

information for party members

standing for the national executive committee

January 2017

the co-operative party



years of pioneering the future
1917-2017

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Introduction

Elections to the Co-operative Party National Executive Committee take place every three years. Members elected in 2017 (and at subsequent by-elections) will serve from June until the next NEC is elected in 2020.

Nominations open 16 January 2017 for elections to the NEC (and Co-operative Party Disciplinary Committee) for 2017-20.

If there is anything in the information here that isn't clear, please contact Karen Wilkie (Returning Officer), k.wilkie@party.coop, 0207 367 4178.

Membership of the National Executive Committee (NEC)

The NEC has 18 voting members: -

- 11 National & Regional members: one each for Scotland & Northern Ireland (combined), Wales and the 9 English regions. These are nominated by branches or party councils and elected by individual members
- 1 youth representative, nominated by branches and/or party councils and elected by individual members aged 30 and under. Candidates must be under 27 at the date of nomination.
- 2 members (1 man and 1 woman), elected by Societies and other affiliates other than the Co-operative Group.
- 2 members nominated by the Co-operative Group
- 1 member from Co-operatives UK.
- 2 members of the Parliamentary Group.
- The Secretary General of Co-operatives UK, or his/her nominee, if a member of the Party, may sit on the NEC as a non-voting member.
- The General Secretary and the Board Secretary also attend each meeting, along with other Party staff as required.

Timetable for the election

Monday 16 January 2017	Nominations open
Thursday 9 March 2017	Nominations close
Friday 31 March 2017	Ballot papers issued to Societies, Affiliates and Party Councils for the 2 Societies and 11 Co-operative Party Disciplinary Committee representatives.
Friday 7 April 2017	Ballot papers issued to all individual members for the regional election and to members under 30 for the election for the youth representative
Tuesday 2 May 2017	Ballots close
10-11 June 2017	Induction & AGM for new NEC

Eligibility

All NEC candidates must:

- Have been a full member of the Co-operative Party for six months by the close of nominations (9 March 2017) and not be in arrears.¹
- Meet the legal requirements for a Board member of a registered Society. For example, they must be over the age of 16.
- Complete the online Candidate Information form

Additionally, no-one can be an NEC member who:

- Is not a member of a local Party, which is itself a member of the Party;

¹ Prior to the rule change at Conference 2016, full membership rights only commenced eight weeks after acceptance by the local Party. If you applied to join on or after 9 June 2016, please check with membership@party.coop to confirm that you are eligible.

- Refuses to sign a statement accepting the code of conduct for members of the National Executive Committee
- Has been declared bankrupt or compounded with their creditors and not been discharged;
- Is subject to a disqualification order made under the Company Directors Disqualification Act
- Has been convicted of an offence where the conviction is not treated as spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Fails to abide by any rules for the conduct of elections made by the National Executive Committee

National & regional representatives (11) must:

- Live in the nation/region for which you are seeking nomination.
- Be nominated by one or more branches or Party Councils in that region at a validly constituted meeting.

Additionally, the elections in the East, North East and South West regions will be for women only candidates (see below).

Youth representative (1) must be:

- Under 27 at the date of nomination.
- Nominated by one or more branches or Party Councils at a validly constituted meeting.

Societies representatives (1 man & 1 woman):

- Must be nominated by a Society or Affiliate that is currently subscribed to the Co-operative Party.

CPDC candidates must

- Be nominated by a Society, Affiliate or local Party of which they are a member
- Live in the region for which they are seeking nomination
- Have been a member of the Co-operative Party (continuously) for five years.

Role of the NEC

The NEC sets the strategic direction for the Party and works closely with the General Secretary and staff to ensure that we meet our purpose and agreed plans.

Party Policy is agreed by the NEC in consultation with members and Annual Conference.

The NEC is also the Board of Co-operative Party Ltd, a registered Society under the Co-operative & Community Benefits Society Act 2014. It is responsible for ensuring that the Party complies with all aspects of good corporate governance and meets its responsibilities in law and to statutory bodies such as the FCA and Electoral Commission.

Members must have a good understanding of corporate governance and finance, or be prepared to receive training.

Rules of Co-operative Party Ltd (extract)

The National Executive Committee exercises all the powers of the Party, subject to the law and the rules of the Party. In particular, it:

- determines the Party's strategy and forward plans, in consultation with the General Secretary;
- receives a report on the business and activities of the Party from the General Secretary at each meeting;
- oversees the annual report, revenue account and balance sheet;
- appoints or removes the General Secretary, and determines her/his terms and conditions of appointment, and the appointment by the General Secretary of other employees of the Party;
- prepares and reviews the Party's membership strategy, its NEC Membership Policy, and when appropriate makes recommendations for change, including changes to the rules of the Party.

Meetings

The NEC normally meets four times a year, over a weekend. These meetings are usually in March, June, September and a Strategy Weekend at the end of November. Other meetings may take place by phone, video conference or email as required.

There are also Sub Committees, including Audit, Policy and Staffing & Remuneration. These usually meet prior to the main NEC meeting. At least one member of the Audit Sub Committee should have financial qualifications and experience.

The next meetings will be:

10-11 June 2017	AGM & induction	Luton
30 September	NEC Meeting preceded by reception to mark the Centenary exhibition	Manchester
13-15 October 2017	Annual Conference	London
25-26 November	NEC Strategy Weekend	t.b.c.

Remuneration

Members of the NEC do not receive a fee or an attendance allowance, but they are reimbursed reasonable travel expenses to attend meetings of the NEC or on the NEC's behalf.

Gender balance

For 2014 and future elections, where required, the NEC agreed that some seats should be reserved for women candidates to ensure a gender balance on the NEC that better reflects the overall membership. For the elections in 2017 the following regions are only open to women candidates: - East, North East, South West. Regions were selected on the basis that they were not included in 2014, and do not have a sitting member of the NEC who would be prevented from contesting the seat.

Election to the Co-operative Party Disciplinary Committee (CPDC)

The CPDC is comprised of 11 members, one per region. Elections to the CPDC take place at the same time as the election to the NEC. Candidates must have been a member of the Co-operative Party for five years and live in the region for which they are seeking nomination. Nominations are made by Party Councils and Societies/Affiliates – the candidate must also be a member of the body nominating them and may not be a member of the NEC, MP, MSP, AM or member of staff.

For full details of the role of the CPDC, see the Rule Book, Section D (online).

Standing for election

Becoming a candidate

Regional & national or youth representative

To be a candidate for one of the regional & national representatives or the youth representative, you must:

- **Complete the online Candidate Information Form**
This form can be completed at www.party.coop/stand-nec
- **Return a completed paper nomination form signed by a party council or branch secretary**
Nomination forms will be sent to party council and branch secretaries as soon as nominations open. The form will also be available online for candidates to download and print themselves.

Society representative

To be a candidate for one of the Society representatives, you must:

- **Complete the online Candidate Information Form**
This form can be completed at www.party.coop/stand-nec
- **Be nominated by a society or affiliate**

Each organisation may nominate one man and/or one woman. Ballot papers will be issued to Societies and affiliates, to elect one man and one woman from different organisations.

Disciplinary committee

To be a candidate for the CPDC, you must:

- **Complete the online Candidate Information Form**
This form can be completed at www.party.coop/stand-nec
- **Seek nomination from a society, affiliated organisation or local Party of which you are a member**

Ballot papers will be issued to Societies, affiliates and Party Councils, to elect one member for each region.

Candidate Information Form

Candidates for all sections must complete the online Candidate Information Form. Via this form, candidates will have the opportunity to provide:

- a biography (not exceeding 200 words)
to be circulated with ballot papers
- a photo
- contact details, including a email, Twitter and Facebook
- a candidate statement of up to 300 words
to be published alongside biography on Party website

Candidate biographies will be circulated with the ballot papers, together with a list of nominating parties and branches. In addition, submitted statements, photos and contact details for valid nominees will be published on the Party website

Campaign materials and social media

Candidates may also use social media but this must not be paid for (either by or on behalf of the candidate or in-kind) and printed materials will be limited to 2 sides of A4, for distribution to party units only.

Voting process


The election will be by one member, one vote of all eligible individual members in the region (for the regional members) and under 30 (for the youth representative).

Voting for the regional members and the youth representative will be on-line, and only those members without an email address will receive a postal vote.

politics for people

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