency business motions to debate. If one or more ballots is held the Committee shall circulate the text of all balloted motions to the voting members as soon as practicable and shall specify a closing time for the ballot. Following the counting of any ballots the Committee shall decide how many motions shall be debated in the time available.

4.6 Emergency amendments

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

4.7 Topical issue discussions

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

5. Special Meetings

5.1 Timetabling of special meetings

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

5.2 Preferred timescales for special meetings

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

6. Appeals

6.1 Appeals against rejection of motions

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

6.2 Appeals against exclusion from conference

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

7. The Chair

7.1 Who chairs conference

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

7.2 The chair's aide

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

8. Conduct of Debate

8.1 Variation in the order of business

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

8.2 Withdrawal of motions and amendments

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

8.3 The order of debate

The Committee shall direct the order of debate. Generally, however, a motion will be moved and immediately thereafter the amendments and options will be moved in the order directed by the Committee. There will then be a general debate. The movers of amendments and options (or their nominees) shall have the right of reply in the same order (except that where an amendment or option has not been opposed during the debate, the chair of the session shall have the right to direct that its movers shall not exercise their right of reply), after which the mover of the motion (or the mover's nominee) shall have the right of reply. Votes shall then be taken on the amendments and options in the order in which they have been moved and, finally, on the substantive motion. The Committee may direct that part of any motion or amendment or groups or amendments may be the subject of a separate debate.

8.4 Topical issue discussions

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

8.5 Who may speak

All voting members may speak at a full session of conference. Additionally, the Committee may invite any person to address the conference as a guest. Neither such provision shall prejudice the right of the chair of a session to select speakers.

8.6 The special rights of the Federal Committees

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

8.7 The selection of speakers

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

8.8 The length of speeches

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

9. Voting at Conference

9.1 The method of voting

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

9.2 Counting of votes

A vote by show of voting cards shall be counted:

a) If the Committee has so directed.
b) If the chair so directs.
c) As the result of a procedural motion under Standing Order 11.5 below.

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

9.3 Separate votes

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

a) On the direction of the Committee.
b) At the discretion of the chair.
c) As a result of a procedural motion under Standing Order 11.4 below.

10. Points of Order

10.1 Making a point of order

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

11. Procedural Motions

11.1 Next business

a) A voting member may, during any full conference session, submit, in writing, a request that conference move to next business, giving the reasons to do so. The submission shall not exceed 75 words.

b) The chair may either take the request immediately upon receipt, or at the end of any speech currently being made. If more than one request is received the chair shall decide which to take. No more than one request may be taken in respect to any motion or report.

c) When the request is to be taken, the chair shall read the statement of reasons and ask conference whether it wishes to consider the request to move to next business. If conference decides, by a simple majority of those voting, to do so, the person who made the request may speak. The chair may allow other speakers. All speeches under this standing order shall be limited to two minutes. If conference decides not to debate the proposal, it falls.

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

11.2 Reference back (moved by a voting member)

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

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

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

d) The reference back shall require a simple majority of those voting to be passed. If it is carried the current agenda item shall be abandoned without any further debate or

vote and, at the discretion of the chair, either the next agenda item shall be taken or there shall be an adjournment until the time at which the next agenda item was due to be taken.

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

11.3 Reference back (moved by the Federal Policy Committee)

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

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

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

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

11.4 Separate vote

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

11.5 Counted vote

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

11.6 Suspension of standing orders

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

11.7 No procedural motions during votes

No procedural motion can be moved during a vote.

12. Reports

12.1 Which reports are tabled

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

12.2 Submission and selection of questions

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

12.3 Whether questions are in order or not

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

12.4 How questions and supplementary questions are put and answered

After the report is moved, the mover, or their nominee, shall answer the questions in turn. After each question has been answered, the voting member who submitted the question will be given the opportunity to put a supplementary question, speaking for a maximum of two minutes, and the mover, or their nominee, will be given an opportunity to respond. The chair shall determine the time given to the mover in moving the report and replying to questions. The chair shall also determine how many of the published questions, and how

many of the questions submitted under Standing Order 1.5 (e), can be taken. After the conference the Committee shall publish the answers to all questions submitted under Standing Orders 1.5 (d) and (e) which are in order, and to all supplementary questions asked.

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

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

12.6 Receipt of reports from other bodies

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

13. Amendment of Standing Orders

13.1 Amendment of standing orders

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

14. The Chair and Vice Chairs of the Committee

14.1 Chair and Vice Chairs

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

COMMITTEE ELECTION REGULATIONS[3]

1. The Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel shall be the Returning Officer. The rules of the Federal appeals panel shall make provision for a process to replace the Chair in this role if necessary. The Chief Executive shall be the Acting Returning Officer. The Deputy Acting Returning Officer will be the Head of Compliance and Constitutional Support. Other Deputy Acting Returning Officers may be appointed if required.

2. The Federal Board shall draw up a timetable for each year's receipts of nominations, dispatch and return of ballot papers and the counting of the votes for each election covered by these regulations. The Returning Officer may make provision for voters who wish to do so to cast their ballots electronically, and to view the candidates' election addresses electronically. The Returning Officer may carry out electronic communications with the electorate to facilitate the election.

3. Nominations may be submitted by:

   (a) Any Local Party;
   (b) Any Regional Party;
   (c) Any State Party;
   (d) Any Specified Associated Organisations; or
   (e) Any ten party members.

   and must be accompanied by the written consent of the candidate. For the election of Councillor Reps see rule 15(b).

4. (a) Each candidate shall be entitled to include in the mailing of ballot papers for each election in which he or she is a candidate a personal election address covering up to one side of A5 paper, printed by and at the expense of the Federal Party. Election address artwork in camera ready form as a high resolution PDF or text-only Word document must reach the Acting Returning Officer at an address and by a date to be notified.
   (b) The Returning Officer may make provision for voters to view the candidates' election addresses electronically as well as, or instead of, through the postal mailing.
   (c) No candidate may incur, or directly or indirectly authorise or cause to be incurred, any further expenses on campaigning at any time before or after the close of nominations
   (d) Each candidate shall be responsible for supplying material that verifies, to the satisfaction of the Acting Returning Officer, any statement in his or her personal election address claiming that he or she is endorsed by any individual or organisation. Such material must accompany the candidate's personal election address artwork.
   (e) Candidates must not carry out any activities during the election period which may be viewed as treating.

5. The Returning Officer may make provision for voters who wish to do so to cast their ballots electronically. Any online voting system shall prompt members to look at candidates' manifestos prior to voting.

6. The names and addresses of party members are confidential and shall not be released for the purposes of the election.

7. (a) No official party publication may accept advertisements in support of or in opposition to candidates.

[3] Amended Feb. 2016. A separate set of regulations apply for Interim Peer Elections.

(b) Candidates may not use official party publications to specifically promote their candidacy but all other articles are permissible.

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

9. The Returning Officer shall have the power to disqualify before declaration of the result, or unseat if declared elected, any candidate who is found to be in breach of regulations 4 or 8, but shall not exercise such power without first offering any such candidate the right to make representation, and having regard thereto.

10. All contested elections shall be conducted by secret ballot and the single transferable vote. Counts shall be conducted in accordance with the current edition of the Electoral Reform Society's publication How to Conduct an Election by the Single Transferable Vote. If the Specified Proportions of men and women are not elected by the operation of the above rules, the Returning Officer shall conduct such further counts as he or she considers necessary and declare elected those members of the under-represented sex and declare not elected those members of the over-represented sex who would or would not have been elected to committees with such larger and smaller numbers of members as would cause the correct number of that sex to be elected.

11. Casual vacancies occurring shall be filled by recounting the original ballot papers in the election, passing over any preferences for any candidate causing a vacancy. If necessary, further counts shall be conducted using the principles set out in regulation 10 to ensure that all candidates originally elected so remain and that the Specified Proportions of men and women are maintained.

12. Any party member may lodge, in writing, a formal complaint of infringement of election regulations forthwith upon becoming aware of any alleged infringement and not more than 21 days after the declaration. The written complaint should be addressed to the Acting Returning Officer and specify in detail the nature of the infringement. The Returning Officer shall then decide, in full consultation with the Acting Returning Officer, whether there is sufficient evidence and grounds to uphold the complaint, but shall not do so without offering any candidate concerned the right to make representations, and having regard thereto.

13. Appeals against decisions of the Returning Officer must be referred to the Federal Appeals Panel within 14 days of the decision. For the purposes of appeals under these regulations the Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel shall not act as a member of the Federal Appeals Panel, and other Panel members shall appoint one of their number as Acting Chair.

14. If a complaint is made prior to the declaration of the result, the Returning Officer shall have the power to postpone such declaration until the determination of such complaint or, where an appeal is made against his decision, until the determination of such appeal.

15. (a) These Regulations shall be used for the triennial elections to the Federal Board, Federal Conference Committee, Federal Policy Committee, International Relations Committee and ELDR Delegation.
(b) They shall also be used for the election of Principal Councillor Representatives on the Federal Board and the Federal Policy Committee except section three shall read: Nominations shall be submitted by any two Principal Councillors with valid membership and must be accompanied by the written consent of the candidate.

LEADERSHIP ELECTION REGULATIONS[4]

1. The Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel shall be the Returning Officer. The Chief Executive shall be Acting Returning Officer.

2. The electorate for the purpose of the election shall be those members with current membership of the Liberal Democrats on the closing date for nominations, including those members whose subscriptions were due not more than three months before the closing date.

3. The sections of the membership register containing the names, addresses and telephone numbers of members will be released in electronic version to each candidate subject to the candidate signing a data protection statement.

4. The timetable for the election shall be no shorter than 8 weeks and no longer than 13 weeks. It shall contain a minimum of 15 days for nominations to be collected which must be on the official forms provided by the Acting Returning Officer for the specific election and available from the day following the setting of the timetable by the Federal Board. It shall provide for at least 21 days between the close of nominations and the despatch of ballot papers and at least 21 days for the return of ballot papers.

5. (a) The Acting Returning Officer shall co-ordinate arrangements for official party member hustings events via the states and regions with a view to balancing the competing demands for media coverage of the campaign, parliamentary and other duties. Other party bodies may only hold hustings-type events if they invite all candidates to attend, but they do not require the agreement of all candidates to attend or send a representative in order to proceed. Events designated as official hustings by the Acting Returning Officer shall take precedence over any other arrangements a candidate may have made.

   (b) Official party communications channels may only be used to promote hustings events approved by the Acting Returning Officer. Responsibility for organising and paying for any hustings event shall lie with the hosting organisation, but the Acting Returning Officer will assist in publicising official hustings events via the party's website, e-mail communications, *Liberal Democrat News*, etc.

6. After acquiring the necessary nominations for candidacy, each candidate may nominate an agent for his or her campaign. A candidate who fails to nominate an agent will be deemed his or her own agent.

7. Nominations from the Parliamentary Party shall not include the candidate themselves and no member of the Parliamentary Party may sign more than one nomination paper. A nomination will be rejected if it depends upon the signature of an MP who has signed a previously submitted nomination form for another candidate standing in the election.

8. Federal Party employees shall maintain strict neutrality from the opening date for declaration of candidacy. It is recommended that employees of state parties, SAO's and any other relevant employing bodies shall also maintain such neutrality.

9. Party Officers, acting in their capacity as officers at federal, state, regional and local level, are expected, as far as possible, to give equal opportunities and fair balance to all candidates.

10. The provision of food, drink or entertainment by or on behalf of the candidates, and any other form of treating, will not be allowed.

11. The Federal Board shall set a spending limit for election expenses, not including travel or

[4] As amended September 2009

subsistence, for each leadership candidate, when they set the timetable for the election. No candidate, or his agent, shall exceed this limit in the production of publicity material and all other expenditures connected with the campaign. All donations above £200 must comply with the provisions of Schedule 7 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.

12. (a) All publicity material produced in paper or electronic form for or on behalf of a candidate shall bear his or her agent's imprint including a full postal address. Any email messages sent out for or on behalf of a candidate for the purposes of publicising their candidacy shall also include a standard form of words provided by the Returning Officer specifying how the recipient of the message may opt out of future messages.
(b) Each candidate shall be responsible for supplying material that verifies, to the satisfaction of the Acting Returning Officer, any statement in his or her personal election address claiming that he or she is endorsed by any individual or organisation. Such material must accompany the candidate's personal election address artwork.
(c) Each candidate shall be entitled to include in the mailing of ballot papers a personal election address covering up to two sides of A4 paper, or A5 in the event of there being more than three candidates, printed by and at the expense of the Federal Party. Election address artwork in camera ready form must reach the Acting Returning Officer at an address and by a date to be notified.
(d) The Returning Officer may make provision for voters to view the candidates' election addresses electronically as well as, or instead of, through the postal mailing.
(e) The published personal election address may be reproduced in whatever format is decided by the Returning Officer so long as the minimum coverage provided for in regulation 12(b) is met.
(f) The Returning Officer may carry out electronic communications to facilitate the election and send out e-mail communications on behalf of the candidates in the election.

13. No material published or circulated in paper or electronic form under regulations 10, 11 or 12 shall defame by name or implication any other candidate and no candidate shall so defame any other candidate in the course of personal canvassing.

14. The Returning Officer may make provision for voters who wish to do so to cast their ballots electronically.

15. Any party publication whether in paper or electronic form shall give, as far as possible, equal coverage and a fair balance to all candidates.

16. The election shall be conducted by secret ballot and the single transferable vote. Counts shall be conducted in accordance with the current edition of the Electoral Reform Society's publication 'How to conduct an election by the single transferable vote'. The election count may be scrutinised by the candidate, their agents and one other personal representative and shall be open to any party member, subject to capacity of the venue.

17. Each candidate and their agent shall complete and lodge with the Acting Returning Officer an election expenses return form. The form must have attached receipts or invoices for all expenditure and must be lodged with the Acting Returning Officer by midday on the 35th day after the declaration of the election result. The Acting Returning Officer will hold the expenses returns of each candidate on file and these may be examined by any party member. The expenses form shall also contain the necessary information to prove compliance with schedule 7 of the PPERA 2000.

18. At the completion of the Election any candidate who needs to make a report to the Electoral Commission shall do so in consultation with the Party's PPERA Compliance Officer.

19. The Returning Officer shall have the power to disqualify before declaration of the result, or unseat if declared elected, any candidate who:

    (a) has brought the party into disrepute during the campaign or where the Returning Officer has clear evidence (e.g. from bankruptcy or financial embarrassment) of this happening in the near future; or
    (b) is found to be in breach of regulations 3, 10, 11, 13 or 17.

18. Any party member may lodge, in writing, a formal complaint of infringement of election regulations at any time up to 21 days after the declaration. The written complaint should be addressed to the Acting Returning Officer and specify in detail the nature of the infringement. The Returning Officer shall then decide, in full consultation with the Acting Returning Officer, whether there is sufficient evidence and grounds to uphold the complaint.

19. Appeals against decisions of the Returning Officer must be referred to the Federal Appeals Panel within 14 days of the decision. For the purposes of Appeals under these regulations the Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel shall not act as a member of the Federal Appeals Panel, and the other Panel members shall appoint one of their number as Acting Chair.

20. These regulations will be reviewed by the Federal Board no later than six months after any Leadership Election.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS REGULATIONS[5]

1. The Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel shall be the Returning Officer. The Chief Executive shall be Acting Returning Officer.

2. The electorate for the purpose of the election shall be those members with current membership of the Liberal Democrats on the closing date for nominations, including those members whose subscriptions were due not more than three months before the closing date.

3. The membership registers, locally and nationally, are confidential and will not be released for the purposes of the election**.**

4. The timetable for the election shall be no shorter than 7 weeks and no longer than 12 weeks. It shall contain a minimum of 15 days for nominations to be collected and at least 14 days between the close of nominations and the despatch of ballot papers.

5. (a) The Acting Returning Officer shall co-ordinate arrangements for official party member hustings events via the states and regions with a view to balancing the competing demands for media coverage of the campaign, parliamentary and other duties. Other party bodies may only hold hustings-type events if they invite all candidates to attend, but they do not require the agreement of all candidates to attend or send a representative in order to proceed. Events designated as official hustings by the Acting Returning Officer shall take precedence over any other arrangements a candidate may have made.

   (b) Official party communications channels may only be used to promote hustings events approved by the Acting Returning Officer. Responsibility for organising and paying for any hustings event shall lie with the hosting organisation, but the Acting Returning Officer will assist in publicising official hustings events via the party's website, e-mail communications, *Liberal Democrat News*, etc.

6. After acquiring the necessary nominations for candidacy, each candidate may nominate an agent for his or her campaign. A candidate who fails to nominate an agent will be deemed his or her own agent.

7. Federal Party employees shall maintain strict neutrality from the opening date for declaration of candidacy. It is recommended that employees of state parties, SAOs and any other relevant employing bodies shall also maintain such neutrality.

8. Party Officers, acting in their capacity as officers at federal, state, regional and local level, are expected, as far as possible, to give equal opportunities and fair balance to all candidates.

9. The provision of food, drink or entertainment by or on behalf of the candidates, and any other form of treating, will not be allowed.

10. The Federal Board shall agree a spending limit for election expenses, not including travel or subsistence expenses, when setting the timetable for the election for each presidential candidate. No candidate, or his agent, shall exceed this limit in the production of publicity material and all other expenditures connected with the campaign. This shall include any expenditure (or the relevant proportion of any expenditure) incurred before an individual becomes a candidate if the property, services or facilities are used for the purposes of the candidate's election. All donations above £200 must comply with the provisions of Schedule 7 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.

11. (a) All publicity material produced in paper or electronic form for or on behalf of a

[5] As amended September 2009

candidate shall bear his or her agent's imprint including a full postal address. Any email messages sent out for or on behalf of a candidate for the purposes of publicising their candidacy shall also include a standard form of words provided by the Returning Officer specifying how the recipient of the message may opt out of future messages.

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

(c) Each candidate shall be entitled to include in the mailing of ballot papers a personal election address covering up to two sides of A4 paper, or A5 in the event of there being more than three candidates, printed by and at the expense of the Federal Party. Election address artwork in camera ready form must reach the Acting Returning Officer at an address and by a date to be notified.

(d) The Returning Officer may make provision for voters to view the candidates' election addresses electronically as well as, or instead of, through the postal mailing.

(e) The published personal election address may be reproduced in whatever format is decided by the Returning Officer so long as the minimum coverage provided in regulation 11(c) is met.

(f) The Returning Officer may carry out electronic communications to facilitate the election and send out electronic communications on behalf of the candidates in the election.

12. No material published or circulated in paper or electronic form under regulations 8 or 9 shall defame by name or implication any other candidate and no candidate shall so defame any other candidate in the course of personal canvassing.

13. Any party publication whether in paper or electronic form shall give, as far as possible, equal coverage and a fair balance to all candidates.

14. The election shall be conducted by secret ballot and the single transferable vote. Counts shall be conducted in accordance with the current edition of the Electoral Reform Society's publication 'How to conduct an election by the single transferable vote'. The election count may be scrutinised by the candidate, their agents and one other personal representative and shall be open to any party member, subject to capacity of the venue.

15. The Returning Officer may make provision for voters who wish to do so to cast their ballots electronically.

16. Each candidate and their agent shall complete and lodge with the Acting Returning Officer an election expenses return form. The form must have attached receipts or invoices for all expenditure and must be lodged with the Acting Returning Officer by midday on the 35th day after the declaration of the election result. The Acting Returning Officer will hold the expenses returns of each candidate on file and these may be examined by any party member. The expenses form shall also containing the necessary information to prove compliance with schedule 7 of the PPERA 2000.

17. At the Completion of the Election any candidate who needs to make a report to the Electoral Commission shall do so in consultation with the Party's PPERA Compliance Officer.

18. The Returning Officer shall have the power to disqualify before declaration of the result, or unseat if declared elected, any candidate who:

(a) has brought the party into disrepute during the campaign or where the Returning Officer has clear evidence (e.g. from bankruptcy or financial embarrassment) of this happening in the near future; or

(b) is found to be in breach of regulations 3, 8, 9, 12 or 16.

19. Any party member may lodge, in writing, a formal complaint of infringement of election regulations at any time up to 21 days after the declaration. The written complaint should be addressed to the Acting Returning Officer and specify in detail the nature of the infringement. The Returning Officer shall then decide, in full consultation with the Acting Returning Officer, whether there is sufficient evidence and grounds to uphold the complaint.

20. Appeals against decisions of the Returning Officer must be referred to the Federal Appeals Panel within 14 days of the decision. For the purposes of Appeals under these regulations the Chair of the Federal Appeals Panel shall not act as a member of the Federal Appeals Panel, and the other Panel members shall appoint one of their number as Acting Chair.

21. These regulations will be reviewed by the Federal Board no later than six months after any Presidential Election.

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
CONSERVATIVE PARTY

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CONSTITUTION OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

PART I

NAME, PURPOSE, OBJECTS AND VALUES

1 This is the Constitution of a political party which shall be known as "The Conservative and Unionist Party" (referred to in this Constitution as "the Party").

2 Its purpose is to sustain and promote within the Nation the objects and values of the Conservative Party.

PART II

MEMBERSHIP

3 The Party is a political Party for the Nation, open to all who share its objects and values and who undertake to be bound by this Constitution. The Party shall consist of its Members. Membership of the Conservative Party is not compatible with Membership of or association with any other registered political party.

4 Its Members shall comprise:

4.1 Individuals (referred to in this Constitution as *"Party Members"*);

4.2 *Constituency Associations*, whose members shall only comprise Party Members;

4.3 *Recognised Organisations*, whose members shall only comprise Party Members, (other than expressly provided by the Board) being other organisations recognised by the Board.

4.4 *The Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party*, and its members (referred to in this Constitution as "*Scottish Party Members*") subject to the provisions of Schedule 8.

5 Party Members, Constituency Associations, Recognised Organisations and (to the extent provided by Article 77 and Schedule 8 herein) The Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party and Scottish Party Members

5.1 shall each agree in the manner prescribed by the Board to be bound by this Constitution; and

5.2 shall work to sustain and promote the objects and values of the Party; and

5.3 shall pay such subscriptions (in the case of individuals) or affiliation fees (in the case of other Members) as shall be determined from time to time by the Board having regard to the recommendations of the Committee on Membership.

6 Subscriptions from individuals shall be received either by the Party or a Constituency Association. Subscriptions shall be received in relation to both the Party subscription and the Constituency Association subscription in the proportionate amounts (and shall belong to the Party and the Constituency Associations in such amounts) as determined from time to time by the Board in consultation with the Committee on Membership.

7 The payment by individuals to the Party or a Constituency Association of subscriptions shall, subject to Article 17.7 confer the following entitlements:

7.1 in relation to the Party, to be a Party Member; and

7.2 in relation to the Constituency Association which has received his subscription, (either directly or indirectly) to be a member of that Constituency Association.

8 A Party Member may apply to be a member of a Constituency Association notwithstanding that he is already a member of another Constituency Association provided that

8.1 a Constituency Association shall be obliged to account to the Party for the Party's proportion of any subscription received by it from any Party Member who is a member of more than one Constituency Association;

8.2 a Party Member who is a member of more than one Constituency Association shall not be entitled to more than one vote in any election within the Party.

9 The names of Members shall be entered on the Party's National Membership List which shall be kept, administered and up-dated from day to day by the Committee on Membership of the Board. Inclusion in the National Membership List shall be conclusive as to the membership of the Party.

PART III

LEADERSHIP

10 There shall be a Leader of the Party (referred to in this Constitution as "the Leader") drawn from those elected to Parliament, who shall be elected by the Party Members and Scottish Party Members in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 2.

11 The Leader shall determine the political direction of the Party having regard to the views of Party Members and the Conservative Policy Forum.

PART IV

THE BOARD OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

12 There shall be established and maintained a Board of the Conservative Party (referred to in this constitution as "the Board") which shall be the supreme decision-making body in matters of Party organisation and management. The Board shall consist of

- 12.1 The Chairman of the Conservative Party ("the Chairman of the Board") who shall be appointed by the Leader and who will chair the Board in the absence of the Leader and act as the Leader's representative on it;
- 12.2 Two Deputy Chairmen,
  - 12.2.1 One of whom shall be Chairman of the National Conservative Convention and who, in the absence of the Chairman of the Board and the Leader, shall chair the Board; and
  - 12.2.2 One of whom shall be appointed by the Leader;
- 12.3 Four further members elected by the National Conservative Convention (in addition to the Chairman of the National Conservative Convention), in accordance with the provisions contained within Schedule 3;
- 12.4 The elected Chairman of the 1922 Committee;
- 12.5 The Chairman of the Association of Conservative Peers;
- 12.6 The elected Deputy Chairman of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party;
- 12.7 The elected Chairman of the Welsh Conservative Party;
- 12.8 The elected Chairman of the Conservative Councillors Association;
- 12.9 The Treasurer of the Party, who shall be appointed by the Leader;
- 12.10 Up to one further member who may, from time to time, be nominated by the Leader subject to endorsement by the Board;
- 12.11 A senior member of the professional staff of the Party, who shall be nominated to serve on the Board by the Chairman of the Board.
- 12.12 The Board may make one further appointment to its number, subject to the approval of the Leader.

13 The Board shall meet not less than six times each year. The Leader shall be invited to attend all meetings of the Board.

14 The quorum for any meeting of the Board will be eight.

15 The Board shall appoint a Secretary to the Board who shall support the Board in its proper and efficient administration and shall be Secretary of the National Convention.

16 The Board shall agree rules concerning the notice to be given in respect of ordinary and emergency meetings of it, and rules governing the circulation in advance of briefing and other papers.

17 The Board shall have power to do anything which in its opinion relates to the management and administration of the Party. It shall oversee all activities within the Party and in particular be responsible for -

- 17.1 the development and implementation of the strategies for the Party, for its campaigning, organisation, membership, and fund-raising at a National, European and local level;
- 17.2 the review and approval of the Party's annual budgets, the monitoring of financial performance and the production and publication of annual accounts;
- 17.3 the appointment of senior staff within the Party;
- 17.4 the administration of the National Membership List in accordance with the provisions of Article 19.1 and Schedule 6;

17.5 the maintenance of the Approved Lists of Candidates in accordance with the provisions of Article 19.2 and Schedule 6;
17.6 the over sight of the m anagement and adm inistration of Constituency Associations, including the pow er to r ecognise F ederations or other gr oupings of Cons tituency Associations;
17.7 the cancellation or refusal of membership, in its absolute discretion, of any Party Member or prospective Party Member;
17.8 the r eplacement or r emoval f rom of fice of any O fficer of a Constituency Association or Recognised Organisation in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 6;
17.9 the establishment of a new or replacement Constituency Association in ac cordance with the provisions of Schedule 6;
17.10 the withdrawal or r efusal of m embership of a Cons tituency As sociation in ac cordance with the provisions of Schedule 6;
17.11 the management of the National Conservative Convention;
17.12 the organisation of Party Conferences, in ac cordance w ith the pr ovisions of Ar ticle 19.3 and Schedule 4;
17.13 ens uring that women are properly involved and r epresented in all as pects of the Par ty's work and or ganisation inc luding, if appr opriate, the m aintenance of an or ganisation to promote the interests of women within the Party;
17.14 ensuring that young people ar e pr operly involved and r epresented in all as pects of the Party's work and organisation including the maintenance of a youth organisation to recruit young people to the Party and communicating with them;
17.15 to grant to organisations, groups or other bodies the status of a Recognised Organisation, Specialist Group , or Other Body and the withdrawal of such status;
17.16 the c o-ordination and im plementation of a national s trategy w ith r espect to electoral boundary changes;
17.17 the resolution of any disputes within the Party, howsoever arising, as it sees fit;
17.18 the implementation of the dec isions of the Ethic s and Integr ity Com mittee established in Part XII of this Constitution;
17.19 the over seeing of the pr ocedure f or the elec tion of the Leader in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 2;
17.20 the registration of trade marks, intellectual property rights, copyright and design rights and patents.
17.21 ensuring that the Par ty is compliant with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act, and such legislation, regulations, or measures amending, supplementing or replacing the same.
17.22 The suspension of membership or the expulsion from membership of any member whose conduct is in conflict with the purpose, objects and values of the Party as indicated in Part I Article 2 or which is inconsistent with the objects or financial well-being of an Association or the Party or be likely to bring an Association or the Party into disrepute.

18 The Boar d shall have the pow er to delegate s uch of its f unctions as it shall from time to time see fit provided always that it shall not delegate any of the functions mentioned in Articles 17.2, 17.8, 17.10, 17.15 and 17.18.

19 The Board shall establish and maintain the following Committees, which shall comprise at least one appointed and one elected member of the Board:
19.1 The Committee on Membership, in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 6;
19.2 The Committee on Candidates, in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 6;
19.3 The Committee on Conferences, in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 4;

PART V

THE NATIONAL CONSERVATIVE CONVENTION

20 There shall be established and maintained The National Conservative Convention which shall consist of

20.1 the Chairmen of each Constituency Association within England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland or a Deputy Chairman nominated as a substitute by the Constituency Association in general meeting. In respect of Constituencies which have joined together as a Federation or other groupings of Constituency Associations pursuant to the provisions of Article 44 below, then the representation pursuant to this Article shall be determined by the Board; and

20.2 the elected representatives on the Board; and
the elected members of the Scottish Executive of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party; and

20.3 the elected members of the Board of the Welsh Conservative Party; and

20.4 all members of the Area Management Executives as elected in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 5 and their equivalent in Scotland; and

20.5 all Regional Co-ordinating Chairmen and Deputy Regional Co-ordinators as elected in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 5; and

20.6 such further representation from each Recognised Organisation, Specialist Group, or Other Body as the Board shall from time to time determine, having regard to the membership of the individual Recognised Organisation, Specialist Group or Other Body (not exceeding 100 such representatives for all Recognised Organisations, Specialist Groups or Other Bodies), who shall be elected by the members of each Recognised Organisation Specialist Group or Other Body in accordance with their respective constitutions; and

20.7 the three past Presidents of the National Conservative Convention; and

20.8 the two immediate past Chairmen of the National Conservative Convention; and

20.9 the immediate past Area Management Executive Chairmen for one year only; and

20.10 the immediate past Regional Co-ordinating Chairmen for one year only.

21 The National Conservative Convention shall elect, in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 3, a Chairman of the Convention whose responsibility it shall be to ensure that the Convention discharges its functions as set out in Article 24 below. The Chairman of the Convention shall, ex-officio, be a Deputy Chairman of the Board.

22 The National Conservative Convention shall elect, in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 3, a President of the Convention, who will chair the annual Party Conference, and who shall be a member of the Board.

23 The National Conservative Convention shall also elect three further Officers, in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 3, who shall be members of the Board and shall serve as Vice-Presidents of the National Conservative Convention.

24 The functions of the National Conservative Convention shall be to

24.1 support and promote the objects and values of the Party;

24.2 elect representatives to the Board;

24.3 oversee and receive reports from the Board, the Area Management Executives and Recognised Organisations;

24.4 provide a focus for views of Party Members and act as a link between the Party Leader and Party Members;

24.5 keep under review, and from time to time propose to the Constitutional College, in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 9, amendments to this Constitution;

24.6 recommend to the Board action that ensures the maintenance of an effective organisation throughout the Country.

25 The National Conservative Convention shall meet at least twice annually. The Leader and the Board shall be invited to attend its meetings.

PART VI

AREA COUNCILS, AREA MANAGEMENT EXECUTIVES AND REGIONAL CO-ORDINATORS

26 There shall be established and maintained in England, Wales and Northern Ireland a number of Area Councils, the composition and precise number of which shall be determined from time to time by the Board, whose decision shall be final and binding.

27 The Board shall undertake a specific review of boundaries following the redistribution of Parliamentary boundaries and shall consider undertaking such a review following
- 27.1 a unanimous request from an Area Management Executive and Regional Co-ordinating Chairman within an Area; or
- 27.2 a request from not less than 60% of Constituency Association Chairmen within an Area; or
- 27.3 a request from the Executive Council of any Constituency Association which is affected by a boundary change.

28 Each Area Council shall comprise
- 28.1 The Chairman of each Constituency Association within the Area of the Area Council to which it belongs. In respect of Constituencies which have joined together as a Federation or other grouping of Constituency Associations pursuant to the provisions of Article 44 below, then the representation pursuant to this Article shall be determined by the Board;
- 28.2 Two representatives elected by the Executive Council of each Constituency Association in accordance with the Rules of the Conservative Party Constituency Associations, as contained within Schedule 7.
- 28.3 The elected members of the Area Management Executive.

Area Management Executive

29 Each Area Council shall meet once a year and elect an Area Management Executive (in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 5) which shall act as a co-ordinating body between the Board and Constituency Associations with a view to enhancing the performance of Constituency Associations in each Area and co-ordinating activities and the efficient management of resources within each Area.

30 Each Area Management Executive shall consist of
- 30.1 a Chairman ("the Area Chairman");
- 30.2 two Deputy Chairmen
  - 30.2.1 One of whom shall have particular responsibility for co-ordinating the formulation and development of policy ideas and initiatives and political campaigning, in the Area ("the Political Deputy Chairman"); and
  - 30.2.2 One of whom shall have particular responsibility for fund-raising and membership within the Area ("the Membership Deputy Chairman");
- 30.3 up to two further Officers who may, from time to time, be co-opted by the Area Management Executive.

31 In Areas comprising more than twelve constituencies, Area Councils shall elect to the Area Management Executive, in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 5, one additional Officer for every additional six constituencies or part thereof.

32 It shall be the function of each Area Management Executive to co-ordinate Constituency Associations and take initiatives in respect of
- 32.1 sharing of resources between Constituency Associations;
- 32.2 the finance and membership of Constituency Associations;
- 32.3 the motivation and monitoring of the performance of Constituency Associations;
- 32.4 the management and training of Officers of Constituency Associations;
- 32.5 campaigning and Conservative representation in National, Local Government and European elections;
- 32.6 matters relating to Local Government;
- 32.7 assisting elected representatives and the professional staff with the co-ordination of local media relations;
- 32.8 resolving disputes within Constituency Associations and Branches thereof, including the investigation of breaches of Rules of Constituency Associations;

PART VI - AREA COUNCILS, AREA MANAGEMENT EXECUTIVES AND REGIONAL CO-ORDINATORS (cont.)

32.9 the provision of assistance to, and the undertaking of activities within a Supported Constituency Association;
32.10 preparing and submitting to the Board an annual report on the activities of each Association within the Area.

33 If the Board decides that an Area Management Executive is failing to fulfil its functions, the Board (or its representative) may meet the Area Management Executive and impose an Action Plan which shall identify performance targets which the Area Management Executive shall be required to meet within a given time scale.

34 The Board may appoint a representative to monitor the performance of the Area Management Executive in respect of the Action Plan. If, upon receipt of a report from the Board's representative, the Board forms the opinion that an Area Management Executive has taken insufficient remedial action or otherwise failed to comply with the requirements of the Action Plan, the Board shall afford the Area Management Executive an opportunity of making representations to it as to why any Officer of the Area Management Executive should not be removed from office.

35 After considering such representations as may have been made to it under Article 34 above, the Board may remove any or all Officers from office, in which case it shall cause fresh elections to take place as soon as reasonable practicable in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 5.

Regional Co-ordinators

36 The Board shall establish throughout England, by dividing into regions, a regional structure, having regard to the constituency boundaries for European elections. Thereafter the Board may from time to time amend the said regional structure to take account of any change in circumstances.

37 Three Regional Co-ordinators (to be known as "Regional Co-ordinators"), shall be elected in each Region, one of whom shall be elected as Regional Co-ordinating Chairman. The other two elected Regional Co-ordinators in the Region will be Deputy Regional Co-ordinators. No Regional Co-ordinator shall hold the same office for more than three consecutive years.

38 The Regional Co-ordinators shall be elected in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 5, by those members of the Area Management Executives in the region in which they are situated.

39 The Regional Co-ordinators shall be responsible for
39.1 co-ordinating campaigning and political activities which cross Area boundaries;
39.2 assisting Area Management Executives in the organisation of activities which cross Area boundaries;
39.3 co-ordinating campaign activity for Local Government elections where local authority boundaries cross Area boundaries;
39.4 ensuring the strategy of the Board in relation to Parliamentary boundary changes is implemented;
39.5 when so requested by the Board, providing assistance in the event of performance failings by Area Management Executives.

PART VII

CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS

40 A Constituency Association shall be maintained in every Parliamentary Constituency in Great Britain.

Structure of Constituency Associations

41 Each Constituency Association shall
41.1 be a Member of the Party;
41.2 adopt as its own rules in General Meeting the Mandatory Rules of The Rules of the Conservative Party Constituency Associations, as contained within Schedule 7;

41.3 adopt such other rules in General Meeting as it shall think fit having regard to the advisory rules of The Rules of the Conservative Party Constituency Associations, as contained within Schedule 7 provided that any such rules adopted by the Constituency Association shall not be inconsistent with the Mandatory Rules;

41.4 comply with the objects of Constituency Associations as set out in Paragraph 2 of Schedule 7 of this Constitution;

41.5 be representative of the Party in the Constituency;

41.6 present and apply the unified image and common presentational strategy designed for the Party nationally.

42 Each Constituency Association shall, upon the adoption or amendment of the Rules of its Constituency Association, send to the Secretary to the Board a copy of the Constituency Association's Rules as adopted or amended within thirty days thereof.

43 If, in the opinion of the Board, the adopted Rules of a Constituency Association are inconsistent or incompatible with either the Mandatory Rules contained within Schedule 7 hereof or this Constitution, the Board may require the Constituency Association to amend the Rules within such time period as it shall specify in such a way as to remove such inconsistency or incompatibility. Further, the Board shall have the power, in appropriate circumstances, to allow a Constituency Association to amend or vary the terms of its trust deed, required pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 17 of Schedule 7 of this Constitution so that the said deed is in a form different from that determined by the Board pursuant to paragraph 17.2 of Schedule 7.

44 Two or more Constituency Associations may join together for the purposes of campaigning and organisation in a Federation or other grouping of Constituency Associations. In such circumstances, the Constituency Associations concerned may, if necessary, when adopting the Rules for their Associations, apply to the Board for a variation of the Mandatory Rules contained within Schedule 7, which the Board shall have power to sanction. The representation of such Federation or other grouping of Constituency Associations at the National Conservative Convention and on Area Councils shall be as the Board shall from time to time determine.

45 The Officers of a Constituency Association shall comprise a Chairman, two Deputy-Chairmen, a Treasurer (where the office is not combined into that of the membership Deputy Chairman), and such other Officers of the Executive Council of the Constituency Association as may be elected in accordance with the provisions of the Association's Constitution, as set out in Schedule 7.

46 It shall be the responsibility of the Chairman of the Constituency Association to ensure that the Association discharges the duties set out in Article 41 above, and in particular the objects of Constituency Associations as set out in Paragraph 2 of Schedule 7.

47 The Officers of the Constituency Association shall send a Constituency Report, in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 5.10.2 of the Rules of Conservative Constituency Associations contained within Schedule 7, to the Area Management Executive which shall have power, at the request of the Board, to take reasonable steps to verify the information contained within it.

<u>Elections to the Area Council</u>

48 The Executive Council of each Constituency Association shall elect two members, in accordance with its Rules, to represent it on its Area Council, in addition to the Chairman of the Constituency Association (who shall be an ex-officio member of the Area Council).

<u>Supported Associations</u>

49 If the membership of any Constituency Association falls below a minimum level to be determined by the Board, or in other exceptional circumstances, the Board may designate such Constituency Association a "Supported Association".

PART VII - CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS (cont.)

50 Supported Associations shall continue to enjoy the full rights of membership of the Party, save that, where the Board so decides

50.1 the Area Management Executive for the Area within which the Association is situated may, working with Officers of the Association, appoint a representative who may if necessary assume the role of Association Chairman, run local recruitment campaigns, supervise the election of Officers and assume responsibility for the funds and finances of the Association;

50.2 the representative appointed under Article 50.1 may supervise the management, affairs and conduct of the Association, and shall have full access to all records and information of it;

50.3 where a supported Association is part of a Federation the Board representative shall be invited to attend all meetings of the Executive Council or Management Committee of the Federation for so long as Supported Status is imposed;

50.4 the Area Management Executive may, together with Officers of the Association, draw up shortlists for the selection by the Association of prospective Parliamentary Candidates from the United Kingdom Parliamentary List as defined in Paragraph 7 of Schedule 6 herein.

51 A Supported Association shall cease to be designated as such by the Board when the Board shall decide that the Association has improved its performance to a satisfactory level.

52 If the Area Management Executive resolves that a Supported Association within its Area is failing to co-operate with any appointed representative or failing to make reasonable efforts to improve its performance, the Area Management Executive may require the Supported Association to draw up an Action Plan which shall specify certain minimum performance targets which the Supported Association shall be required to meet within a given timescale.

53 If, 3 months after requesting an Association to draw up an Action Plan, the Area Management Executive is of the opinion that the Officers of the Association have failed to make reasonable efforts to achieve the targets set out in the Action Plan, the Area Management Executive may report to the Board recommending that any Officer or Officers of the Association shall be removed, in accordance with the provisions of Paragraphs 14 and 15 of Schedule 6 herein.

<u>Refusal of membership or expulsion from a Constituency Association</u>

54 The Executive Council of a Constituency Association may resolve either to refuse membership to its Association of any individual or expel any existing Party Member from the Association only in accordance with the procedure set out in Paragraphs 3.5 to 3.7 of the Rules of Conservative Constituency Associations contained within Schedule 7.

55 In such circumstances, the Constituency Association shall immediately inform the Board, which shall instruct the Committee on Membership thereupon to consider the circumstances surrounding the Association's decision. The Committee on Membership shall either confirm or refuse to confirm the decision, or take other such action as it may think it fit.

56 The Board may suspend the membership of any Party Member who has been the subject of a resolution to expel him from a Constituency Association pending consideration of the matter by the Committee on Membership or take other such action as it may think it fit.

57 After determination by the Committee on Membership, either the Party Member or the Executive Council of the Constituency Association may appeal to the Board. The Board shall adopt such procedures as it think s fit to hear the appeal and will notify the parties of its procedures (in particular whether the appeal is to be in the nature of a review of the original decision or a full rehearing) and the grounds being considered. The Board may uphold the decision of the Constituency Association and/or take other action as it may think fit. The decision of the Board shall be final and binding on all parties.

58 Where the Committee on Membership or (as the case may be) the Board has confirmed the decision of the Constituency Association, the name of the Party Member concerned shall be removed forthwith from the National Membership List and thereafter that individual shall not be permitted to join the Party or any Constituency Association for such period as shall be determined by the Board.

59 Where the Committee on Membership or (as the case may be) the Board refuses to confirm the decision of a Constituency Association to expel a Party Member, the Party Member concerned shall forthwith be reinstated as such on the National Membership List and the Constituency Association's Membership List. In relation to a prospective Party Member, where the Committee on Membership or (as the case may be) the Board refuses to confirm the decision of the Constituency Association, the Board shall invite the prospective Party Member to join the Party.

Breaches of the Rules of Conservative Party Constituency Associations

60 If a member of a Constituency Association is concerned about any breach of the rules of the adopted Constituency Association Rules of his Association, he may raise the matter with the Chairman of the Association, who shall investigate the matter and take appropriate action to remedy any breach.

61 If the member of such Constituency Association remains dissatisfied with either the investigation by the Chairman of the Association or the action taken by him, the member may report the matter to the Area Management Executive for the Area in which the Association is situated, which shall have the power to investigate the matter and take such action as it thinks appropriate to remedy the breach.

62 If, upon consideration and determination by the Area Management Executive, the member is still dissatisfied with either the investigation by the Area Management Executive or the action taken in respect of any breach found, he may refer the matter to the Compliance Officer, who shall investigate the matter in accordance with the provisions of Articles 77 and 78. The decision of the Compliance Officer on such a reference shall be final and binding and not subject to review of any kind.

Amendments to the Rules of Conservative Party Constituency Associations

63 The Rules of the Conservative Party Constituency Associations, as contained within Schedule 7, shall be reviewed from time to time by the National Conservative Convention which may propose amendments in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 3. Any amendments to the said Rules shall be in accordance with the provisions of Article 91.

PART VIII

THE CONSERVATIVE POLICY FORUM

64 There shall be established and maintained a national policy development forum to be known as the Conservative Policy Forum, the principal functions of which shall be

- 64.1 to encourage and co-ordinate the formulation and development of policy ideas and initiatives within the Party, particularly the Constituency Associations;
- 64.2 to establish a process for receiving such policy ideas and initiatives and ensuring a response is made to them;
- 64.3 to consult by such means as it sees fit on such policy ideas and initiatives;
- 64.4 to facilitate the development and organisation of high quality specialist input on important policy Areas at a national level;
- 64.5 to assist in the organisation of Party Conferences;
- 64.6 to advise the Leader and the Board of any policy ideas and initiatives so formulated and developed.

65 The Board shall appoint a Director of the Conservative Policy Forum whose responsibilities shall include the formation of a structure to co-ordinate the activities of the Political Deputy Chairmen of the Area Management Executives and Constituency Associations.

PART VIII - THE CONSERVATIVE POLICY FORUM (cont.)

66 The Conservative Policy Forum shall be managed by a Council constituted annually which shall consist of

66.1 A Chairman, appointed by the Leader, normally being a Government Minister (or while in Opposition, a Shadow Spokesman);

66.2 The Director of the Conservative Policy Forum;

66.3 Three representatives elected by the Political Deputy Chairmen of the Area Management Executives in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 5

66.4 A senior Director of the Party, appointed by the Chairman of the Board;

66.5 A representative appointed pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party;

66.6 Up to five individuals with expertise in specific policy Areas, co-opted by the Director of the Conservative Policy Forum in consultation with the Council.

67 The Council of the Conservative Policy Forum shall meet not less than twice every year with the Leader to discuss policy ideas and initiatives, and membership opinion in relation thereto.

PART IX

RECOGNISED ORGANISATIONS

68 Prior to application for recognition by the Board as a Recognised Organisation, any such organisation seeking recognition and membership shall

68.1 verify to the satisfaction of the Board that it has a democratic constitution, a broad membership and is open to all Party Members who qualify under its constitution;

68.2 submit to the Board for its approval prior to recognition a copy or draft copy of its constitution.

69 The Constitution of any Recognised Organisation shall, as a minimum requirement, include:

69.1 a statement of the objects of the Recognised Organisation;

69.2 its criteria for membership, including membership of the Party, unless expressly provided otherwise by the Board;

69.3 a requirement for an election of its Chairman and its other Officers at an Annual General Meeting.

69.4 a requirement for the maintenance and regular revision of a register of its members;

69.5 a requirement for the keeping of an annual statement of accounts in a form approved by the Board, which shall be submitted to the Board annually.

70 The Board may, subject to the prior fulfilment of the conditions contained within Articles 68 and 69 above, grant to an organisation the status of Recognised Organisation.

71 The Board shall always accord the status of a Recognised Organisation to one organisation which has specific responsibility for representing Party Members under the age of 30.

72 In the event that a Recognised Organisation fails to fulfil or maintain the requirements contained within Article 68.1 above, then the Board shall give twelve months written notice to the Recognised Organisation that its status may be withdrawn in the event that it fails to achieve those requirements within that period. After such period of twelve months, where a Recognised Organisation has failed to achieve the requirements contained within Article 68.1, the Board may either withdraw from the Recognised Organisation its status as such, or require the Recognised Organisation to remove from office such Officer of the Recognised Organisation as it shall determine.

73 Save as shall be expressly provided by the Board, each Recognised Organisation shall, without prejudice to the provisions of Article 69 above,

73.1 be a member of the Party;

73.2 ensure that its membership is open only to Party Members;

73.3 be bound by this Constitution;

73.4 pay to the Party such affiliation fees as shall be prescribed from time to time by the Board.

PART X

PARTY CONFERENCES

74 The provisions of Schedule 4 shall have effect in relation to Party Conferences.

PART XI

FURTHER RULES OF THE PARTY

75 Further Rules of the Party shall be as contained within Schedule 6.

76 The provisions of Paragraph 1 and 2 of Schedule 8 shall apply to the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party and Scottish Party Members; and the provisions of Paragraph 3 to 5 of Schedule 8 shall apply to the Welsh Conservative Party.

PART XII

ETHICS, CONDUCT AND STANDARDS

77 The Board of the Party shall appoint a Compliance Officer who shall be responsible for

77.1 ensuring that the provisions of this Constitution of the Party are complied with by all members of the Party;

77.2 identifying any breach of the provisions of this Constitution;

77.3 requiring, by written warning, the member of the Party to remedy any identified breach of the provisions of the Constitution within a specified period of time;

77.4 informing the Board of any failure of a member of the Party to comply with the notice to remedy the breach provided that in relation to any matter where there is an allegation of conduct bringing or likely to bring the Party into disrepute, that matter shall not be considered by the Compliance Officer but shall be considered in accordance with Articles 80 to 89 below.

78 Where the Board is informed by the Compliance Officer of any failure of a member of the Party to comply with a notice to remedy a breach of the provisions of this Constitution within the time specified in the notice, the Board may take such action as it shall think fit against the member of the Party concerned, which action shall be unlimited.

79 No Member of Parliament of either House, no Member of the European Parliament, no prospective Member of the European Parliament, no Assembly or prospective Assembly Member in England or Wales, no Assembly Member or prospective Assembly Member or its equivalent in Northern Ireland, no Councillor or prospective Councillor, no Candidate or prospective Candidate, no Party Member, or applicant for membership, no Party Officer or prospective employee; shall have engaged or engage in conduct which brings or is likely to bring the Party into disrepute.

80.1 The Ethics and Integrity Committee ("The Committee") is an independent committee which following a reference or request by the Leader or the Board, is empowered to determine whether any alleged conduct has brought or is likely to bring the Party into disrepute, and to promulgate and publish Rules relating thereto, which will be binding.

The Committee is also empowered to give advice on general matters relating to ethics and integrity within the Party.

80.2 The Committee shall consist of two Queen's Counsel in private practice, appointed by the Board, as Chairman and Deputy Chairman, and two ex officio members, the Chairman for the time being of the National Conservative Convention and the Chairman for the time being of the 1922 Committee.

80.3 The alternates for the ex officio members will be, respectively, the President for the time being of the National Conservative Convention, and one of the Vice Chairmen of the 1922 Committee.

80.4 The Committee will sit as a four member committee, unless there are exceptional reasons for not doing so, which will be a matter for the Committee.

PART XII - ETHICS, CONDUCT AND STANDARDS (cont.)

81 For the purposes of Articles 79 and 80, conduct which consists solely of expressing disagreement with the policies of the Party shall not constitute conduct which brings or is likely to bring the Party into disrepute. The Committee will determine in its absolute discretion whether a complaint which has been referred is in substance based on policy disputes within the Party.

82.1 The Committee will be the master of its own procedure, subject to the paramount duty to act fairly.

82.2 The Rules governing the determination of a complaint will be decided by the Committee and will be available generally as well as given to the person whose conduct is to be investigated in order to enable him to know in advance the rules governing the complaint against him.

82.3 It is the duty of all members of the Party and of any person subject to a complaint to co-operate fully with the Committee in the discharge of its functions whether by the provision of documents, information, evidence or otherwise, as the Committee in its absolute discretion may from time to time require. Breach of this duty is subject to sanction as a disciplinary matter determined by the Board.

82.4 The Committee will not deal with stale complaints, namely, complaints based on misconduct known publicly prior to 31st March 1998. Complaints based on misconduct which took place prior to 31st March 1998, but which only came to light publicly thereafter, will be considered by the Committee.

82.5 The Committee will have unlimited powers to impose whatever sanction it considers appropriate in the context of all the relevant circumstances after it has made a final determination of the nature and gravity of the conduct which has brought or is likely to bring the Party into disrepute.

83 The Board shall publish and implement the Committee's determination of a complaint as soon after its receipt as is reasonably practicable, unless the determination is subject to review, in which case the Committee's final determination will be published but not implemented.

84.1 The Committee's final determination can be reviewed if leave is granted.

84.2 All applications for leave, subject to the Rules of the Committee, shall be made within 14 days from the Committee's final determination.

84.3 No application for leave can be made when that time limit has expired, unless the applicant can establish that there was new material evidence which was not by the exercise of reasonable due diligence available to him at the time of the Committee's final determination.

84.4 The application for leave and the review (if any) will be conducted by a retired Judge appointed by the Board ("the Reviewer")

85 The review will be on the following grounds:

(a) procedural unfairness;

(b) perversity: namely, that the determination is one which no reasonable Committee could reach in the circumstance of the particular case; and

(c) proportionality: namely, that the sanction imposed is disproportionate to the nature and blameworthiness of the conduct which has brought or is likely to bring the Party into disrepute

86 The Reviewer shall either confirm the Committee's original determination or remit it to the Committee for reconsideration in accordance with his decision and statement of reasons.

87 A review, if leave is granted, under article 84 shall be the exclusive remedy available to a person aggrieved by the Committee's determination..

88.1 The Committee may in its absolute discretion, decide whether or not to deal with a complaint made against a person who is also a member or associate member of the Party in Scotland. In exercising its discretion the Committee shall take into account, inter alia, where the complaint took place and its effect as well as the closeness of the ties of the person the subject of the complaint to the Party in England. If the Committee exercises its discretion not to deal with the complaint it may refer the complaint to the equivalent body in Scotland.

88.2 The Committee will be entitled to recognise as a matter of comity and reciprocity decisions made in other countries in relation to a member or associate member of the Party where the same or similar conduct is complained of.

89 For the avoidance of doubt but without prejudice to any of the provisions of this Part, matters of Parliamentary discipline (not touching or concerning the ethics and integrity of a Member of Parliament or Peer) shall at all times remain the responsibility of the Chief Whip in the House of Commons or House of Lords, as the case may be.

PART XIII

CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

90 The Constitutional College of the Conservative Party shall comprise:

i. Members of the National Conservative Convention;
ii. Members of Parliament;
iii. Members of the European Parliament;
iv. Officers of the Association of Conservative Peers and Frontbench Spokesmen in the House of Lords, as appointed by the Leader.

91 Subject to the provisions of Articles 92 and 93 below, this Constitution may be amended or changed provided that the amendment or change is approved by

91.1 not less than 66% of those members of the Constitutional College voting; and
91.2 not less than 50% of those members of the Constitutional College eligible to vote.

92 In relation to any proposed change to Parts III, IV, XII and XIII of this Constitution and the Schedules only to the extent that relate thereto, this Constitution may only be amended if approved by

92.1 not less than 50% of those members of the Constitutional College eligible to vote and
92.2 not less than 66% of Members of Parliament voting; and
92.3 not less than 66% of Members of the National Conservative Convention voting.

93 The provisions of Schedule 9 to this Constitution shall have effect.

PART XIV

COMMENCEMENT PROVISIONS

94 On 28th March 1998 the provisions of this Constitution shall take effect subject to the commencement provisions contained within Schedule 10.

PART XV

INTERPRETATION

95 This Constitution shall be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 1.

SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE 1
INTERPRETATION

1 In this Constitution, except in so far as the context otherwise requires

1.1 The provisions of the Interpretation Act 1978 (or any statutory modification or re-enactment thereto) shall apply.

1.2 "Councillor" means a member of the Conservative Group in a Unitary, County, Metropolitan, Shire, District or London Local Authority;
"Member of Parliament" means a Member of the House of Commons in receipt of the Conservative Whip;
"Member of the European Parliament" means a Member of the European Parliament representing a constituency or region in the United Kingdom, in receipt of the Conservative Whip;
"Member of a Regional Assembly" means a member of the Conservative Group in a Regional Assembly;
"the 1922 Committee" means a committee comprising all Members of Parliament;
"Peer" means a Member of the House of Lords in receipt of the Conservative Whip.

SCHEDULE 2
RULES FOR THE ELECTION OF THE LEADER

1 The Leader shall be elected by the Party Members and Scottish Party Members.

2 A Leader resigning from the Leadership of the Party is not eligible for re-nomination in the consequent Leadership election.

Election of Leader

3 Upon the initiation of an election for the Leader, it shall be the duty of the 1922 Committee to present to the Party, as soon as reasonably practicable, a choice of candidates for election as Leader. The rules for deciding the procedure by which the 1922 Committee selects candidates for submission for election shall be determined by the Executive Committee of the 1922 Committee after consultation of the Board.

4 If there is only one candidate at the time laid down for the close of nominations, that candidate shall be declared Leader of the Party.

5 Only those Party Members and Scottish Party Members who were members of the Party from the time of the call for nominations by the Chairman of the 1922 Committee for the election of the Leader and have been members for at least three months immediately prior to the close of the ballot for the election of the Leader shall be entitled to vote.

6 A candidate achieving more than 50% of the vote among the Party Membership shall be declared elected Leader of the Party.

7 In the event of there being only one valid nomination at the close of nominations prior to the first ballot being held by the Parliamentary Party for the election of the new Leader, the election of the nominee may if so ordered by the Board be ratified by a ballot of the Party Members and Scottish Party Members to be held within one month of the close of nomination.

8 Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the rules for the conduct of the ballot or ballots of Party Members and Scottish Party Members shall be agreed by the Board and the Executive Committee of the 1922 Committee.

9 The Chairman of the 1922 Committee, acting on behalf of the Party, shall act as Returning Officer for all stages of the election.

SCHEDULE 3
THE NATIONAL CONSERVATIVE CONVENTION

1 A meeting of the National Conservative Convention ("the National Convention") shall take place at least twice annually, and arrangements for such meetings shall be organised and administered by the National Convention Executive.

2 Not less than 56 days prior to the Annual Meeting of the National Convention, the Secretary of the National Convention shall write all members of the National Convention
- 2.1 Giving notice of the date of the Annual Meeting of the National Convention;
- 2.2 Inviting nominations from the members of the National Convention for election of the President and Chairman of the National Convention and three Vice Presidents to the Board;
- 2.3 Stating the date by which nominations must be returned, being not less than 28 clear days from the date of the Notice, nor more than 21 clear days from the date of the Annual Meeting of the National Convention;
- 2.4 Stating the address to which the nominations must be returned.

3 Only those members of the National Convention notified to the Secretary of the National Convention not less than 28 days prior to a meeting of the National Convention shall be entitled to vote.

4 Any nomination for any such office or post referred to in Paragraph 2.2 herein must be submitted on Official Nomination papers signed by not less than twelve members of the National Convention, of whom eight must be Chairmen of Constituency Associations, together with a signed letter from the nominee accepting nomination.

5 Any nominee for any such office or post referred to in Paragraph 2.2 herein shall have been a Member of the National Convention for not less than two years.

6 Any nominee for the office of President shall have been an elected member of the Board for one year.

7 No member of the National Convention may hold office
- 7.1 as one of the elected representatives of the National Convention (other than as President or Chairman) for more than three consecutive years;
- 7.2 as Chairman of the National Convention for more than three consecutive years;
- 7.3 as President for more than one year.

8 At the National Convention Annual Meeting, the National Convention shall receive, prior to elections, reports from the elected Officers of the National Convention, such Area Management Executives and Recognised Organisations as the National Convention shall determine. The National Convention shall also consider any proposed changes to this Constitution in accordance with such procedure as the National Convention shall determine.

9 The Secretary of the National Convention shall act as Chief Returning Officer in any election at any meeting of the National Convention.

10 An Officer of the National Convention who is not standing for re-election shall assume the chairmanship of the National Convention during the election of Officers. If all the Officers are standing for re-election, then the Secretary of the National Convention shall assume the chair.

11 Each member of the National Convention shall have one vote only notwithstanding that that member's right to attend the National Convention derives from holding more than one office or post.

SCHEDULE 3 - THE NATIONAL CONSERVATIVE CONVENTION (cont.)

12 Elections shall take place at a meeting of the National Convention and shall be held by secret ballot. Provision may be made at the discretion of The Secretary of the National Conservative Convention for voting to take place by post prior to the meeting.

13 Upon a petition signed by not less than sixty-five Constituency Association Chairmen to the Secretary of the National Convention, the Chairman of the National Convention shall call an Extraordinary General Meeting of the National Convention.

14 The Secretary of the National Convention shall give not less than 28 clear days notice of the Extraordinary General Meeting in writing to all members of the National Convention, together with an Agenda for the meeting.

15 Subject to the provisions of this Constitution the Board shall be advised of the rules governing the conduct of the National Convention elections and rules of Procedure to be adopted at the National Convention.

SCHEDULE 4
PARTY CONFERENCES

Committee on Conferences

1 In accordance with its responsibility for the organisation of Party Conferences, the Board shall establish a Committee of the Board on Party Conferences ("the Committee on Conferences") the composition and membership of which shall be as the Board shall from time to time determine, but which will include the President of the National Convention and the Director of the Conservative Policy Forum. The Committee on Conferences shall report directly to the Board.

2 The function of the Committee on Conferences shall be to organise and administer Party Conferences, including setting the agenda and ensuring that, so far as is practicable, there is open access and debate on topical issues. The Committee on Conferences shall review annually the procedure adopted at Party Conferences (including these Rules) and make recommendations to the Board on any amendments thereto.

Annual Party Conference

3 There shall be a Conference of the Party held annually ("the Annual Party Conference") which shall be held at such time and place as the Board shall decide except that, in exceptional circumstances and in its absolute discretion, the Board may decide that the Annual Party Conference shall not be held for a particular year.

4 In addition to the Annual Party Conference, the Board may decide, upon the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences, to hold further Party Conferences in any particular year, the composition of which shall be determined by the Board.

5 Not less than 56 clear days prior to its commencement, the Board shall give notice of the venue, dates and sitting times of a Party Conference to each member of the National Convention and the Agent or Secretary of each affiliated Constituency Association, save that any failure to give proper or adequate notice shall not prevent the holding of a Party Conference or invalidate any resolutions made at it.

6 The following (to be known as "representatives" for the purposes of the Annual Party Conference), are entitled to attend and vote at the Annual Party Conference:

- 6.1 The members of the National Convention;
- 6.2 The two Deputy Chairmen of each Constituency Association;
- 6.3 Three additional representatives of each Constituency Association, one of whom must be a member of such Recognised Organisation as is recognised by the Board under Article 71 of this Constitution;
- 6.4 Members and former members of the Board and its Committees;
- 6.5 The Agent or Secretary of each Constituency Association;
- 6.6 Members of Parliament, Members of the European Parliament, Members of the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly and Members of the Association of Conservative Peers;
- 6.7 Selected Prospective Parliamentary Candidates for Westminster and European seats;
- 6.8 Parliamentary Candidates on the Approved Lists;
- 6.9 The Chairman and such number of representatives from each Recognised Organisation and Specialist Group or Other Body as the Board shall from time to time determine;
- 6.10 Members of the Scottish Executive of The Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party;
- 6.11 Members of the Board of the Welsh Conservative Party;
- 6.12 One representative of each university or college based Branch or member of such Recognised Organisation as is recognised by the Board under Article 71 of this Constitution;
- 6.13 Honorary Vice-Presidents of the former National Union;
- 6.14 The Leaders of Conservative Groups on all Unitary, County, Metropolitan, Shire, District and London Local Authorities in the United Kingdom;
- 6.15 Adopted Prospective Candidates for The Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly;

SCHEDULE 4 - PARTY CONFERENCES (cont.)

7 Each representative of a Party Conference shall have one vote only and his place shall not be transferable notwithstanding that a representative's right to attend a Party Conference derives from holding more than one office or post.

8 Constituency representatives may attend a Party Conference only on behalf of a Constituency Association in which they are registered on the National Membership List.

9 In addition, the Committee on Conferences may allocate "Additional Representative" passes to Constituency Associations, Recognised Organisations and others which shall be allocated on such basis as the Board decides but having regard to the membership of Constituency Associations as recorded on the National Membership List. Such Additional Representative places shall carry full voting and speaking rights.

10 Representatives shall pay such registration fee as the Board shall determine and only representatives who have paid such fee may attend.

11 Motions to a Party Conference shall be submitted to the Director of the Conservative Policy Forum by such date as the Committee on Conferences shall determine. The Director of the Conservative Policy Forum will, on behalf of the Committee on Conferences, publish all motions properly made not less than fourteen clear days prior to the opening of a Party Conference.

12 In addition, the Committee on Conferences shall determine the Agenda for a Party Conference and publish it not less than fourteen clear days prior to the opening of a Party Conference, save that, where circumstances require, the Committee on Conferences may vary or amend the Agenda after publication and such variations or amendments shall be published as soon as possible thereafter.

13 Rules for the procedure to be adopted at Party Conferences will be prepared from time to time by the Committee on Conferences which it will recommend for adoption by the Party Conference.

SCHEDULE 5
AREA COUNCILS, AREA MANAGEMENT EXECUTIVES AND REGIONAL CO-ORDINATORS

Area Councils and Area Management Executives

1 There shall be an annual meeting of the Area Council for each Area which shall be held at such time and place as the Area Management Executive shall decide.

2 The Area Chairman shall give not less than 28 days clear notice of the annual meeting of the Area Council to every member of the Area Council. The Agent or Organising Secretary of each Constituency Association within the Area of the Area Council, shall also receive notice and be entitled to attend in a non-voting capacity.

3 In such notice the Area Chairman shall invite nominations for election to the elected posts to the Area Management Executive and the notice shall state the address to which nominations shall be sent and the return date for return of nominations being a date not less than three days before the meeting.

4 Any member of a Constituency Association within an Area may stand for election within that Area to the Area Management Executive provided he is proposed and seconded by members of an Area Council in the Area in which he is standing for election.

5 The election shall take place at the meeting of the Area Council. The election shall be by secret ballot (unless the Area Council agrees otherwise unanimously). The Returning Officer shall be a member of the professional staff of the Party, nominated for the purpose by the Board.

6 Candidates shall stand for the posts of either
6.1 Chairman; or
6.2 either post of Deputy Chairman; or, if applicable,
6.3 the post of additional Officer(s),
and the Candidate with the most votes for the respective post shall be duly elected for that post for the following year with immediate effect.

7 No one may hold the same office as an Officer of the Area Management Executive (whether in an elected or co-opted position) for more than three consecutive years.

8 The Board shall from time to time determine and publish the procedure for election to the Council of the Conservative Policy Forum. Political Deputy Chairmen of the Area Management Executives shall be eligible for election to the Council as shall the elected members of the CPF Council. All Political Deputy Chairmen of the Area Management Executive shall be eligible to vote. No elected member may serve on the Council for more than three years.

9 In the event that a member of the Area Management Executive ceases to hold office, for whatever reason, a meeting of the Area Council shall be convened by a person appointed by the Board for that purpose, not more than 28 days later, for the purpose of electing a successor.

Regional Co-ordinators

10 The Regional Co-ordinating Chairman of each region established pursuant to Article 36 of the Constitution shall give notice to every member of an Area Council within the Region and the Secretary or Agent of every Constituency Association within the Region of the annual election of the Regional Co-ordinators. The notice shall also state
10.1 the date by which nominations for election to the post of Regional Co-ordinator must be returned;
10.2 the address to which nominations shall be sent;
10.3 the date by which ballot papers shall be returned.

SCHEDULE 5 - AREA COUNCILS, AREA MANAGEMENT EXECUTIVES AND REGIONAL CO-ORDINATORS (cont.)

11 Ballot papers shall be dispatched within 14 days of the close of nominations and the ballot shall close 14 days after the dispatch of the ballot papers

12 Any Party Member may stand for election as a Regional Co-ordinator in the Region in which he is a Party Member provided that his nomination is supported by the resolution of at least one Area Management Executive in the Region in which he is standing for election.

13 The election of Regional Co-ordinators shall take place by secret ballot of all members of Area Councils within the Region. The Returning Officer shall be a member of the professional staff of the Party, nominated for the purpose by the Board.

14 Candidates shall stand for the posts of either
14.1 Regional Co-ordinating Chairman; or
14.2 a Deputy Co-ordinating Chairman
and the Candidate with the most votes for the respective post shall be duly elected for that post for the following year with immediate effect.

SCHEDULE 6
FURTHER RULES OF THE PARTY

Elections

1 No person may cast more than one vote in any ballot in any election for any post within the Party, including any Constituency Association or Recognised Organisation.

2 No Party Member or Scottish Party Member may vote in any election within the Party unless that member has been such for not less than three months prior to the date of the election.

Membership of the Party

3 A Member of Parliament, Member of the European Parliament, Peer in receipt of the Party Whip, Member of or Candidate for the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, Councillor or any Candidate for any such office shall be a Party Member.

4 The Board shall establish and maintain, in accordance with the provisions of Article 19.1 a Committee of the Board on Membership ("the Committee on Membership") the composition and membership of which shall be as the Board shall from time to time determine.

5 The Committee on Membership shall report directly to the Board and, in particular shall be responsible for

5.1 the determination of the subscriptions of Party Members and Scottish Party Members and affiliation fees of Constituency Associations and Recognised Organisations;

5.2 the determination of the different categories of membership, including issues relating to the renewal and length of subscriptions;

5.3 overseeing and protection of the National Membership List.

Candidate Selection - Committee on Candidates

6 In accordance with its responsibility for maintaining a Candidates' List, the Board shall establish and maintain in accordance with the provisions of Article 19.2 a Committee of the Board on Candidates, ("the Committee on Candidates") the composition and membership of which shall be as the Board shall from time to time determine, but which shall be chaired by a chairman ("the Chairman of the Committee on Candidates) who shall report directly to the Board.

7 The Committee on Candidates shall establish Lists of Candidates, one of which shall be known as the United Kingdom Parliamentary List and another of which shall be known as the European Parliament List, known collectively as "the Approved Lists".

8 The Committee on Candidates shall prepare a procedure for the selection and review of Candidates onto both Lists and submit that procedure to the Board for prior approval. The Committee on Candidates shall cause the approved procedure for Candidate selection to be published, and Constituency Associations shall be obliged to select Candidates in accordance with such approved procedure.

9 In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, a Constituency Association shall only adopt as its Candidate for a United Kingdom Parliamentary Election a Candidate whose name appears on the United Kingdom Parliamentary List.

10 Any Candidate for the European Parliament must be included on the European Parliament List prior to selection.

11 In the case of a by-election in respect of a United Kingdom Parliamentary or European Parliamentary election, the Committee on Candidates may revise the relevant List for the purposes of the by-election.

SCHEDULE 6- FURTHER RULES OF THE PARTY (cont.)

Power of the Board to determine the procedure by which Constituency Associations and other bodies select Candidates.

12 The Board may, through the Committee on Candidates, from time to time publish mandatory rules as to the procedure by which Constituency Associations and other bodies select Candidates for all or any public elections.

Standing for Election against the official Party Candidate

13 Standing in an election against an official Party Candidate shall be considered to be a ground for expulsion of a Party Member from the Constituency Association of which he is a member and from the Party.

Replacement or removal from office of any Officer of a Constituency Association

14 Upon receipt of a report from an Area Management Executive recommending that any Officer or Officers of a Constituency or Supported Association should be removed from office or by its own motion, the Board may remove from office any Officer of a Constituency Association and may replace such Officer with such individual (being either a member of the Constituency Association or a member of the Area Management Executive of the Area in which the Constituency Association is located) as it shall think fit.

15 If the Board exercises its powers to replace any Officer of a Constituency Association, it may also, by the giving of the requisite notice, call a Special General Meeting of the Constituency Association for the purpose of electing a new Officer or Officers of the Constituency Association.

Withdrawal of Membership of a Constituency Association

16 The Board may refuse or withdraw the membership of a Constituency Association.

17 In the event that the Board is minded to exercise this power, the Board shall give notice of its intention, giving the reasons for the proposed action, to the Officers of the Constituency Association. The notice shall also invite representations, either orally or in writing, from the Constituency Association within such period specified in the notice, not being less than 28 days from the date of the notice.

18 If the Constituency Association elects to make representations orally, it shall write to the Board making that request and briefly setting out its case. Thereafter, the Board shall arrange a private hearing not being less than 14 days from the date of the Constituency Association's request, at which the Board, or such representatives as it may appoint, shall hear the Constituency Association's representations. The Board, or its representatives, shall determine its (or their) own procedure, but will at all times have regard to the rules of natural justice.

19 If representatives of the Board attend to hear the representations, those representatives shall report back to the Board, in writing, as soon as practicable, on those representations; and shall make recommendations accordingly. Thereafter, the Board shall take such action as in its absolute discretion it thinks fit including, without exception, the issuing of a written warning, the withdrawal of any of the rights of membership, the refusal of membership, and the suspension or expulsion from membership of the Party.

20 The Board shall give its reasons in writing which shall be final and binding on the parties and not subject to review of any kind.

21 The Board retains the right to establish a new or replacement Constituency Association in such manner as it thinks appropriate.

22 Notwithstanding that a Constituency Association has had its membership of the Party withdrawn, the Members of such Association shall continue to be Party Members unless the Board decides otherwise.

SCHEDULE 6- FURTHER RULES OF THE PARTY (cont.)

23 In the event of the Board of the Party under the provisions of Part IV Articles 17.7 or 17.22 determining that an individual membership should be suspended, withdrawn or refused the secretary shall write to the individual concerned stating any reason for this determination. The individual shall then have 28 days to lodge an appeal to the Individual Member Review Committee which shall exist for the purpose of hearing such appeals under a process determined by it and whose decision shall be final.

The Conservative Councillors Association

24 Councillors in England, Wales and Northern Ireland shall, within a month of election or re-election, join the Conservative Councillor's Association (CCA) and shall pay such annual subscription as shall be determined from time to time at the Annual General Meeting of the CCA.

Specialist Groups

25 The Board shall have power to acknowledge specialist groups of Party Members

(i) ("Specialist Groups") which shall submit their Rules or Constitution for approval by the Board prior to being acknowledged by the Board. The status of any Specialist Group as such may be rescinded by the Board at any time.

(ii) All full members of Specialist Groups shall be Party Members and shall file their annual report, accounts and membership records with the Board by 30th June each year.

(iii) The Board shall have power to determine, in respect of each Specialist Group, such representation at Party Conferences, as it shall think fit.

Other Bodies

26 (i) The Board shall have power to acknowledge Other Bodies (Other Bodies) which shall submit their rules or Constitution for approval by the Board prior to their being acknowledged by the Board. The status of any Other Body as such may be rescinded by the Board at any time.

(ii) The Board shall have power to determine, in respect of each Other Body, such representation at Party Conference, as it shall think fit.

Association of Conservative Clubs

27 (i) Where a Conservative Club is affiliated to the Association of Conservative Clubs and a subscription, donation or per capita payment is made on behalf of the members of the Club to the Constituency Association in which the Club is situated, those members should be deemed to be Club members of the Conservative Party (hereafter referred to as Club members).

(i) Club members shall become Party members upon payment of such appropriate subscription as shall be determined by the Board from time to time.

(iii) In order to represent a Club or the ACC in a representative capacity within the Party such a representative must be a Party member.

Natural Justice

28 Any removal of rights of membership of, or removal of office or other position from, any Association or other body within the Party will only be made after due consideration of natural justice.

SCHEDULE 7
RULES OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS

(The Mandatory Rules are indicated in bold type. The Advisory Rules are not emboldened.).

1 NAME AND AFFILIATION

1.1 The name of the Association shall be "..... Conservative Association" ("the Association").

1.2 The Association shall be a member of and affiliated to The Conservative and Unionist Party (referred to in this Constitution as "the Party") and shall at all times be bound by the Constitution of the Party.

2 OBJECTS

The Objects of the Association shall be to sustain and promote the objects and values of the Party in the Parliamentary constituency of ..... ("the Constituency"); to provide an effective campaigning organisation in the Constituency; to secure the return of Conservative Candidates at elections; and to raise the necessary funds to achieve these objectives; to contribute to the central funds of the Party.

3 MEMBERSHIP

3.1 The Association shall only comprise Party Members (as defined in Article 4 of the Constitution of the Party) who shall pay subscriptions in accordance with the provisions of Articles 5 and 6 of the Constitution.

3.2 All members of the Association shall be bound by these Rules and the Constitution of the Party.

3.3 All members of the Association shall have the right to attend and vote at any General Meeting (including an Annual or Special General Meeting) of the Association or Branch of which they are members, save that no member of the Association may vote or nominate, propose or second any person or motion at any meeting of the Association unless he has been a member of that Association for at least three months prior to the date of the meeting.

3.4 Any person who has ceased to be a member of the Party and the Association shall have no rights or interest in the property or funds of the Association.

3.5 The Officers of the Association may move before the Executive Council the suspension or termination of membership of the Association of any member whose declared opinions or conduct shall, in their judgement, be inconsistent with the objects or financial well-being of the Association or be likely to bring the Party into disrepute. Similarly, the Officers may move the refusal of membership of the Association for the same reasons. Following such a motion, the Executive Council may by a majority vote suspend, terminate or refuse membership for the same reason.

3.6 If the Officers so move, they shall ensure that the individual receives in writing, at least 14 days before the meeting of the Executive Council considering the motion:

(i) notification that they have moved the suspension, termination or refusal (as the case may be) of his membership of the Association;

(ii) the grounds for the motion and any supporting evidence;

(iii) notification that he has the opportunity to appear before the Executive Council and to make representations and provide evidence as to why such motion should not be confirmed by that body.

SCHEDULE 7 – RULES OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS (cont)

3.7.1 The determination of the Executive Council shall be based on the grounds provided to the individual by the Officers of the Association and no further grounds shall be considered by them at this meeting. The person who shall chair the item concerning the motion must not be the Chairman, other officer or any member of the Association and shall be someone unconnected with the individual and the circumstances related to the case. Subject to these matters, the Executive Council may adopt their own procedures for determination of the motion.

3.7.2 Following the determination by the Executive Council, they shall write within five working days to the person informing him of the outcome of the motion and, if the motion has been confirmed, informing the individual of his right of appeal.

3.8 Subject to the provisions of Article 59 of the Constitution, any person so expelled in accordance with this rule shall not be eligible for renewed membership of the Association without the express approval of the Executive Council.

3.9.1 The Executive Council shall immediately inform the Board if it expels or refuses membership to any member in accordance with Article 55 of the Constitution.

3.9.2 Should an expelled member wish to submit an appeal to the Board, such appeal must be lodged with the Secretary to the Board within 14 days of notice of expulsion and the substantive grounds for an appeal must be lodged with the Secretary of the Board within 28 days of notice of the expulsion.

3.10 Where the Board has refused to confirm the expulsion from or non-admission to the Association of a Party Member, such person shall be admitted back into membership of the Association, or granted membership of the Association, as the case may be.

4 HONORARY POSITIONS

4.1 The Association shall elect a President who shall, ex-officio, be a member of the Executive Council, who may be an Officer of the Association under the provisions of Paragraph 5.1.4 below.

4.2 The President shall chair and conduct the business of the Annual General Meeting of the Association and act as Returning Officer in all elections for Officers of the Association.

4.3 The Association may elect annually, as Patrons or Vice-Presidents, individuals who have made an outstanding and valuable contribution to the Association.

5 OFFICERS

5.1 The Officers of the Association will be the management team of the Association and shall comprise

5.1.1 A Chairman;

5.1.2 Two Deputy Chairmen;

5.1.3 A Treasurer, where the office is not combined into that of the Membership Deputy Chairman; which shall be determined by the Executive Council.

5.1.4 Such other Officers as the Executive Council shall have determined.

5.2 One Deputy Chairman shall have particular responsibility for co-ordinating within the Constituency Association the formulation and development of policy ideas and initiatives, and political campaigning (the Political Deputy Chairman).

SCHEDULE 7 – RULES OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS (cont)

5.3 The other Deputy Chairman, who may also be the Treasurer, shall have particular responsibility for fund-raising and membership within the Constituency Association (the Membership Deputy Chairman) and shall represent the Association in dealing with matters of finance with the Party.

5.4 The Officers of the Association shall be individually elected by members of the Association annually at the Annual General Meeting of the Association or, if a Special General Meeting is called pursuant to a resolution of the Board of the Party in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 15 of Schedule 6, at that Special General Meeting.

5.5 No Officer shall hold the same office for more than three consecutive years save that the Executive Council may, upon a motion put and voted upon by it by secret ballot, (and subject to the approval of the Area Management Executive) invite any Officer who has held the same office for three years to offer himself for re-election to that office for no more than one further year.

5.6 If an Officer elected at the Annual General Meeting ceases to hold office, for whatever reason, the Executive Council shall have power to elect a successor until the next Annual General Meeting.

5.7 The Officers of the Association shall ex-officio be members of all Committees of the Executive Council and of Constituency and Branch Committees and if any Officer so requests, he may be entitled to notices of all Committee meetings.

5.8 The Officers of the Association shall have day to day responsibility for the management and administration of the Association but shall report to and implement any decision of the Executive Council. The actions of the Officers shall not be inconsistent with any decision of the Executive Council or the objects of the Association.

5.9 Within 28 days of assuming office, the Officers of the Association shall prepare a plan of objectives and activities for the forthcoming year ("the Strategy Plan") which shall be presented to the next meeting of the Executive Council. The Strategy Plan shall also be submitted to the Area Management Executive within 28 days of the Officers assuming office.

5.10 Not less than one month prior to the Annual General Meeting of the Association each year, Officers of the Associations shall:

5.10.1 prepare all Association accounts which shall be submitted for audit or certification by a person or persons appointed by the Association and a certified true copy of the duly audited or certificated statements of accounts shall be available for all members of the Association and shall be sent to the Area Management Executive immediately following the Annual General Meeting of the Association; and

5.10.2 produce a Constituency Report which shall be available for all members of the Association and shall be sent to the Area Management Executive immediately following the Annual General Meeting of the Association and shall include the following information:

5.10.2.1 the number of members in the Association and the change in membership over previous year;

5.10.2.2 the number of active Branches including details of new or closed Branches over the year;

5.10.2.3 details and activity of Association Committees;

5.10.2.4 details of campaigning and political activity during the year, including details of Local Government Candidates and the results of elections;

5.10.2.5 names and addresses of the Association's trustees;

5.10.2.6 a summary of the activities of any Branch of the Association.

5.11 For the purposes of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), the Association Chairman on election automatically assumes the role of Registered Treasurer and the Deputy Chairman Membership and Fundraising automatically assumes the role of deputy Registered Treasurer. If the Association has retained the position of Treasurer, then the Association may appoint that person as deputy Registered Treasurer. All changes to these office holders must be notified to Conservative Central Office within 14 days of the change and Central Office shall within 28 days inform the Electoral Commission save that the Board may vary this timetable to comply with the PPERA or successor legislation.

6 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

6.1 The Association shall have a governing body which shall be known as the Executive Council which shall comprise

6.1.1 The President of the Association;

6.1.2 Such other Honorary member of the Association as the Association shall, in General Meeting, think fit;

6.1.3 The Officers of the Association;

6.1.4 [One or more] elected representatives from each ward or polling district Branch;

6.1.5 [One or more] representatives of each committee, as established under Paragraph 6.5.2 below;

6.1.6 [One or more] representatives being elected Conservative members of any Local Authority in which the constituency is situated, who live in the constituency and are nominated by the Conservative Group Leader;

6.1.7 One representative of each Conservative Club in the constituency, which is affiliated to the Association of Conservative Clubs, provided that the representative is a Party Member;

6.1.8 The Conservative Member of Parliament for the constituency and/or Prospective Parliamentary Candidate and the Conservative Member of the European Parliament and/or the Prospective European Parliamentary Candidate, in a non-voting capacity;

6.1.9 The Agent of the Association, in a non-voting capacity;

6.1.10 The Chairman of the Area Management Executive ("the Area Chairman") (or another member of the Area Management Executive, nominated by the Area Chairman) for the Area in which the Association is situated, in an advisory and non-voting capacity;

6.1.11 Such person as is appointed by the Board of the Party for the purpose in an advisory and non-voting capacity.

6.1.12 Up to three further persons co-opted by the Executive Council

6.2 The Chairman of the Association shall be chairman of the Executive Council and in his absence the Executive Council shall be chaired by one of the Deputy Chairmen.

6.3 The Executive Council may appoint a Secretary to the Executive Council.

6.4 The Executive Council shall meet not less than twice every year. Additional meetings may be held at the discretion of the Chairman or request of the Executive Council.

SCHEDULE 7 – RULES OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS (cont)

6.5 The Executive Council shall have the following powers and responsibilities:

6.5.1 The Executive Council shall have the power (subject to any resolutions of the Association made at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting) to deal with all matters affecting the Association and its membership, and to exercise control over all ward and polling district Branches and specialist committees or groups.

6.5.2 The Executive Council may, pursuant to paragraph 6.8 below, establish such committees of the Association as it shall think fit, for example a Political Committee, a Women's Committee, a Local Government Committee, and Conservative Future, where there are sufficient numbers of members of the Association who would wish to take part in the activities of such Committee to warrant its establishment.

6.5.3 The Executive Council shall elect annually two members of the Association to be its representatives on the Area Council for the Area in which the Association is situated.

6.5.4 The Executive Council shall make provision for the collection of subscriptions in respect of Party Membership.

6.5.5 The Executive Council shall determine, prior to the date upon which nominations for elections of Officers of the Association are sought;

6.5.5.1 Whether the post of Treasurer should be combined into that of Membership Deputy Chairman; and

6.5.5.2 Where other Officers are elected pursuant to Paragraph 5.1.4, the number and responsibility of those Officers of the Association.

6.6 Funds of the Association

6.6.1 The Funds of the Association shall be under the control of the Executive Council.

6.6.2 The Executive Council shall appoint not less than three signatories for Association bank accounts, bank drafts or cheques or similar documents which shall always require signature by two authorised signatories.

6.6.3 The Executive Council shall be responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the PPERA and such legislation, regulations, or measures amending, supplementing or replacing the same are fulfilled with regard to the accounting procedures of the Association and for complying with any request by the Board to enable the Party as a whole to comply with its duties under the said act.

6.7 Notice of meetings

6.7.1 The Chairman of the Association shall give not less than 14 days notice of each meeting of the Executive Council to each member of it and such notice shall

6.7.1.1 State the date time and venue for the meeting;

6.7.1.2 Give an Agenda together with the draft minutes of the last meeting for approval by the Executive Council.

6.7.2 Business not specified in the notice convening the meeting may be considered and dealt with only by leave of the Chairman provided that two-thirds of those present and entitled to vote agree to treat such business as urgent.

6.7.3 In an emergency, and at the absolute discretion of the Chairman of the Association, the Chairman may summon a meeting of the Executive Council at shorter notice to deal only with the business stated in the notice convening the meeting.

SCHEDULE 7 – RULES OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS (cont)

6.8 Committees of the Association

6.8.1 Any committee established by the Executive Council pursuant to paragraph 6.5.2 above shall adopt Rules which accord with the Constituency Association Guide to Best Practice.

6.8.2 The minutes of any meeting of any Committee of the Association shall be sent to the Chairman of the Association and Agent forthwith after approval.

6.8.3 The Executive Council may resolve to disband any committee of the Association established under paragraph 6.5.2 above at any time and for any reason provided that prior notice of the proposed resolution shall be given in the Agenda for the meeting.

7 WARD OR POLLING DISTRICT BRANCHES

7.1 Branches of the Association may be established in wards or polling districts in the Constituency consisting of all members of the Association resident in or connected with the ward or polling district.

7.2 The Executive Council shall determine the precise number and boundaries of Branches within the Constituency having regard to the particular circumstances of that Constituency. No Branch shall be formed unless so authorised by the Executive Council.

7.3 The functions of a Branch shall be to work to sustain and promote the objects and values of the Party and carry out the objects of the Association within the ward or polling district, subject to the directions of the Executive Council.

Officers of the Branch

7.4 Each Branch shall consist of the following Officers:

7.4.1 A Chairman;

7.4.2 Two Deputy Chairmen, one of whom shall have particular responsibility for co-ordinating the formulation and development of policy ideas and initiatives, and political campaigning within the Branch; and the other shall have particular responsibility for fund-raising and membership within the Branch, and who also may be the Treasurer;

7.4.3 A Treasurer, where the office is not combined into that of one of the Deputy Chairmen;

7.4.4 A Secretary.

7.5 The Officers of the Branch shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Branch in accordance with the Rules for Ward or Polling District Branches annexed hereto.

Branch Committee

7.6 Each Branch shall have a Committee ("The Branch Committee") which shall consist of the Officers and such number of members as is decided by the Branch to be representative of its membership in the Branch and necessary for its adequate working. The Officers shall be elected at the Branch Annual General Meeting.

Funds and property

7.7 The Branch Committee shall have power to raise funds and (subject to any directions of the Executive Council, including a direction preventing a Branch from holding a bank account) to control its funds, but such funds shall belong to the Association. Any property other than cash in hand or monies on current or deposit account at the bank shall be vested in the Trustees of the Association in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 17.1 below.

SCHEDULE 7 – RULES OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS (cont)

7.8 Branches shall pay annually to the central fund of the Association a quota agreed upon between the Executive Council and the Branch concerned.

7.9 The Branch Committee shall appoint not less than three signatories for bank and other accounts, of whom any two shall be required to sign any necessary documents.

7.10 All Branch accounts shall be submitted for audit or certification by a person or persons appointed by each Branch and a certified true copy of the duly audited or certificated statements of accounts shall be sent to the Treasurer of the Association or, where that office is combined with that of the Membership Deputy Chairman, to the Membership Deputy Chairman immediately following the Annual General Meeting of the Branch.

7.11 Upon request from the Chairman of the Association or the Executive Council, a Branch shall provide forthwith such information as is requested relating to the affairs of the Branch, including information relating to finances and membership.

Rules of the Branch

7.12 Each Branch of the Association shall adopt Rules for Ward and Polling District Branches in the form annexed to these Rules of Conservative Party Constituency Associations. Such Rules (or any amendments thereto) shall be submitted to the Executive Council for approval.

Power to disband Branches

7.13 The Executive Council shall have power to disband any Branch, subject to the provisions of paragraph 7.14 below, and the entire assets of any disbanded Branch shall belong to the Association, and any assets not already vested in the Trustees of the Association shall be handed over to the Officers of the Association.

7.14 Before any Branch is disbanded, the following procedure shall apply:

7.14.1 Not less than twenty-eight days' notice shall be given in writing to the members of the Branch of the meeting of the Executive Council at which the disbanding of the Branch is to be proposed, inviting the Branch to send not more than two Officers or representatives of the Branch to attend such meeting and show cause why the Branch should not be disbanded.

7.14.2 If, after hearing such Officers or representatives (not exceeding two) of the Branch who may attend the said meeting of the Executive Council, the Executive Council resolves that the Branch shall be disbanded, notice of the resolution shall be given in writing to the members of the Branch and the resolution shall not take effect for a period of fourteen days from the date when notice of the resolution is given.

7.14.3 Within fourteen days of the giving of the notice referred to in paragraph 7.14.2 above (as the case may be), if any six members of the Branch is aggrieved by the decision of the Executive Council, they may appeal to the Area Management Executive (as defined in Part VI of the Constitution) for the Area in which the Association is situated.

7.14.4 Any appeal to the Area Management Executive shall follow such procedure as the Area Management Executive shall in its absolute discretion decide.

7.14.5 If either the Executive Council or the Branch members who appealed to the Area Management Executive are aggrieved by the decision of the Area Management Executive, they may appeal to the Board which shall follow such procedure to hear the appeal as the Board shall in its absolute discretion decide. The Board shall give a decision on the appeal, in writing, which shall be final and binding on the parties and not subject to review of any kind.

8 AGENT

8.1 The Executive Council shall have power to appoint a certificated Agent who shall be responsible to the Executive Council for supervising the work of the Party organisation throughout the constituency.

8.2 The Agent shall be a non-voting member of the Executive Council.

8.3 The Agent will work with and support the management team of the Association.

8.4 The Agent shall receive notices of and be entitled to attend all committee and other meetings of the Association and Branches, but shall not be entitled to vote.

8.5 In relation to Agents first employed by the Association before 28th March 1998:

8.5.1 there shall be a written contract between the Association and the Agent;

8.5.2 the salary shall be based on the recommendation of the Board and shall be negotiated between the Agent and the Officers;

8.5.3 the Association shall pay the Agent's expenses and allowances based on the recommendations made from time to time by the Board;

8.5.4 the Association shall pay the employer's contribution to the Agent's Superannuation Fund provided that the Agent also pays the appropriate contribution.

8.6 In the case of Agents first employed after 28th March 1998, the form and provisions of the contract shall be as determined by the Board.

8.7 The Officers of the Association, the Agent and such member of the professional staff of the Party appointed by the Board for the purposes shall agree a Management Development Programme for the Agent.

8.8 All decisions on the appointment and termination of employment of the Agent will be discussed jointly between the Officers of the Association and such member of the professional staff of the Party appointed by the Board for the purpose.

8.9 The Executive Council shall have the power to appoint such other paid staff as it may think fit.

9 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

9.1 The Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held before the end of March each year, being within three months of the Association's financial year, for the following purposes:

9.1.1 To receive and adopt the audited or certificated accounts of the Association prepared in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 5.10.1 above;

9.1.2 To receive and adopt the Constituency Report prepared by Officers of the Association in accordance with Paragraph 5.10.2 above;

9.1.3 To elect the Officers in accordance with paragraph 5.4 above;

9.1.4 To elect Honorary positions within the Association in accordance with paragraphs 4.1 and 4.3 of these Rules;

9.1.5 To appoint auditors or such other persons who may be qualified to certify accounts;

9.1.6 To transact such other business as may be brought before it.

9.2 Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given to each member of the Association at least twenty-one days before the date of the meeting and shall require nominations for Officers and other vacancies to be made and seconded not later than seven clear days before the day of the meeting; provided that if no nomination for a particular office or vacancy is so received, nominations made for that office or vacancy at the meeting shall be valid.

10 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

10.1 A Special General Meeting of the Association may be summoned at any time by
10.1.1 the Chairman of the Association, or

10.1.2 upon a petition signed by not less than fifty members of the Association or 10% of the total membership of the Association for the previous year (whichever is less) sent to the Secretary of the Executive Council of the Association requesting him to convene such a meeting; or

10.1.3 upon a resolution of the Board of the Party.

10.2 Upon the summoning by the Chairman of a Special General Meeting or the receipt by the Secretary of such a petition, or the making of a resolution by the Board, a Special General Meeting shall be held not less than fourteen nor more than twenty-eight days later.

10.3 Notice of the Special General Meeting shall be given to every member of the Association. The business of the meeting shall be stated in the notice convening it and no other business shall be discussed.

10.4 Where in the judgement of the Officers, or such as are available for consultation, an emergency has arisen demanding an immediate meeting, the period of notice shall be such as they consider appropriate in the circumstances.

11 GENERAL MEETINGS

11.1 Notice of the Annual General Meeting and of any other General Meeting of the Association shall be given in accordance with one or other of the following provisions: either
11.1.1 by written notification to every member of the Association; or
11.1.2 By sending an individual notice
11.1.2.1 to each member of the Executive Council; and
11.1.2.2 to the Secretary of each Branch and Committee of the Association together with sufficient copies of the notice for distribution; and
11.1.2.3 to each Secretary of each subscribing Conservative Club; and by advertising in at least one local newspaper(s) as the Executive Council shall deem appropriate.

SCHEDULE 7 – RULES OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS (cont)

11.2 If any member fails to receive proper or adequate notice, such shall not prevent the holding of the meeting or invalidate any resolutions made or elections undertaken at it.

11.3 The Area Chairman (or another member of the Area Management Executive, nominated by the Area Chairman) for the Area in which the Association is situated shall be given notice of and may attend any general meeting of the Association in an advisory and non-voting capacity.

11.4 Such person as is appointed by the Board of the Party for the purpose shall be given notice of and may attend any General Meeting of the Association in an advisory and non-voting capacity.

12 QUORUM

12.1 For all General Meetings of the Association the quorum shall be not less than 50 members or 10% of the total membership of the Association (whichever is less).

12.2 The quorum of the Executive Council and of its Committees shall be one-fifth of their respective members, except that the quorum shall in no instance be less than three.

12.3 In the event that a General Meeting of the Association be or becomes inquorate, another meeting shall be called not less than 7 nor more than 14 days from the date of the inquorate meeting. Any nominations submitted to the inquorate meeting shall stand as nominations for elections at the quorate meeting.

13 VOTING AT MEETINGS

13.1 At all meetings of the Association, including meetings of the Executive Council and its Committees, voting shall be by a show of hands in the first instance except that

13.1.1 in relation to the election of Officers, and the re-adoption of a sitting Member of Parliament, voting shall be by secret ballot;

13.1.2 in relation to any other matter, if either the Chairman (at his discretion) directs or upon one-third of members present and entitled to vote so requesting, the voting shall be by secret ballot.

13.2 Except where expressly provided otherwise, any motion at any meeting of the Association, including meetings of the Executive Council and its Committees shall be carried on a majority vote.

13.3 The Chairman (or chairman of the meeting) shall have a second or casting vote in all cases where the voting is declared to be equal.

14 DISPUTES

14.1 The Executive Council may and, if so requested by any Branch of the Association, shall submit any dispute or difference arising in connection with the Association or any of its Branches to the Area Management Executive for the Area within which the Association is situated with a view to the Area Management Executive bringing about a settlement of such dispute or difference. Such submission shall be made within 56 days of notification of the said dispute to the Executive Council.

14.2 If the Area Management Executive fails to bring about a settlement acceptable to all parties to the dispute or difference, the Executive Council may and, if so requested by any Branch of the Association, shall submit any such dispute or difference to the Board which shall give a decision upon, or take such steps as it thinks fit to bring about a settlement. Any decision given in writing by the Board shall be final and binding on all parties to the dispute or difference and not subject to review of any kind.

15 SELECTION OF CANDIDATES

15.1 The Executive Council shall when required establish a Candidate Selection Committee, the members of which shall be:

15.1.1 The Chairman of the Association;

15.1.2 Other members of the Association appointed by the Executive Council in accordance with guidance published by the Committee on Candidates of the Board (as established under Schedule 6 of the Party Constitution);

15.1.3 The Agent, who will act as Secretary to the Candidates Selection Committee, and not be entitled to vote;

15.1.4 Such person as is appointed by the Board of the Party for the purpose, who shall be invited to attend all meetings of the committee in an advisory capacity and not be entitled to vote.

15.2 Selection of Parliamentary Candidates

15.2.1 Whenever it may be necessary to initiate the procedure to adopt a Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, the Candidate Selection Committee shall, through the Chairman or other Officer of the Association, act in consultation with the Committee of the Board on Candidates and, as far as is practicable, shall follow the procedure published by the Committee on Candidates of the Board (as established under Schedule 6 of the Constitution). In any case the following procedure shall apply:

15.2.2 Where there is no sitting Member of Parliament, the Candidate Selection Committee shall recommend not less than three Candidates for interview by the Executive Council (" the recommended list"). The recommended list shall not be published.

15.2.3 Upon receipt of the recommended list, the Executive Council shall nominate not less than two Candidates for consideration by a General Meeting of the Association.

15.2.4 Where the Executive Council by secret ballot and with the approval of the Board, agree that it would be in the interest of the Party to reselect their candidate from the previous parliamentary election, the Executive shall present that sole candidate for adoption at a Special General Meeting of the Association called for that purpose.

15.2.5 The Chairman of the Association shall convene a General Meeting of the Association which shall select the Prospective Parliamentary Candidate.

15.2.6 Sitting Members of Parliament

15.2.6.1 A sitting Member of Parliament shall be required to make a written application to the Executive Council should he wish to seek re-adoption to stand again for Parliament or submit such an application if requested by the Executive Council.

15.2.6.2 The motion to re-adopt should be presented to the Executive Council after due notice and not less than two weeks nor more than two months following the receipt of the application by the Member of Parliament and the Member of Parliament invited to attend and speak if he wishes. Voting shall be by secret ballot, counted by two persons agreed by the sitting Member of Parliament and the Chairman of the Association with the result but not the figures declared.

15.2.6.3 In the event of a sitting Member of Parliament not securing the assent of the Executive to his re-adoption he will have the right to request a postal ballot of the full membership of the Association. The ballot shall be conducted by the Area Campaign Director with the Chairman of the Association and the sitting Member of Parliament each appointing a Scruinteer. No communication other than:

(i) the ballot paper and relevant instructions in connection therewith; and

(ii) Any communication by the sitting MP (on no more than a single A4 sheet of paper) shall be sent to members of the Association in connection with the ballot.

In the alternative to the procedure contained within para 15.2.6.3 above the sitting Member of Parliament may (at his option) have his name automatically added to the final list to be considered by the General Meeting (in addition to the Candidates nominated by the Executive Council).

15.2.7 Should the Parliamentary boundaries of the constituencies be subject to redistribution, then the sitting Member of Parliament shall have the right to submit himself for selection for any constituency which may incorporate any part of his old constituency notwithstanding that there may be a Member of Parliament for another part of the constituency, or for any other constituency where a vacancy is notified, and the procedure for selection shall be as determined by the Board from time to time.

15.3 Selection of Local Government Candidates

15.3.1 In the selection of Local Government Candidates, the Executive Council shall either

15.3.1.1 maintain an approved list of potential Candidates for Local Government elections, and submit suitable names to Branches for selection by the Branch; whereupon the Branch may proceed to adopt one or more of the Candidates; or

15.3.1.2 allocate Candidates to fight particular wards or divisions; or

15.3.1.3 allow Branches to select the Candidates of their choice but shall approve such selection. Thereafter, the general meeting of the Branch shall adopt the Candidate(s).

15.3.2 If the electoral Area extends beyond the Area of a single Branch the foregoing procedure shall be carried out by the Branches concerned, acting jointly, under the direction of the Executive Council.

15.3.3 A sitting Councillor shall be required to make a written application to the Executive Council or Branch Committee as appropriate should he wish to seek re-adoption. The procedure for re-adoption shall thereafter take place in accordance with the procedure set out in Paragraph 15.3.1 above.

15.3.4 The decision relating to re-adoption should be reached in reasonable time having regard to the mutual convenience of both the Association and the sitting Councillor.

15.3.5 Candidates for principal Local Authorities shall be informed, before being selected, that, if elected, they would be obliged to join the Conservative Councillors Association and pay an annual subscription.

16 SUSPENSION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF AN ASSOCIATION

Upon the calling of a Parliamentary General Election or By-Election in the Constituency, the activities of the Association and of its Branches shall be suspended until after polling day. No resolution shall be necessary to bring this provision into effect.

17 TRUSTEES

17.1 All the freehold, leasehold and other property of the Association and its Branches, save only cash in hand and monies on current or deposit account with the bank, shall be vested in not less than two nor more than four Trustees (who shall be members of the Party) appointed to hold office as Trustees by the Association at a General Meeting.

17.2 All property of the Association for the time being vested in the Trustees and the proceeds of sale and the income thereof shall be held upon trust for the Association absolutely, and the Trustees shall execute a trust deed in such form as the Board shall from time to time determine and such form as from time to time so determined shall form part of the Mandatory Rules under this Schedule.

18 INTERPRETATION

18.1 Schedule 1 of the Party Constitution shall have effect in these Rules.

18.2 The Executive Council shall have power to deal with any matter not provided for in these Rules.

19 ALTERATION OF THE RULES

19.1 The Mandatory Rules of the Association, within the meaning of Article 42.2 of the Constitution, being those in bold type within these Rules of Constituency Associations shall not be amended or altered other than in accordance with the provisions of Article 92 of the Constitution.

19.2 Subject to the provisions of Paragraph 19.1 above, a General Meeting of the Association shall have the power to amend, to add to, or to rescind such rules of the Association which are not Mandatory Rules by a vote in favour of such a resolution consisting of not less than two-thirds of those present and voting at the meeting provided that any such change in the Rules shall not be inconsistent with the Mandatory Rules.

19.3 Notice of the proposed alteration must reach the Chairman of the Association in writing at least fourteen days before the day of the meeting. Notice of the proposed alteration shall be given to members of the Association at least seven days before the meeting in accordance with Paragraph 11.1 above.

20 TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

20.1 Notwithstanding the provisions of Paragraph 5.4 of these Rules, and until 27th March 1999, the first election of Officers of the Association may be at a Special General Meeting of the Association.

20.2 Until the first election of Officers at an Annual General Meeting of the Association in 1999, the Executive Council of the Association may appoint two Officers of the Association to undertake the responsibilities of the Political Deputy Chairman and the Membership Deputy Chairman, as set out in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of these Rules.

ANNEX

RULES FOR A WARD OR POLLING DISTRICT BRANCH

NAME

1 The name of the Branch shall be the "..... Branch of the ..... Conservative Association" hereinafter referred to as "the Branch".

FUNCTION

2 The function of the Branch shall be to carry out the objects as stated in Paragraph 2 of the Rules of the Association so far as these apply to the Ward (or Polling District), subject to the directions of the Executive Council of the Association.

MEMBERSHIP

3 Any person residing in or connected with the Ward or Polling District and who is a member of the ..... Constituency Association shall, if they so desire, be a member of the Branch.

4 The provisions of Paragraph 3.3 of the Rules of the Constituency Association shall have effect to Branches for the purpose of attending and voting at general meetings of the Branch.

5 All members of the Branch shall be bound by these rules or any subsequent amendments thereto approved at a general meeting of the Branch.

6 The Secretary of the Branch (or such Officer of the Branch who is responsible for membership within the Branch) shall maintain, and furnish to the Executive Council of the Association when requested, a full and up-to-date list of the names and addresses of the members of the Branch.

CONSTITUTION

7 The Branch is formed with the authority of the Executive Council of the Association and is subject to the rules of the Association.

8 The Branch Committee shall have power to raise funds and (subject to any direction of the Executive Council, including a direction preventing a Branch from holding a bank account) to control funds so raised, but such funds shall belong to the Association. Any property other than cash in hand or monies on current or deposit account at the bank shall be vested in the trustees of the Association in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 17.1 of the Association rules.

9 The Branch shall pay annually to the central fund of the Association a quota agreed upon between the Executive Council and the Branch Committee.

10 All Branch accounts shall be submitted to audit or certification by a person or persons appointed by the Branch and a certified true copy of the duly audited or certificated statement of accounts shall be sent to the Treasurer of the Association or, where that office is combined with that of the Membership Deputy Chairman, to the Membership Deputy Chairman of the Association immediately following the Annual General Meeting of the Branch.

11 The Branch Committee shall appoint not less than three signatories for Branch accounts, of whom any two shall be required to sign any necessary documents.

12 Upon request from the Chairman of the Association or the Executive Council, a Branch shall provide forthwith such information as is requested relating to the affairs of the Branch, including information relating to finances and membership.

ANNEX - RULES FOR A WARD OR POLLING DISTRICT BRANCH (cont.)

OFFICERS OF THE BRANCH

13 Each Branch shall consist of the following Officers:

13.1 A Chairman;

13.2 Two Deputy Chairmen, one of whom shall have particular responsibility for co-ordinating the formulation and development of policy ideas and initiatives, and political campaigning within the Branch; and the other shall have particular responsibility for fund-raising and membership within the Branch, and who also may be the Treasurer;

13.3 A Treasurer, where the office is not combined into that of one of the Deputy Chairmen;

13.4 A Secretary.

14 The Officers of the Branch shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Branch in accordance with paragraph 19 below.

15 No Officer shall hold the same office for more than three consecutive years save that the Branch Committee may, upon a motion put and voted upon by it by secret ballot, invite any Officer who has held the same office for three years to offer himself for re-election to that office for a fourth and final year.

16 If any Officer ceases to hold office either by death or by resignation, the Branch Committee shall have power to elect a successor until the next annual general meeting of the Branch.

17 The Officers shall be ex-officio members of all sub-committees of the Branch Committee.

18 BRANCH COMMITTEE

18.1 There shall be a Branch Committee consisting of the Officers of the Branch and [number] elected members.

18.2 The Chairman of the Branch shall be the Chairman of the Branch Committee.

18.3 Meetings, Notices and Business

18.3.1 The Chairman shall have power to instruct the Secretary to convene a committee meeting at any time, of which not less than seven days' notice shall be given in writing, specifying the business to be dealt with, and at which the Secretary and Treasurer shall give reports.

18.3.2 A special meeting of the committee shall be held not less than a week before the annual general meeting of the Branch to approve the annual report and statement of accounts for presentation at the annual meeting of the Branch.

18.3.3 The committee shall have power to appoint sub-committees, and the Officers of the Branch shall be ex-officio members of such sub-committees.

18.3.4 Unless the Branch Committee decide otherwise, the sub-committees shall have power to elect their own Chairmen.

18.4 Absence from Meetings

Any member of the Branch Committee who is absent from three consecutive committee meetings shall be deemed to have forfeited his position on the committee unless the committee shall otherwise resolve.

18.5 Quorum

The quorum of the Branch Committee and of its sub-committees shall be one-fifth of their respective members except that the quorum shall in no instance be less than three.

18.6 Co- option

The Branch Committee shall have power to co-opt not more than six additional members. The sub-committees shall have such power of co-option as the Branch Committee shall determine.

18.7 Co- option

The Branch Committee shall have power to co-opt not more than six additional members. The sub-committees shall have such power of co-option as the Branch Committee shall determine.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

19 The Annual General Meeting of the Branch shall be held before the end of March each year, but at least 14 days prior to the AGM of the Association, for the following purposes:-

19.1 To receive and adopt the audited or certificated accounts of the Branch for the financial year ending [date] **last;**

19.2 To receive and adopt the report of the Branch Committee on the work of the Branch for the year ending [date] **last;**

19.3 To elect the Officers of the Branch;

19.4 To elect the Branch Committee;

19.5 To appoint auditors or such other persons who may be qualified to certify accounts;

19.6 To elect representatives to the Executive Council of the Association;

19.7 To transact such others business as may be brought before it.

20 Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given at least seven days before the date of the meeting.

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

21 A Special General Meeting of the Branch may be summoned at any time by the Chairman of the Branch or by any twenty members, acting together, who shall authorise the holding of a Special General Meeting within twenty-one days of the receipt of the report.

22 The business of the meeting shall be stated in the notice convening it, and at least seven days' notice shall be given.

NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETINGS

23 The provisions of Paragraph 11 of the Rules of the Constituency Associations shall apply mutatis mutandis.

QUORUM AT GENERAL MEETINGS

24 For all General Meetings of the Branch the quorum shall be not less than [number].

VOTING AT GENERAL MEETINGS

25 The votes at all meetings may be taken, in the first instance, by a show of hands, but the Chairman at his discretion may direct a ballot to be taken, and shall so direct if requested to do so by one-third of the members present. The Chairman of the Branch shall have a second or casting vote in all cases where the voting is declared to be equal.

SUSPENSION OF BRANCH

26 When a Parliamentary General Election or By-Election in the Constituency takes place activities of the Branch shall be automatically suspended in accordance with Paragraph 16 of the Rules of the Constituency Associations.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CANDIDATES

27 The provisions of paragraph 15.3 of the Rules of the Constituency Associations shall have effect in relation to the selection of Local Government Candidates.

INTERPRETATION

28 Schedule 1 of the Constitution shall have effect in these Rules.

29 Subject to the approval of the Executive Council, the Branch Committee shall have power to deal with any matter not provided for in these Rules.

ANNEX - RULES FOR A WARD OR POLLING DISTRICT BRANCH (cont.)

ALTERATION OF THE RULES

30 A General Meeting of the Branch shall have the power to amend, to add to, or to rescind such rules of the Branch which are not mandatory rules by a vote in favour of such a resolution consisting of not less than two-thirds of those present and voting at the meeting provided that any such change in the Rules shall not be inconsistent with the Mandatory Rules. Any amendment to the said Rules shall be submitted to the Executive Council for approval by it.

31 Notice of the proposed alteration must reach the Chairman of the Association in writing at least fourteen days before the day of the meeting. Notice of the proposed alteration shall be given to members of the Association at least seven days before the meeting in accordance with Paragraph 11.1 of the Rules of the Association.

SCHEDULE 8
THE SCOTTISH CONSERVATIVE & UNIONIST PARTY AND THE WELSH CONSERVATIVE PARTY

THE SCOTTISH CONSERVATIVE & UNIONIST PARTY

1 Scottish Party Members are bound by the provisions of the Constitution of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party ("SCUP"). Notwithstanding any other provision contained within this Constitution, the SCUP and Scottish Party Members shall therefore have only the following rights and obligations with respect to the Party within this Constitution:

1.1 The election of the Leader in accordance with the provisions of Part III and Schedule 2 of this Constitution;

1.2 Participation in the National Conservative Convention in accordance with the provisions of Part V and Schedule 3 of this Constitution;

1.3 Participation in Party Conferences in accordance with the provisions of Part X and Schedule 4 of this Constitution;

1.4 The maintenance of a Constituency Association in every Parliamentary Constituency in Scotland;

1.5 Membership of and participation within the Constitutional College of the Party in accordance with the provisions of Part XIII and Schedule 9 of this Constitution.

2 In addition, in relation to matters relating to Ethics and Integrity, the Ethics and Integrity Committee shall assume, in relation to the conduct of any Scottish Party Member who is a Member of Parliament or Member of the European Parliament or an adopted Parliamentary Candidate or European Parliamentary Candidate the same powers and responsibilities as are contained in Part XII, subject to the following additional provisions:

2.1 The Ethics and Integrity Committee shall investigate any matter referred to it by the Scottish Executive;

2.2 The Honorary Secretary of SCUP or his nominee shall be a member of the Ethnics and Integrity Committee for the purposes of those cases in which the Ethics and Integrity Committee is investigating the conduct of any Scottish Party Member who is a Member of Parliament or Member of the European Parliament or an adopted Parliamentary Candidate or European Parliamentary Candidate.

2.3 The Ethics and Integrity Committee shall conclude its determination by reporting, in writing, to the Scottish Executive stating what action, if any, is required.

2.4 Thereafter, the SCUP shall implement any action which the Ethics and Integrity Committee has determined, which action shall be unlimited.

2.5 The provisions of Articles 87 to 89 inclusive shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to any determination by the Ethics and Integrity Committee under these provisions.

THE WELSH CONSERVATIVE PARTY

3 There shall be established and maintained in Wales The Welsh Conservative Party which shall be managed by a Board (known as "The Board for Wales") consisting of:

3.1 A Chairman, to be known as "The Chairman of the Welsh Conservative Party",

3.2 Two Deputy Chairmen

3.2.1 One of whom shall have particular responsibility for co-ordinating the formulation and development of policy ideas and initiatives and political campaigning in the Principality ('the Political Deputy Chairman') and;

3.2.2 One of whom shall have particular responsibility for fund-raising and membership within the Principality ('the Membership Deputy Chairman');

3.3 The Area Chairmen in Wales

3.4 The Conservative Leader in the Welsh Assembly

3.5 The Chairman of the Welsh Local Government Committee

3.6 The Director for Wales (in a non-voting capacity).

4 The Chairman and Deputy Chairmen of the Welsh Conservative Party shall be nominated for election and elected by members of Area Councils in Wales and may not hold the same post for more than three consecutive years.

SCHEDULE 8 - THE SCOTTISH CONSERVATIVE & UNIONIST PARTY AND THE WELSH CONSERVATIVE PARTY (cont.)

5 Rules governing the management of and elections within the Welsh Conservative Party shall be submitted to and approved by the Board, and thereafter any amendment to the said rules shall take place only with the approval of the Board. Such rules shall be consistent with this Constitution.

SCHEDULE 9
CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

1 Any proposal to amend this Constitution may be initiated by the following:
- 1.1 A resolution of the National Conservative Convention;
- 1.2 A petition, delivered to the Chairman of the Board, signed by not less than 10,000 Party Members;
- 1.3 A resolution of the Board;
- 1.4 A resolution of the Executive of the 1922 Committee.

2 Upon receipt of the resolution or receipt of the petition, as the case may be, the Chairman of the Board shall notify in writing all members of the Constitutional College of a proposed ballot on a motion for the change of the Constitution. The notification shall:
- 2.1 state the terms of the motion;
- 2.2 state the return date, time and address for ballot papers, not being a date less than 28 days, nor more than 56 days from the date of notification of the ballot.

3 Thereafter, it shall be the duty of each body or group within the Constitutional College to convene meetings of its respective body or group in order to inform its members of the motion, and to debate its merits.

4 A postal ballot shall be conducted of all members of the Constitutional College. The Chairman of the Board shall act as Returning Officer and he shall cause the result of the ballot to be published forthwith upon completion of the counting of votes.

SCHEDULE 10
COMMENCEMENT PROVISIONS

Membership

1 An existing member of any Conservative Party Constituency Association affiliated to the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations or the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Association shall be deemed to be a Party Member or Scottish Party Member (with the same right to vote at meetings as if he had been a Party Member or Scottish Party Member for three months) until the expiry of his membership of the Constituency Association of which he is a member or 14th June 1999, whichever is the sooner.

2 From 15th June 1998, an existing Conservative Association affiliated to the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations shall be a member of the Party provided that, on or before that date, it adopts as its Rules the Rules of the Conservative Party Constituency Associations as contained within Schedule 7 hereto, in place of any and all existing Rules or Constitutions, subject to confirmation by the Board.

3 In the event that any Constituency Association affiliated to the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations has not adopted as its Rules the Rules as contained within Schedule 7 by 15th June 1998, the Board may thereafter proceed to form a new Conservative Party Constituency Association within the constituency.

Leader

4 The Leader of the Party is The Right Honourable William Hague MP.

Board

5 The Leader shall appoint members of the Board in accordance with the provisions of Part IV of this Constitution, to take effect as from 28th March 1998.

6 From 28th March 1998 the National Conservative Convention representatives on the Board shall be

6.1 Mr Robin Hodgson CBE, as Chairman of the National Conservative Convention
6.2 Mr Graham Park CBE, as President of the National Conservative Convention
6.3 Mr Brian Hanson CBE
6.4 Mr Raymond Monbiot CBE
6.5 Mrs Jean Searle OBE

7 Until such time as The Conservative Councillors Association is formed and accorded the status of a Recognised Organisation with an elected Chairman, County Councillor Paul White DL shall be a member of the Board from 28th March 1998 occupying the position on the Board of Chairman of the Conservative Councillors Association.

8 The Chairman of the Board shall nominate a member of the professional staff of the Party to serve on the Board in accordance with the provisions of Part IV of this Constitution, with effect from 28th March 1998.

9 The other members of the Board shall be as set out in Article 12 of Part IV of this Constitution.

The Conservative Policy Forum

10 With effect from 28th March 1998 the Director of the Conservative Policy Forum shall be Mr Michael Simmonds.

11 The three representatives of the Area Political Deputy Chairmen on the Council of the Conservative Policy Forum shall be determined by the Board in consultation with the Director of the Conservative Policy Forum and appointed as soon as reasonably practicable to hold office until the first full elections of such posts take place by no later than 31 May 1999.

SCHEDULE 10 - COMMENCEMENT PROVISIONS (cont.)

The National Conservative Convention

12 Paragraphs 5 and 6 of Schedule 3 of this Constitution shall not take effect until after the National Convention elections in 2001.

Area Councils

13 The first meeting of the Area Councils shall take place on such date and time and in such location as the majority of the Chairmen of each Constituency Association forming part of each Area shall agree between themselves, being a date not earlier than 1st July 1998 and not later than 1st October 1998.

14 The Chairmen of each Constituency Association forming part of each Area shall agree, by a majority, the identity of a member of the Area Council (not standing for election to the Area Management Executive) to act as returning Officer for the election of the first Area Management Executive.

Regional Co-ordinators

15 The Board will determine the identity of the Regional Co-ordinators who shall be appointed by the Board as soon as reasonably practicable after 28th March 1998, to hold office until the Area Management Executives have been formed and the election of Regional Co- ordinators has taken place.

Candidates

16 The procedure in the Guidelines on Procedure approved by the Standing Advisory Committee on Candidates on 18th March 1998 shall have effect in respect of the regional selection, ranking and adoption of Conservative European Parliamentary Candidates in England and Wales for the 1999 European election only.

Other Appointments and Decisions

17 Except as expressly provided for in the Commencement Provisions, other appointments and decisions shall take place in accordance with the provisions of the relevant Part of this Constitution within the timescale indicated, and in the absence of any identified timescale, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Amendments to the Constitution

18 The Board shall establish, as soon as reasonably practicable after 28th March 1998 a Constitutional Review Sub-Committee, the purpose of which shall be to examine the introduction of the reforms and monitor the effectiveness of this Constitution. The composition of the Constitutional Review Sub-Committee will be determined by the Board.

19 The Constitutional Committee shall make such recommendations to the Board as it thinks fit.

20 Save as expressly provided, the provisions of Part XIII of this Constitution shall not take effect until 31st October 1999.

21 From 28th March 1998 until 31st October 1999, the following provisions apply in relation to amendments to this Constitution:

21.1 Subject to the provisions of paragraph 21.2 below, the Board may with the approval of the Leader of the Party make such amendments or changes to the provisions of this Constitution as it thinks fit with immediate effect provided that such amendment must be approved by a simple majority of those voting in the Constitutional College within 12 months of the change in the Constitution being implemented.

21.2 Any amendments or changes to the provisions in Parts III, IV, XII and the Schedules only to the extent that they relate thereto may only take effect if approved by a simple majority of those members of the Constitutional College (as defined in Article 91 of this Constitution) voting.

21.3 The provisions of Paragraphs 2 to 4 inclusive of Schedule 9 shall apply to these commencement provisions.

SCHEDULE 10 - COMMENCEMENT PROVISIONS (cont.)

Provision of Information

22 A Constituency Association shall provide to the Board such information which may reasonably be requested of it by the Board relating to membership and other constituency matters within such reasonable timescale as the Board may require.

Other matters

23 The provisions of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 6 shall not take effect until 15th June 1998.

END