From: FOI
To: [redacted]
Subject: FOI 050-25 - Response
Date: 10 June 2025 13:57:08
Attachments: Chislehurst Matters Financial Scheme - sanitised.pdf
Chislehurst Matters Constitution - sanitised.pdf

Dear [redacted]

Our Ref: FOI 050-25

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission.

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 shown in bold below followed by our response.

You have asked for the following information:
Copy of Chislehurst Matters Political Party PP12998 documents: Financial Scheme and Constitution.

Our response is as follows:

We hold the information you have requested.

Please find the documents you have requested attached to this email.

The Commission strives to be an open, transparent authority and I trust that this information satisfies your request. 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: www.electoralcommission.org.uk/freedom-information/make-a-freedom-information-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

Information Team
FOI@electoralcommission.org.uk

The Electoral Commission
www.electoralcommission.org.uk

Chislehurst Matters - Financial scheme

This financial scheme was formally adopted at the inaugural meeting of Chislehurst Matters held at 3 Willow Vale, Chislehurst on 7 January 2022.

Introduction

1.1 This scheme sets out how Chislehurst Matters ('the party') will organise its financial affairs to comply with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 ('the Act').

Constitution

1.2 A copy of the party constitution, setting out our structure and organisation, and how we take decisions about the management of the party, is attached to this scheme or has been provided separately to the Electoral Commission.

Accounting units

1.3 The party does not wish to register any separate accounting units with the Commission.[1]

Organisations within the party

1.4 For the purpose of compliance with the Act, the financial affairs of any local branches or affiliated organisations of the party, whether currently existing or to be established in future, will be wholly controlled by the party treasurer.

Financial year

1.5 The party's financial year will run from 1 January to 31 December.

Role of the party treasurer

1.6 Mark Smith, the registered treasurer of the party is responsible for the whole party's compliance with the requirements of the Act, including the following:

Annual accounts

1.7 The party will submit our annual statement of accounts to the Commission by the required date, being 30 April of the year following the end of the financial year if both our expenditure and income are under £250,000 in that year, or 7 July of the year following the end of our financial year if either our expenditure or income exceeds £250,000 in that year. We understand that if our income or expenditure exceeds £250,000 our accounts must be submitted with an auditor's certificate.

1.8 In order to comply with this requirement, Mark Smith has:

- put in place arrangements for ensuring that annual statements of accounts for the party are prepared, approved, audited where necessary and submitted to the Commission by the prescribed deadline for each register the party is on

[1] Please refer to sections 2.13 and 2.14 in our brief guide *Registering a political party*.

- put in place accounting processes capable of meeting the Act's accounting record keeping requirements and of any regulations made by the Commission about the format of statements of accounts

Donations and Loans (regulated transactions)

1.9 The party will report the donations and loans it receives each quarter to the Commission, for each of the registers it is registered on, within the following timescales:

- quarter 1 (1 January – 31 March) by 30 April of that year
- quarter 2 (1 April – 30 June) by 30 July of that year
- quarter 3 (1 July – 30 September) by 30 October of that year
- quarter 4 (1 October – 31 December) by 30 January of the following year

1.10 In order to comply with this requirement, Mark Smith will:

For donations:

- record information for all donations of more than £500, including:
  - amount or value of the donation
  - full name of donor
  - registered address of donor
  - company registration number (if applicable)
  - date on which the donation was received
  - date on which the donation was accepted or returned
  - information about the trust (if applicable)[2]
- check the permissibility of any donations over £500 within 30 days of receipt[3]
- ensure that impermissible or unidentifiable donations of more than £500 to the party are recorded as outlined above and returned to the sender or financial institution that transferred the money or, if that is not possible, surrendered to the Commission
- ensure that a submission of quarterly donation reports covering donations exceeding £7,500 (including aggregates of donations and regulated transactions) and any impermissible or anonymous donations of more than £500 is made to the Commission within the above timescales; submitting a nil return if there are no reportable donations[4]
- provide weekly donation reports to the Commission during UK Parliamentary election campaigns if we are contesting the election

1.11 We understand that if we submit four consecutive quarterly nil donation returns, we will then be exempt from submitting further quarterly returns in respect of donations until we receive a reportable donation.

1.12 We also understand that separate quarterly donation returns must be submitted if we appear on the Northern Ireland register of political parties.

For loans (regulated transactions):

- record information about all regulated transactions (loans, credit facilities, etc.) of more than £500, including:

[2] More details can be found in our guidance documents by visiting our parties pages at: http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance/those-we-regulate/register-a-new-party
[3] See above.
[4] See above.

  - value of benefit of the transaction
  - name of all authorised participants
  - registered addresses of participants
  - company registration number (if applicable)
  - nature of the transaction
  - date agreement entered
  - the terms of the transaction
- ensure that the party does not enter into any regulated transactions over £500 with unauthorised participants
- ensure that a submission of quarterly transaction reports covering transactions exceeding £7,500 (including aggregates of donations and regulated transactions) and any void transactions or transactions of more than £500 entered into with an unauthorised participant is made to the Commission within the prescribed timescales; submit a nil return if there are no reportable transactions
- ensure weekly regulated transaction reports can be submitted during UK Parliamentary election periods if we are contesting the election

1.13 We understand that if the party has submitted four consecutive quarterly nil loans returns, we will then be exempt from submitting further quarterly returns until we enter into a reportable loan.

1.14 We also understand that separate quarterly loan returns must be submitted if we appear on the Northern Ireland register of political parties.

Campaign expenditure

1.15 The party will submit a campaign expenditure return if we have candidates contesting a UK Parliamentary election, European election, Scottish Parliamentary election, National Assembly of Wales election, or Northern Ireland Assembly election. The campaign expenditure return will be submitted within three months of the date of the election if our expenditure is less than £250,000 or within six months of the date of the election if our expenditure exceeds £250,000. We note that if our expenditure during the campaign exceeds £250,000 our return must be submitted with an auditor's certificate.

1.16 In order to ensure compliance with the legislation, Alison Stammers (The Campaigns Officer) will:

- ensure that campaign expenditure and claims payments are duly authorised, received and paid on time and that all relevant receipts and invoices are kept
- put in place budgeting and monitoring arrangements to ensure that campaign expenditure is within the statutory limits
- ensure the compilation, auditing (if necessary) and timely submission to the Commission of a campaign expenditure return within the statutory deadlines

Referendums

1.17 If the party participates in a referendum to which Part VII of the Act applies, we will develop and put in place arrangements for complying with the controls on referendum expenditure. We will do this by adapting our arrangements for the control of campaign expenditure.

Grants

1.18 The party will ensure that any grants from the Commission to the party are spent in accordance with the conditions of grant imposed by the Commission. We agree to cooperate with any associated audit requirements specified by the Commission.

Changes to registered details

1.19 The party will ensure that the our details that are registered with the Commission are kept up to date. We will inform the Commission of any changes to registered officers within 14 days of the change and any other changes within 28 days.

1.20 We will ensure that our RP8 annual confirmation of registered details and £25 fee are submitted to the Commission with the annual statement of accounts by 30 April of the following year (if our expenditure or income is less than £250,000) or by 7 July of the following year (if our expenditure or income exceeds £250,000).

1.21 We note that failure to submit our RP8 annual confirmation of registered details within the prescribed timescale will result in our statutory removal from the register of political parties. We understand that this would mean that the party would no longer be able to field candidates at elections under the party name.

Penalties and offences

1.22 The party understands that the Commission may impose civil penalties on parties that fail to comply with their legal obligations, including failures to submit statutory returns on time. The party also understands that failure to comply with certain legal requirements of being a registered political party is a criminal offence.

Role of other party officers

1.23 Should the appointment of the registered party treasurer terminate for any reason, then the registered party leader will, until a new treasurer is appointed, be treated as the party treasurer and will be responsible for ensuring that the party complies with its legal obligations.

1.24 Should the treasurer whose appointment is terminated also be party leader, then the nominating officer will, until a new treasurer is appointed, be treated as the party treasurer.

1.25 Should the treasurer whose appointment is terminated also be party leader and nominating officer, then the other registered officer will, until a new treasurer is appointed, be treated as the party treasurer.

Promoting compliance with the Act

1.26 The party will have processes in place to ensure compliance with its legal obligations. The registered treasurer, Mark Smith will ensure that the registered leader and all other officers and members of Chislehurst Matters have sufficient knowledge of our financial obligations under the Act to ensure that the party as a whole complies with these obligations.

Amendments to the financial scheme

1.27 The registered treasurer, Mark Smith, will ensure that any proposed amendments to this financial scheme are submitted to the Commission for approval.

Signed

Leader:	Michael Jack	Date:	7/1/2022
Treasurer:	Mark Smith	Date:	7/1/2022
Nominating officer:	Alison Stammers	Date:	7/1/2022
Campaigns officer (if applicable):	Alison Stammers	Date:	7/1/2022
Other officer (if applicable):		Date:	

Chislehurst Matters – Constitution

This constitution was formally agreed at the inaugural meeting of Chislehurst Matters held at 3 Willow Vale, Chislehurst, on 7 January 2022.

1. Name and status

1.1 The name of the party shall be Chislehurst Matters (hereafter referred to as "the party").

1.2 The geographical area of the party is the ward of Chislehurst in the London Borough of Bromley.

2. Aims

2.1 The object of Chislehurst Matters is to represent the interests and issues of the residents of Chislehurst in the London Borough of Bromley to ensure that they get the attention and action they deserve.

2.2 To that end to win the local council seats in the Chislehurst word of the London Borough of Bromley council

2.3 To organise any activity to publicise and further these aims.

3. Membership

3.1 Any individual living in Chislehurst ward over the age of 18 is entitled to be a member of the party

3.2 All members of the party should agree to abide by the principles and aims set out in this constitution

3.2 Members may not be a member of another political party. Should a member join another political party then they immediately cease to be a member of the party.

3.3 If an elected party councillor joins another political party they will resign their seat and force a by-election with immediate effect

4. Officers of Chislehurst Matters

The party shall elect its Officers at its inaugural meeting and thereafter at each AGM. These shall include a:

- Chair
- Treasurer
- Party organiser
- Nominating officer

4.2 Nominations shall be proposed and seconded, and won by a simple majority vote. Any member can ask for a secret ballot.

4.3 Other ad hoc officer positions can be filled at the discretion of the officers

5. Changes to officers

5.1 The party will ensure that the our Officer details that are registered with the Commission are kept up to date.

5.2 The party will inform the Commission of any changes to, or death of any registered officers within 14 days of the change and any other changes within 28 days.

5.3 If a vacancy occurs for the positions of any of the registered officers between AGMs a replacement will be appointed at the next party meeting after the date of the resignation and the Commission advised of the new officer within 14 days of the meeting taking place.

5. Meetings and decision making

5.1 The business of the party shall be decided and managed by meetings held monthly or at or such other times as members attending a meeting may decide upon, referred to hereafter as party meetings. Party meetings shall be open to all members. Potential new members and supporters may attend by invitation of the officers.

5.2 Motions should be proposed and seconded, and will be carried by a simple majority vote of members present.

5.3 Only members of the party will be entitled to vote. Those unable to attend may make their views known to the Branch Meeting, either in writing or through representation by another member, but only those in attendance will be entitled to vote.

5.4 The business meeting will be deemed to be in quorum if there are three or more paid up members in attendance.

5.5 Attendance and business conducted at meetings shall be recorded in minutes to be approved by the next meeting.

5.6 A draft agenda will be circulated in advance of each Branch Meeting, together with the minutes of the previous meeting. Anyone can suggest additional items for the agenda in advance of or at the start of the meeting.

5.7 In the event of a decision needing to be made before a party meeting, an emergency decision may be made by agreement of a simple majority of Officers of the party. This decision must be ratified by the next Branch Meeting.

6. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

6.1 Every year in the month of January an AGM shall be held for the purposes of:

(a) Presentation of Officer reports of work which has been carried out over the year

(b) Presentation of a financial statement for the year

(c) Election of the Officers

(d) Reviewing strategy and setting goals for the following year and beyond.

(g) Any other business on the agenda

6.2 The Chair shall be taken by a nominated person as agreed by members attending the Branch Meeting prior to the AGM.

6.3 All members of the party who are present have one vote each, and resolutions must have the support of a simple majority.

6.4 Notice of the AGM shall be given at least one month prior to the meeting and any motions for consideration shall be submitted in writing to the Organiser at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

6.5 The Agenda will be circulated in advance at least one week prior to the meeting.

6.6 The Chair has the right to rule on the admissibility of any emergency motions put forward.

6.7 The quorum of an AGM shall be three or 25% of members of the party (whichever is the smaller).

6.8 An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) on a particular agenda may be called on the request of the monthly meeting or at least five members of the party. The same general rules apply to EGM's as to AGM's.

7. Finance

7.1 The Treasurer shall collect or arrange the collection of all money due to the party and shall receive all donations to the party and shall be the custodian thereof.

7.2 The Treasurer will arrange payment of any bills incurred by the party, and will notify the group if it is in danger of becoming overdrawn.

7.3 All monies drawn from the party bank account shall be signed by one authorised persons from a list of three, to be agreed at the AGM.

7.4 Members, may incur expenditure on behalf of the party provided prior approval is obtained from one or more officers

7.5 Any affiliation fees to another organisation or donations to another group must have the approval of a branch meeting.

7.6 Single donations to the party exceeding £500 must be referred to all three officers before being accepted

8. Selection of election candidates

8.1 For selection of Chislehurst ward local authority candidates, arrangements will be agreed at a Branch Meeting of the party with the proviso that all candidates are agreed at a Branch Meeting.

9. Equality

9.1 The party will, at all times, comply with the terms and underlying principles of the Equalities Act, 2010. (The act)

9.2 The party Chair is responsible for compliance with the act and will include details of how the act has been complied with in their annual report to the party AGM

10. Amending the constitution

10.1 This constitution can only be altered by an AGM or EGM of the party. Amendments to this constitution require advance notice.

11. Winding up

11.1 Chislehurst Matters may cease to exist only by agreement of an EGM or AGM. In the event of the party being wound up, the balance of funds shall be transferred to a suitable local charity to be agreed by the officers.