

Twickenham and Richmond Liberal Democrats

Minutes of the **Annual General Meeting** held at The Exchange, 75 London Road, Twickenham TW1 1BE

19:30 – 21:00 27<sup>th</sup> November 2025

| Role                          | Name                             | 18/2/25<br>FULL | 20/3/25<br>CORE | 15/5/25<br>CORE | 15/7/25<br>FULL | 23/10/25<br>CORE | 6/11/25<br>CORE | 27/11/25<br>AGM |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Executive Officers</b>     |                                  |                 |                 |                 |                 |                  |                 |                 |
| Chair                         | Piers Allen                      | ✓               | ✓               | ✓               | ✓               | ✓                | ✓               | ✗               |
| Vice Chair – Twickenham       | Richard Baker                    | ✓               | ✓               | ✓               | ✗               | ✓                | ✓               | ✓               |
| Vice Chair - Richmond         | Julia Cambridge                  | ✓               | ✓               | ✓               | ✓               | ✓                | ✓               | ✓               |
| Secretary                     | Kieran Mander                    | ✓               | ✓               | ✓               | ✓               | ✓                | ✓               | ✓               |
| Treasurer                     | Naresh Aggarwal                  | ✗               | ✓               | ✓               | ✗               | ✓                | ✓               | ✓               |
| Deputy Treasurer              | Zeynep Aydin                     | ✗               | ✓               | ✗               | ✗               | ✗                | ✗               | ✗               |
| Fundraising Officer           | VACANT                           |                 |                 |                 |                 |                  |                 |                 |
| Membership Officer            | Jane Wilson                      | ✓               | ✓               | ✓               | ✗               | ✓                | ✓               | ✓               |
| Comms Officer                 | VACANT                           |                 |                 |                 |                 |                  |                 |                 |
| Youth Officers (Joint)        | Marcus Loh<br>Isabel Dixon-Smith | ✓               | ✓               | ✓               | ✓               | ✗                | ✗               | ✗               |
| Diversity Officer             | Kuldev Sehra                     | ✗               | ✗               | ✓               | ✗               | ✓                | ✓               | ✓               |
| Data Officer                  | Dave Cobb                        | ✗               | ✓               | ✗               | ✗               | ✗                | ✓               | ✓               |
| Events Officer                | Alice Lankester                  | ✓               | ✓               | ✓               | ✗               | ✓                | ✓               | ✗               |
| Campaigns Officer             | Donncha Hayes                    | ✓               | ✓               | ✓               | ✗               | ✓                | ✓               | ✗               |
| Print Society Chair           | Ellen Purton                     | ✗               | ✓               | ✓               | ✗               | ✗                | ✗               | ✗               |
| <b>Full Executive Members</b> |                                  |                 |                 |                 |                 |                  |                 |                 |
| <b>Full Exec Attendance</b>   |                                  |                 |                 |                 |                 |                  |                 |                 |
| <b>Council Group Reps:</b>    |                                  |                 |                 |                 |                 |                  |                 |                 |
| Deputy Council Leader         | Julia Neden-Watts                | ✓               |                 |                 | ✓               |                  |                 | ✓               |
| Deputy Council Leader         | Jim Millard                      | ✓               |                 |                 | ✓               |                  |                 | ✓               |
| Chair                         | James Chard                      | ✓               |                 |                 | ✓               |                  |                 | ✓               |
| Vice Chair                    | Carey Bishop                     | ✓               |                 |                 | ✗               |                  |                 | ✗               |
| Treasurer                     | Stephen O'Shea                   | ✓               |                 |                 | ✓               |                  |                 | ✗               |
| Council Group Rep             | Anton McNulty                    | ✓               |                 |                 | ✓               |                  |                 | ✓               |
| Council Group Rep             | Andrew Hale                      | ✓               |                 |                 | ✓               |                  |                 | ✓               |
| Council Group Rep             | Michael Butlin                   | ✓               |                 |                 | ✓               |                  |                 | ✓               |
| Council Group Rep             | Alexander Ehmann                 |                 |                 |                 | ✓               |                  |                 | ✗               |
| Council Group Rep             | Penny Frost                      |                 |                 |                 | ✓               |                  |                 | ✓               |
| <b>Branch Chairs:</b>         |                                  |                 |                 |                 |                 |                  |                 |                 |
| HN & Hampton                  | Nick Kennerley                   | ✓               |                 |                 | ✓               |                  |                 | ✗               |
| HPRR                          | Jill Lamb                        | ✗               |                 |                 | ✗               |                  |                 | ✓               |
| Kew                           | Bridget Towers                   | ✗               |                 |                 | ✗               |                  |                 | ✗               |
| MABES                         | Sarah Wilson                     | ✓               |                 |                 | ✓               |                  |                 | ✓               |
| N & S Richmond                | Judy Wright                      | ✓               |                 |                 | ✗               |                  |                 | ✓               |
| SMNT & Twick Riverside        | David Grindlay                   | ✗               |                 |                 | ✓               |                  |                 | ✓               |

|                                    |                 |   |   |   |   |   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teddington & STHW                  | Nara Soleimani  | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| TWITTON                            | Mike Lightfoot  | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ |
| Fulwell & H'pton Hill Rep          | Jonathan Cardy  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <b>Other Invitees</b>              |                 |   |   |   |   |   |
| Fed Campaign Manager               | Patrick Gilbert | ✓ | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ |
| Constituency Organiser             | Ian Richardson  |   |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ |
| Constituency Organiser             | Josh Mitte      | ✓ | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ |
| MP for Richmond Park               | Sarah Olney     |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |
| MP for Twickenham                  | Munira Wilson   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   | ✗ |
| GLA Member / Leader of the Council | Gareth Roberts  | ✓ |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |

**Apologies:** Munira Wilson, Piers Allen, Robin Brown, Donncha Hayes, Ian Richardson, Patrick Gilbert

**Total of 58 attendees**

## AGENDA

|       |   |                            |
|-------|---|----------------------------|
| 19.30 | Welcome, call to order and apologies  | Piers Allen                |
| 19.35 | Adoption of the minutes & next steps from last AGM  | Piers / All                |
| 19.40 | <b>Chair's Summary</b><br><i>Key Highlights Update &amp; Thanks</i><br><i>Christmas - Events Reminder</i><br><i>Mortlake Office purchase</i>  | Piers Allen                |
| 19.50 | <b>Election Campaign</b><br><b>Finance Update</b><br><i>Audited Accounts summary &amp; requirements</i><br><i>Treasurer and Finance Team - [Report Attached]</i><br><i>Vote on acceptance of report</i> | Donncha<br>Naresh Aggarwal |
| 20.00 | <b>MPs update</b><br><i>Sarah Olney</i>   | Sarah Olney                |
| 20.15 | <b>Leader of the Council update</b><br><i>Gareth Roberts</i>  | Gareth Roberts             |
| 20.30 | <b>Executive Officer Selection</b><br><i>Vote of membership for nominated roles</i>   | Kieran Mander              |
| 20.40 | <b>Conference Reflections</b>   | Andy Hale                  |
| 20.45 | <b>Q&amp;A -</b>  | All                        |
| 20:55 | <b>AOB (as notified to Secretary in advance)</b>  | Kieran                     |
| 21.00 | <b>Close - followed by drinks at the Cabbage Patch</b>  |                            |

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Call to order and welcome by Richard Baker and Julia Cambridge.

### Adoption of the minutes – Julia Cambridge

Kieran Mander had circulated the minutes of the previous AGM in advance. As there were no objections raised, the minutes were accepted and adopted. There were no action points arising.

### Chairs summary – Piers Allen

#### Summary of Chair's Report read by Richard Baker

The Chair sent apologies for absence as he was attending the National Adult Social Care Conference in Bournemouth. In reflecting on the conclusion of his two-year term, he noted that two issues had dominated the Local Party's work during the year.

First, the approval and selection of candidates for the May 2026 local elections. The Chair thanked all those involved in what he described as an exhaustive, fair and transparent process, particularly members of the approval panels, and to Donncha Hayes, Julia Cambridge and Kieran Mander, who served with him on the Approvals Committee. From over 63 applicants, 58 were approved to attend ward selection meetings, resulting in 54 selected candidates (three per ward across 18 wards). Special thanks were given to Geraldine, as Returning Officer, and to Jane Wilson for overseeing the selection meetings. All approvals and selections are now complete.

Second, the Chair highlighted the successful acquisition of the Local Party office building, soon to be renamed *Adrian Slade House*, following more than three years of work. Thanks were extended to donors to the Brick Fund and, in particular, to Ian Wrigglesworth, Robin Bevan and Laurence Mann for their substantial work in securing this permanent base for the party.

The Chair thanked Donncha Hayes who stepped in as chair of the Local Elections Campaign Committee when Robin Brown had to step aside earlier in the year. Robin will continue to advise the committee, along with HQ Campaign Manager Patrick Gilbert and long serving campaign consultant Michael Wilson. He also thanked Josh and Ian for their work strengthening campaigning across all wards. Josh will be leaving at the end of the month to work with Merton Local Party, and recruitment for his successor is underway.

The Chair noted the success of the annual summer dinner and thanked Alice Lankester for her work as Events Officer over the past two years. Members were reminded of the forthcoming Christmas event on 5 December.

Thanks were also given to Jane Wilson for producing the members' newsletters, the Membership Development team, and the Executive Officers, with particular thanks to Kieran Mander for organising Executive meetings and this AGM. The Treasurer, Naresh Aggarwal, supported by Deputy Treasurer Zeynep Aydin, was thanked for maintaining strong financial management and regular reporting to the Federal Party. Members were advised that a fundraising appeal for the local election campaign would be launched later in the year.

Looking ahead, the Chair wished the incoming Executive Committee well and expressed his intention to continue serving as Conference Officer. He noted strong attendance at the Autumn Federal Conference and encouraged continued campaigning in the lead-up to the May 2026 local elections.

Finally, the Chair thanked Vice Chair Richard Baker for presenting the report, and expressed his appreciation to both Vice Chairs, Richard Baker and Julia Cambridge, for their support over the past two years.

### **Election Campaign**

#### **Campaign Report – Julia Cambridge**

The report was delivered on behalf of the Campaigns Officer, Donncha, who was unable to attend. It was noted that Robin continues to advise and remains involved through the Campaign Committee.

The Local Party will be contesting the May 2026 local elections with a full slate of 54 Liberal Democrat candidates, with no shared tickets in any ward. Of these, 18 are new candidates, alongside returning councillors bringing valuable experience. The breadth of experience and diversity within the team was highlighted, and all candidates — both returning and new — were thanked for their commitment.

Candidates have been asked to undertake at least one “power hour” of campaigning per week, focused on door-knocking and voter engagement. Members were reminded that the political landscape has shifted since 2022, with increased competition, and that sustained, visible campaigning will be essential.

Action Days were emphasised as critical to success, with candidates working in partnership to support each other across wards. Members were thanked for their contribution to Action Days and encouraged to continue participating. January Action Days will begin in the second week of January, beginning in Fulwell & Hampton Hill, a key target ward.

The report noted that, according to the HQ Campaign Manager, the Local Party is currently ranked in the top six London boroughs for doors knocked during the year, reflecting a strong and active campaigning effort. Members were encouraged to maintain momentum through continued canvassing and literature delivery.

The report concluded with thanks to candidates, activists, the Campaign Committee and the Executive, and an invitation for members to continue the discussion informally later in the meeting.

#### **Finance Update – Naresh Aggarwal, Treasurer (slides attached)**

The Treasurer reported on the financial position for 2024, a general election year, noting it was an unusual year for fundraising. Both income and expenditure increased significantly, with higher expenditure driven primarily by general election campaigning costs. Despite this, the Local Party ended the year with a higher balance than at the start, reflecting a strong overall financial position following the successful re-election of Sarah and Munira.

The acquisition of the Local Party office building was confirmed as complete. The purchase price was £475,000, with total acquisition costs (including VAT, stamp duty and legal fees) bringing the overall cost to approximately £590,000–£600,000. A £375,000 mortgage was secured with NatWest at 6.7% fixed for three years. The Finance Officer highlighted a £50,000 donation which substantially reduced

the Local Party's cash contribution to the purchase. Thanks were recorded for professional support provided pro bono, which reduced costs. Overall, previous and current fundraising meant the acquisition did not place significant strain on day-to-day finances.

As 2024 income exceeded £250,000, the accounts required an external audit, which had been completed successfully. Fundraising through events was reported as strong, with the annual dinner generating significant income and the Christmas event expected to be successful, while also maintaining a celebratory, inclusive approach.

While overall fundraising had increased slightly, some income streams — particularly branches, membership-related income and standing orders — continued to underperform and would be a focus for improvement. The Treasurer highlighted ongoing challenges around visibility of ward-level bank accounts, stressing the importance of timely reporting of donations for compliance with Federal Party and Electoral Commission requirements.

The Treasurer explained that while he reports all individual donations over £500, he has limited visibility where wards or branches collect multiple smaller donations that together may be significant (for example amounts over £50–£100). A solution would be to close local bank accounts and operate a single central account. While this appears sensible in principle, it carries practical risks, particularly the potential loss of long-standing regular donors who may disengage if asked to change payment details.

The Treasurer therefore emphasised the need for a careful and proportionate approach. He highlighted ongoing compliance risks and asked for support from wards and branches, either by promptly reporting donations over £50–£100 or by migrating funds to the central account where this can be done safely. Maintaining fundraising momentum across all channels while meeting compliance requirements remains a key challenge.

Looking ahead, draft budgets for 2026, including the local elections, are in development. The Finance Officer confirmed that mortgage repayments are broadly comparable to previous rental costs, and that a £10,000 annual sinking fund will be established to accelerate repayment of the mortgage principal. He undertook to provide more regular financial updates in the coming year and encouraged wards to submit clearer fundraising plans.

A questioner suggested that, given the risks associated with migrating branch bank accounts, it might be helpful to provide the Treasurer with access to or copies of branch bank statements. The Treasurer declined this approach, noting that receiving and monitoring multiple branch statements would be impractical and would outweigh any benefit. In response to a question, the Treasurer agreed that where branches receive regular income, a regular transfer ("sweep") to central funds could be an effective arrangement.

The Treasurer clarified the distinction between "Membership" and "Members" income. *Membership* income refers to funds received from the Federal Party, including subscriptions, rebates and centrally processed donations. *Members* income relates to donations made by individuals to the Local Party that can subsequently be identified, tagged and attributed back to local branches.

It was noted that no formal Brick Campaign fundraising target had been set for 2025 at the start of the year. The Brick Campaign, established in 2019, was confirmed as a long-standing, ring-fenced fund used to support the acquisition of the Local Party office building, with donations made specifically towards the purchase of the property. The accounts were presented to members. In the absence of immediate objections, it was proposed that the accounts be deemed approved, subject to any concerns being raised within 48 hours.

## Member of Parliament for Richmond Park – Sarah Olney

The report was delivered following the MP's attendance in the House of Commons during the Budget debates, with apologies for arriving late. Significant concern was raised about the Budget's impact on Richmond residents, particularly the proposed levy on properties valued at £2 million and above, and wider tax measures disproportionately affecting London. It was noted that Richmond Park is the only non-Labour constituency among those most affected.

Both MPs reported active engagement in Parliament across a range of key issues. These included continued opposition to the proposed "mansion tax", concerns over the Fair Funding Review and its impact on local government, and strong joint working with councillors and ministers to press for changes on behalf of Richmond. It was noted that, in her role as Liberal Democrat Education Spokesperson, Munira continues to prioritise education policy, with particular emphasis on the significant and ongoing funding shortfall in the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) budget, an issue of direct relevance to local councils and families across the borough.

In addition to concerns about the proposed mansion tax, the MPs highlighted the Fair Funding Review as a significant issue for Richmond taxpayers. They noted that they have been working closely with ministers, actively advocating on behalf of Richmond to press for changes. While specific details will be left to Councillor Roberts to address, this was cited as a strong example of effective collaboration between the council and local MPs, combining local insight with parliamentary advocacy to secure change at Westminster and Whitehall.

Work on policing and neighbourhood services was highlighted, including meetings with the Metropolitan Police Commissioner to raise concerns about police counters and funding for neighbourhood policing. While some proposals remain unlikely to proceed, advocacy on policing resources for London continues.

The MPs also reported sustained campaigning on Thames Water, including support for legal challenges and parliamentary action, and ongoing work on the TDRA (Teddington Direct River Abstraction) issues. Opposition to Heathrow expansion, particularly the third runway and associated infrastructure disruption, remains a priority, with cross-party MP collaboration to challenge the Department for Transport.

Several national policy campaigns were highlighted:

- Work to secure free or affordable access to court transcripts for victims, particularly survivors of sexual violence.
- Continued leadership on kinship care, including securing an extension to the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund.
- Achievements in strengthening community rights over assets of community value, including police stations.

The MPs outlined their current parliamentary roles, noting strong cooperation within the expanded Liberal Democrat parliamentary group. While legislative and committee work has been effective, challenges remain in achieving greater national media visibility, prompting a renewed focus on proactive media engagement and social media strategy.

Looking ahead, the MPs expressed optimism about future elections, including the May 2026 local elections, while noting the risks of fiscal policy fuelling a Conservative resurgence in some London

boroughs. MPs committed to increased on-the-ground campaigning across London, particularly in key target areas, while continuing to support Richmond and neighbouring constituencies.

The report concluded with a reaffirmation of commitment to local campaigning, parliamentary advocacy, and collaboration with members and candidates in the year ahead.

#### **Leader of the Council and London Assembly Member - Gareth Roberts**

The Leader of the Council reflected on twelve years of council leadership, noting that this was his eighth AGM in the role. He paid tribute to the strength, experience and dedication of the Liberal Democrat councillor group, thanking his Deputy Leaders, the Chairs, Spokespersons, Lead Members and backbench councillors for their collective contribution to effective local leadership and ward-level representation. Continued electoral success was attributed to this sustained team effort and strong member support.

The Council's ongoing priorities of being fairer, cleaner/greener and safer were reaffirmed. Key achievements included sustained support for residents during the cost-of-living crisis, notably through the Low Income Family Tracker, which helps residents access benefits and support services, and continued funding for local Citizens Advice provision.

Environmental progress was highlighted, including a record number of Green Flag awards for parks, major investment in the Thames towpath, and the refurbishment of Teddington Lock footbridge to support active travel. On community safety, Richmond was reaffirmed as the safest borough within the safest Basic Command Unit in London. The Council continues to fund initiatives addressing violence against women and girls and to support ward policing panels and close working with the police.

The Leader confirmed that the Council continues to deliver on manifesto commitments made over the past two election cycles and benefits from high visibility and strong recognition of councillors within local communities.

Significant concern was raised regarding the Government's Fair Funding Review, which initially proposed a £45m reduction in Richmond's core funding. Following legal challenge, this has been reduced, although the Council still faces an anticipated £30m reduction over time. The Leader described this as a continued threat to local government finances.

The report also addressed the proposed closure of Twickenham Police Station front counter, which would leave only two 24/7 police counters across London. The decision was strongly opposed, and it was confirmed that the Council is taking legal advice and will issue a Letter Before Action to the Mayor of London and the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, citing concerns for community safety and public trust in policing.

The report concluded with an invitation for members to raise any additional matters, none of which were identified.

As London Assembly Member the report noted that his major focus over the past twelve years has been policing and crime, highlighting sustained reductions in police resources across the borough. These included the loss of the Royal Parks Police after 150 years, reductions in forensic services, dog and mounted units, schools officers, safer transport teams, and specialist anti-social behaviour policing. Concerns were raised that claims of additional officers on the streets reflected redeployment rather than genuine increases in frontline police numbers.

The report also highlighted campaigning at London level against the Thames Water Direct River Abstraction (TDRA) scheme, which would remove large volumes of water from the Thames. This work has been pursued through the Environment Committee.

The limitations of the London Assembly's formal powers were noted, particularly its sole ability to reject the Mayor's budget, a power never exercised in the Assembly's 25-year history. Despite these constraints, members were encouraged to bring London-wide issues forward so they can be raised through Assembly scrutiny and public platforms.

Looking ahead to 2026, it was stressed that electoral success cannot be taken for granted. Members were encouraged to support campaigning activity through canvassing, leaflet delivery and fundraising. The importance of expanding campaigning beyond Richmond into neighbouring boroughs was emphasised, including Hounslow, Merton and other target areas. It was noted that gaining control in additional boroughs, particularly Merton, could significantly strengthen the Liberal Democrats' position across London.

The report concluded by calling on members to remain active and engaged to support both local and London-wide campaign objectives.

#### **Executive Committee Election – Kieran Mander, Secretary**

Kieran provided a quick summary of what the Local Party Executive does and how important Officers and member volunteers are with giving their time to help raise money, providing support and guidance locally and ensuring that we follow the rule of the Lib Dem constitution to run the party locally fairly.

Kieran showed the following nominations for election and by show of hands the officers were elected, with no dissension. These officers will continue or formally commence their roles on 1 January in the New Year.

| <b>Executive Officers</b> |                       |                 |                 |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Role</b>               | <b>Nominated Name</b> | <b>Proposed</b> | <b>Seconded</b> |
| Chair                     | Kieran Mander         | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Vice Chair-Twickenham     | Richard Baker         | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Vice chair – Richmond     | Julia Cambridge       | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Treasurer                 | Naresh Aggarwal       | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Deputy Treasurer          | Zeynep Aydin          | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Fundraising Officer       | <b>VACANT</b>         | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Secretary                 | Geraldine Locke       | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Membership Officer        | Jane Wilson           | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Comms Officer             | Simon Banks           | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Youth Officer             | Marcus Loh            | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Diversity Officer         | Kuldev Sehra          | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Data Officer              | Dave Cobb             | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Events Officer            | <b>VACANT</b>         | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Campaign Officer          | Donncha Hayes         | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Print Society Chair       | Ellen Purton          | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |
| Conference Officer        | Piers Allen           | Judy Wright     | Sarah Wilson    |

### Conference Reflections – Andy Hale

It was noted that over 40 members attended the Autumn Conference, reflecting strong engagement. Members were reminded that the party holds four conferences each year (Spring, Autumn, London Regional and Young Liberals) and were encouraged to view these collectively as part of ongoing involvement in the wider party.

The report highlighted the value of conference participation in building national connections, contributing to policy development and strengthening a sense of belonging to the wider Liberal Democrat movement. Examples were given of local members playing active roles at national level, including participation in federal policy work and nationally chaired working groups.

The importance of celebrating and supporting members who contribute to national policy and conference activity was emphasised, particularly where this connects with successful local initiatives. Members were reminded of the availability of the Access Fund to help reduce financial barriers to conference attendance and were encouraged both to apply and, where possible, to donate.

It was observed that the growth of the parliamentary party means policy and conference responsibilities are now more evenly shared among MPs, while still allowing strong local input and visibility at Conference.

The report concluded by encouraging members to engage with future conference deadlines and opportunities to contribute to policy-making, with further guidance on how to do so to be circulated.

### Chair's Announcements and Closing Remarks

Members were reminded to use the QR code to book tickets for the forthcoming Christmas Party, with good uptake already reported.

The newly elected Chair thanked members for attending and emphasised the importance of the Local Party in supporting the election of councillors, MPs and GLA members through a strong volunteer-led organisation. Appreciation was expressed for the professionalism and effectiveness of the Local Party's operations, including campaign infrastructure, organisers and literature delivery.

Significant thanks were recorded to individuals for their outstanding contributions, including:

- Ian Wrigglesworth and others for their leadership in securing the Local Party office and establishing a strong physical and organisational base.
- The Treasurer and Brick Fund supporters for ensuring the necessary funding.
- The outgoing Chair for his leadership and support over recent years.
- Alice Lankester, the outgoing Events Officer, for raising substantial funds for the Local Party, and notice was given of a vacancy for this role.
- Communications, data protection, membership, secretarial and returning officer roles for their essential volunteer work.
- Ward Chairs and campaign committee members for maintaining effective ward-level organisation.
- Elected representatives for their sustained and visible work locally and nationally.

Looking ahead, the Chair highlighted key priorities:

- Recruiting a replacement organiser following Josh's departure.
- Selecting and electing 54 councillors for a third consecutive term, with caution against complacency.

- Maintaining high levels of canvassing, data collection and campaigning to support both local and neighbouring target areas.
- Growing membership, including engagement with younger members.
- Strengthening fundraising in preparation for forthcoming elections.

Members were encouraged to remain actively involved, share ideas, assist with campaigning and fundraising, and support the wider party. The Chair concluded with thanks to all attendees for their contribution to party democracy and local success.

### **AOB and Questions**

Kieran confirmed that there were no submitted motions or questions and opened the floor for discussion. There were 3 questions and some member feedback.

1. Jonathan Cardy asked for an update regarding the party's position on Gaza.

Sarah Olney reported that there has been relatively little activity since the ceasefire in September/October, and that parliamentary engagement on the issue has consequently reduced. She advised that she did not have a detailed update available at the meeting but offered to circulate a written update by email in due course.

2. Maria McManus raised a question regarding references in the Budget to reallocating funding from large corporations to support local high street businesses, and seeking clarification on whether such measures are proposed and what their potential impact might be on local high streets.

In response, Sarah Olney explained that the Budget does not reallocate funds directly from large businesses to small high street shops. Instead, it announces changes to the way business rates are calculated, involving both the rateable value of properties and the applicable multipliers. While multipliers for smaller businesses are being reduced, larger businesses operating from higher-value premises will face higher multipliers, effectively subsidising smaller businesses.

It was noted that this approach has been framed as charging warehouses and large businesses to support small shops, but it also affects other high-value premises such as large retailers and hotels. Newly announced rateable values may significantly change some businesses' liabilities, and in some cases may offset any benefit gained from a lower multiplier. As the impact varies widely by sector and property, the overall effect on local high streets remains unclear, though at present it appears unlikely to result in substantial savings for many businesses.

3. A question was raised noting the limited emphasis on environmental measures in the Budget and asking what the National and Local Party's approach is to strengthen its green credentials.

Sarah Olney explained that recent Budget measures have focused primarily on reducing household energy bills. The Liberal Democrats have proposed removing the renewable levy from energy bills and funding it instead through general taxation. While the Government has announced the removal of certain charges used to fund measures such as home insulation, it has not clarified how these initiatives will be financed going forward. In the absence of this detail, there is concern that existing home insulation schemes may be discontinued.

It was further noted that proposals such as pay-per-mile charging for electric vehicles risk suppressing demand for EVs and slowing the transition to low-emission transport. This was described as particularly problematic for the car industry, which remains subject to a zero-emission vehicle mandate requiring a high proportion of vehicles sold to be electric by the 2030s. While manufacturers must still meet these targets, recent policy changes were said to undermine consumer demand.

It was also observed that, to date, the Green Party's London campaigning has focused less on environmental policy and more on issues such as housing, wealth taxation and foreign policy. This was seen as providing the Liberal Democrats with a clear opportunity to assert and promote their environmental credentials more strongly, provided these messages are communicated more clearly and prominently.

Gareth Roberts confirmed that the forthcoming manifesto will include a strong range of environmental and green policy proposals, with further details to follow.

Finally, several members expressed appreciation to all speakers for the professionalism and clarity of their contributions, noting that this greatly supports members when canvassing and speaking with residents. Particular satisfaction was expressed with recent national messaging on Europe and Brexit, and Sarah Olney was asked to convey members' positive feedback to Ed Davey, especially regarding the strong reception of related communications.

*Meeting was declared closed at 9.02pm*



**Kieran Mander**  
**Secretary | Twickenham and Richmond Liberal Democrats**  
27<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Proposed Dates for Full and Core Executive 2026

|           |                         |                   |
|-----------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Core Exec | Thurs - 22/JANUARY/26   | Virtual meeting   |
| Full Exec | Tues - 26/MARCH/26      | In-person meeting |
| Core Exec | Thurs - 14/May/26       | Virtual meeting   |
| Full Exec | Wed - 5/JULY/25         | In-person meeting |
| Core Exec | Thurs - 24/SEPTEMBER/25 | Virtual meeting   |
| Core Exec | Thurs - 06/NOVEMBER/25  | Virtual meeting   |
| AGM       | Thurs - 27/NOVEMBER/25  | In-person meeting |