

Content for Internal Elections Webpage – Scottish Internal Elections

Introduction

Our party is run by members, for members. Whether it's our leader, members of Committees or the teams that run your local party, everyone is elected by fellow members.

Every two years, the Scottish Liberal Democrats hold elections for a range of positions—from our Convener to Ordinary Members of our committees. These roles offer a fantastic opportunity to contribute to the Party's direction and success.

Many of our members find serving in these positions deeply rewarding, demonstrating leadership, sound decision-making, and strong relationship-building skills. If you believe you can make a difference, we warmly encourage you to apply.

We are committed to diversity and welcome applications from individuals of all backgrounds. If you have something to offer the Party, explore the available roles and learn how to apply below.

All positions are elected using the Single Transferable Vote system.

Timetable

The timetable for the elections will be as follows:

- Opening of Nominations – Monday 13th October
- Close of Nominations – Monday 10th November (noon)
- Deadline for candidate personal statements – Monday 17th November (noon)
- Postal ballot papers dispatched – Friday 28th November
- Electronic ballot papers dispatched – Friday 28th November

- Deadline for receipt of returned ballots – Thursday 11th December (midnight)
- Count and announcement of results – from 10am on Friday 12th December

Positions Available

- President
- Convenor
- Policy Convener
- Conference Convener
- Campaigns & Candidates Convener
- Treasurer
- Executive Committee Members (12 Members)
- Policy Committee Members (5 Members)
- Conference Committee Members (6 Members)
- Federal Council Members (3 Members)
- A member of the Federal Policy Committee
- A member of the Federal Conference Committee
- A member of The Federal People Development Committee
- A member of The Federal International Relations Committee

How do I stand/vote?

How to stand

Fill out a candidate consent form. This can be found on the website [HERE](#).

Ask other members to nominate you using the forms on the website [HERE](#).

These forms will also be available at the Presidential Hustings stand at our Autumn Conference in Glasgow on the 18th of October.

As per the Constitution:

- *(F6) Nominations for any of the Office Bearer posts shall be by not fewer than fifteen Party Members of whom not more than five shall be members of the same Local Party.*
- *Nominations for membership of the Executive, other than for the posts of the Office Bearers, must be by ten Party Members.*

How to vote

Voting will take place online through e-voting platform *Mi-Voice*. Electronic ballot papers will be dispatched on Friday 28th of November. Full details on how this process works will be available through the link sent out when voting opens. If you have opted out of receiving ballot papers online, you will receive your ballot by post. The letter containing your ballot will include the option to vote online should you wish to do so.

Job Descriptions for roles across the Scottish Party

Under the terms of the Scottish Liberal Democrats Constitution, elections require to be held every 2 years for office bearers and members of the Scottish Executive.

PARTY OFFICE BEARERS

Extract from the Constitution: The role of the Office Bearers

'F17. The Office Bearers shall be responsible for the appointment and management of staff and for agreeing their terms and conditions according to a

policy determined by the Executive, and for the Party's compliance with employment law.'

'F18. The Officer Bearers shall also be responsible for ensuring the co-ordination of the political and other work of the Party and for this purpose will meet regularly and may make recommendations to the Executive and its Standing Committees and sub-committees.'

The Office Bearers include the posts below, plus the Leader and Deputy Leader. They are responsible for the appointment and management of Party staff plus the coordination of the political and other work of the party.

The Office Bearers meet online on a roughly 6-weekly basis. The agenda and papers are circulated one week in advance by the CEO/Member of staff in conjunction with/agreement with the Convener.

President – formally they are the guardian of the Party Constitution. The President chairs the Appeals Tribunal. The President shall be entitled to attend and speak at meetings of the Executive but not to vote. The President may preside at the Conference on formal occasions.

Convener - responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the Party and chairs meetings of the Executive and Conference. They are also a standing member of all sub-committees of the Executive and have a legal responsibility, with the Treasurer under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, for

party finances. They represent the Scottish Liberal Democrats on the Federal Board, which meets approx 10 times per year, normally in London or online.

Treasurer – chairs the Finance & Membership Committee which meets around 6 times per year to set budgets and monitor party finances. The Treasurer is the registered treasurer of the Party in terms of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and is responsible for overseeing the donation reporting

and production of the accounts. They are also the Scottish representative on the Federal Finance Committee which meets in London or online.

Policy Convener – chairs the Policy Committee, responsible for researching, developing and formulating policy, and managing and overseeing the policy-making process.

Conference Convener – chairs the Conference Committee, responsible for overseeing the organisation of the Scottish conferences, including setting the agendas.

Campaigns Convener – chairs the Campaigns & Candidates Committee, responsible for overseeing candidate approval and selections, supporting and co-ordinating campaigning activity, and organising campaign training for members.

OFFICE BEARERS' JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Job Description

PRESIDENT

Strictly speaking the principal role of the Party President in Scotland is to convene appeal tribunals. This role will change when the Scottish Party constitution fully endorses and accepts the complaints procedures which are part of the Federal constitution. There are, however, a number of duties/functions that the Party President can usefully perform on a voluntary basis, and these are briefly noted below. The President may from time to time deal with urgent matters referred to by the Convener or Chief Executive and participate fully in events such as members' meetings, conferences, etc.

Principal responsibilities

- Participation in Scottish Party Executive Committee meetings and meetings of Scottish Party office bearers. *reclusion from some meetings and discussions maybe necessary to retain impartiality in the role of convener of the appeal tribunal.
- Attendance at and participation in Scottish Party and Federal Party conferences. This might involve introducing speakers or chairing certain sessions at conferences.
- Speaking engagements. These can include constituency annual general meetings or dinners and might include 'by invitation' speaking at the Scottish Liberal Club or affiliated groups within the Party in Scotland.
- Constituency visits. These can cover a whole range of things such as fund-raising events, action days and political meetings.
- Providing support and encouragement to office bearers, staff and Party members. This is by no means a formal part of the duties but on occasions it may

be helpful to lend a listening ear or empathetic sounding board to a whole range of individuals in the Party employing skills, diplomacy, tact and understanding.

CONVENER

Job Description

The Convener shall be responsible for the day-to-day direction of the Party and shall be entitled to chair meetings of the Office Bearers, the Executive and Conference.

Principal responsibilities

- Provide leadership across the Party and in their interaction with the other State and Federal Parties.
- Ensure there is two-way communication across the party, ensuring that the Executive and sub committee members are engaged and that feedback from the wider party is considered in all decision making.
- Ensure that the Executive fulfils its duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the Party.
- Appraise the CEO annually and through regular one to one's/ communication. (staff management remains delegated by OBs to the CEO)
- Seek to ensure that the Executive and the staff carry out the responsibilities delegated to them by Conference.

- Chair meetings effectively and efficiently.
- Seek to ensure that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.

Time Commitment

The role of the Convener has increased in recent years. This structure should follow the 'three-legged stool' approach outlined by Dorothy Thornhill, in the post-2019GE Thornhill Review. The CEO is responsible for the operational implementation of the policies agreed by Conference and the Executive. The CEO works with the Convenor and the Office Bearers to ensure a joined-up approach. Core meetings are currently; 8 Executive meetings a year, 8 Office Bearers' meetings a year, roughly the same each for the 4 Standing Committees, two Scottish Conferences, 2 Federal Conferences (optional); 10 Federal Board Meetings. In addition, there are ad hoc meetings. Most of these can be attended remotely by Zoom etc. The Convener, for the Office Bearers, should have regular

meetings with the CEO, and also represent the Party at various events and meetings with stakeholders.

TREASURER

Principal responsibilities

- Seek to ensure the Scottish Party is compliant with electoral accounting rules, and oversee the audit of the accounts;
- Chair the Finance and Membership (FMC) Committee, which provides financial governance and oversight of membership recruitment and retention on behalf of

the Executive Committee. The chair also manages the diversity, fundraising, finance and membership sub committees.

- Work with Party staff and FMC to set the annual budget and review spending against budget regularly, signing off on larger items of spending by staff;
- Oversee and support fundraising efforts;
- Provide financial reports to the Executive Committee, and fundraising reports to the Campaign Committee during elections;
- Represent the Scottish Party on the Federal Finance and Resources Committee and liaise with Federal staff on financial decisions affecting the Scottish Party. The meetings of FFRC are in London/online on a 4/6 weekly basis.

CAMPAIGNS AND CANDIDATES CONVENER

Principal responsibilities.

- Chairs meetings of the Campaigns and Candidates Committee which meets about eight times a year, usually by telephone conference.
- Works with Office Bearers', committee members, staff and politicians to ensure that the party is election ready.
- Submits a report to each meeting of the Executive (about eight times a year) and answers questions on the report at the meeting.

- Encouraging members, particularly those from underrepresented groups, to apply to become approved candidates and stand for selection as a prospective candidate.
- Liaising with the Scottish Candidates Assessment Facilitator to ensure applicants for the approved candidates list are allocated an assessment day in Scotland.
- Recruiting and obtaining places on training course for candidate assessors and Returning Officers.
- Seek to ensure that the recommendations of the formal election reviews are implemented in conjunction with the Convenor and other Office Bearers.
- Representing the Scottish Party on the Federal Communications and Elections Committee and the Joint States Candidates Committee.
- Working with staff to support and co-ordinate campaigning activity and training events.

CONFERENCE CONVENER

Principal responsibilities

- Responsible for overseeing selection of venues for future conference.
- Responsible for ensuring smooth running, in conjunction with staff of the two annual conferences and ensure that there is an excellent programme of events for party members
- Responsible for overseeing budget for conference with the Finance and Membership Committee.
- Responsible for setting Chairs and Aides rota for conference.

- Promote conference at every opportunity, including attending regional opportunities to promote conference.
- Key advisor to Exec, party staff, members and politicians on standing orders and processes related to conference.
- Responsible for chairing the Conference Committee and working with the policy committee and staff to provide motions for debate at conference in line with Standing Orders and the constitution.
- Set agenda for conference including overseeing selection of speakers for conference.
- Work with key stakeholders in motions, to develop potential interested exhibitors.

POLICY CONVENER

Principal responsibilities

- The Policy Convener will chair and organise meetings of the Policy Committee and attend Office Bearers' and Executive meetings. You also will attend Scottish Conference, present a report to Spring Conference and engage with members across the country to further policy aims.
- Working with staff, committee and members and wider stakeholders you are responsible for the production the Scottish Manifesto at election time and

contribute to the UK ensuring joined up working and that a Scottish voice is present in the Federal Manifesto.

- Facilitate manifesto and policy roadshows so members can contribute to policy.
- Develop programmes for policy development and work with the policy committee to bring motions to Spring and Autumn Conference.
- Research relevant policy areas and bring new ideas to the table.
- Work with Politicians and Spokespeople to develop policy and conference motions.

PARTY COMMITTEES

If you're not quite ready to jump in at the Office Bearer level, getting to contribute to the Party by serving in a committee is a great way to learn about the Party and help it to reach its goals. The committees in which we directly elect members are, The Executive Committee, Policy Committee and Conference Committee. We also have one space for a Scottish Representative on the following Federal

Committees: Federal Board, Federal Conference Committee and Federal Policy Committee.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

There are 12 places available. The Executive Committee is made up of the Office Bearers and the twelve directly elected members. The committee is responsible for the management and conduct of the Party. There are normally 6-8 meetings per year, held at 10.30am on Saturday mornings in Edinburgh or online. You will need to be nominated by 10 fellow party members to stand for this committee.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

There are 6 places available. The committee is responsible for setting conference agendas and members are expected to take responsibility for specific tasks in the run up to and during conferences. The timetable for meetings is based around key dates for motion deadlines, with normally 6 meetings each year. Only those who have registered to attend one or both Scottish Conferences in the year of

election are eligible to vote. You will need to be nominated by 10 fellow party members to stand for this committee.

POLICY COMMITTEE

There are 5 places available. The committee is responsible for researching, developing and formulating policy, and managing and overseeing the policy-making process. The schedule for meetings may depend on specific policies being developed and the expertise of individuals involved. There are normally at least

6 full committee meetings each year. You will need to be nominated by 10 fellow party members to stand for this committee.

SCOTTISH REPS ON FEDERAL PARTY COMMITTEES

It is important that the Scottish Party maintains good, regular contact with the activities of the corresponding Federal committees. There is one place available on each of the following.

- Federal Council - meets 6-8 times per year, usually online, normally on a weekday evening. Travel and accommodation expenses can be claimed.
- Federal Conference Committee – meets in London/online to oversee the organisation of the two main events and set the agendas, and then at the conference venues immediately before the conferences
- Federal Policy Committee - meets once a month, usually on Tuesday or Wednesday evening at 6pm in Westminster/online. Reasonable travel expenses can be claimed. FPC members are also invited to sit on at least one Party

Parliamentary Committee, although attendance in London is not required formally.

Job Description for an ordinary member of the Executive

*Members of the Scottish Executive, appointed to that position as a result of being a convenor/vice convenor of another committee have a very specific role on the Executive. That is, to report to the Executive, the business of their Standing

Committee. They also have a responsibility to scrutinise the activity of others committees through the Executive.

Extract from the Constitution

F22. The Executive shall be responsible for the management and conduct of the Party and ensuring compliance of the Party with the Act and any subsequent legislation, and shall be accountable to the Conference.

Principal responsibilities

- To retain a view of all matters of strategic importance to the party. Staffing and operational matters are within the remit of the Office Bearers and the Chief Executive.
- To ensure that the organisation works in a joined up way using its resources to maximises impact in achieving strategic objectives.
- Scrutinise report, plans drafted by or provided to the committee to ensure that these are in the best interest of party members, deliver best value for its members and live its values at all times.
- Executive Committee members predominately make up the membership of the various Standing Committees alongside additional co opted members.

Job Description for a member of a Standing Committee

Working with the Committee convener you will establish a work plan for the committee for the year. This will set out the aspects of the committee's work you will look at throughout the year. For example, planning the autumn conference,

planning member recruitment, or trying to find more member to be candidates depending on the committee you have put yourself forward to sit on.

Principal responsibilities

- Work with the Committee Convener to deliver the work plan.
- Work with the relevant party staff where applicable to deliver shared objectives.
- Scrutinise report, plans drafted by or provided to the committee to ensure that these are in the best interest of party members, deliver best value for its members and live its values at all times.
- Implement decisions made by the Executive – for example ensuring the actions from the diversity and inclusion report are embedded by the organisation by staff and volunteers through the committee's work.

Rules for Party Elections

Purpose

The purpose of these rules is to ensure that –
Members are properly informed about the candidates;
There is fairness between candidates, and
The process is transparent.

In pursuit of this purpose, candidates and their supporters are expected to observe the spirit, as much as the letter, of the rules and to apply common sense in applying them. In cases of doubt, the Returning Officer's guidance should be sought.

1. General

- 1.1 These rules apply to all elections to offices within the Party in which there is a ballot of all members, except an election for Leader or Deputy Leader (for which different and additional rules apply).
- 1.2 The conduct of the elections is the responsibility of the Returning Officer.
- 1.3 The membership list is confidential. It will not be released and may not be used by any candidate during an election.
- 1.4 Employees of the Party, whether involved in the administration of the elections or not, must observe strict impartiality between candidates from the date that nominations are called for. They may not sign the nomination papers nor endorse any candidate. Employees of a Local Party or any other constituent part of the Party may not use their position to promote any candidate.
- 1.5 Office Bearers of the Party may personally endorse a candidate, but may not use their position in doing so, and have a duty to assist in ensuring a fair balance between all candidates.

2. Literature

- 2.1 All written material used by candidates or by anybody appointed to act on their behalf must first be approved by the Returning Officer. Any statement that could, in the opinion of the Returning Officer, be construed as defamatory or whose publication could bring the Party or any of its members into disrepute will not be approved.
- 2.2 The Party will circulate to all members one candidate statement in support of each candidate along with the ballot paper. Candidates must provide finished artwork and text to conform to a template provided by the Party. This must be received not more than seven days after the close of nominations. Leaflets that are received late, or are not approved by the Returning Officer will not be circulated. Leaflets will be black-and-white and printed on one side. Candidates for Office Bearer positions are entitled to an A5 sized leaflet, and for all other positions an A6 sized leaflet. The Party's facilities may not otherwise be used in support of any candidate.
- 2.3 No other printed material may be published or circulated by any candidate, or by any of his or her supporters. This prohibition includes the production of any badges, posters, stickers, audio-visual or similar publicity material, or any photocopied material.

3. Telephone and electronic communication

- 3.1 Cold calling of members by telephone is not permitted. This does not preclude candidates or their friends from seeking support of members by telephone when the call is part of normal social contact.
- 3.2 The unsolicited circulation of electronic messages is not permitted, whether sent directly to members or by means of social media sites (e.g. Facebook). This does not preclude candidates or their friends seeking support of members in messages that form part of the normal social contact between them. Candidates may also reply to any electronic message they receive.
- 3.3 Posts on websites or blogs that refer to the election do not have to be approved in advance by the Returning Officer. Candidates are responsible for ensuring that nothing that is published online in their name (or in private messages allowed under rule 3.2) could be construed as defamatory or whose publication could bring the Party or any of its members into disrepute.

4. Endorsements

- 4.1 A candidate must get the prior written consent of any person whose name, or photograph, is to appear in the candidate's election address, either as a supporter or otherwise. This requirement extends also to any verbal, written or online communication provided for in rules 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3.

5. Breach of rules and appeals

- 5.1 In the event of a breach of these rules, the Returning Officer has the power to order such remedy as he deems appropriate. This includes the authority to disqualify a candidate before the declaration of the result, or remove from office a person who has been elected if, in the Returning Officer's opinion, it is justified by the seriousness of the breach.
- 5.2 Any Party member may make a complaint about an infringement of these rules, or about the content of posts on websites or blogs, at any time up to fourteen days after the declaration of the results. Complaints must be made to the Returning Officer in writing and specify the nature of the infringement. The Returning Officer will consider the complaint along with supporting evidence and any response made by the candidate complained of, and advise both parties of his ruling.
- 5.3 Appeals against decisions of the Returning Officer must be referred to the Appeals Tribunal in terms of section K of the Constitution and should be lodged within fourteen days of the Returning Officer's decision.