



# Co-operative Party Rule Book 2020

## Contents

Contents.....	1
Terms and Abbreviations.....	2
<b>Rules of Co-operative Party Ltd.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Co-operative Party Rules.....</b>	<b>18</b>
Scope of the Rules and their interpretation.....	18
Membership Conditions.....	18
Party Units and Networks.....	20
Annual Conference.....	21
<b>Procedures.....</b>	<b>22</b>
Procedural Rules for Annual Conference.....	22
Election of the Conference Arrangements Committee (CAC).....	24
Membership Procedure.....	25
Disciplinary Procedure.....	26
Sexual Harassment Complaints Procedure.....	27
Remit of the Co-operative Party Disciplinary Committee.....	29
Election of the Co-operative Party Disciplinary Committee (CPDC).....	30
Procedural Guidelines in Disciplinary Cases brought before the CPDC.....	31
Parliamentary Panel.....	33
Nomination of Parliamentary Candidates.....	35
Scottish Parliament Elections.....	40
Welsh Parliament/Senedd Cymru Elections.....	41
<b>Policies.....</b>	<b>42</b>
National Agreement between the Labour Party and the Co-operative Party (2003).....	42
Conduct.....	45



Safeguarding.....	46
Antisemitism.....	47
Islamophobia.....	48
<b>Rules for Party Units.....</b>	<b>50</b>
Scottish Co-operative Party.....	50
Wales Co-operative Party.....	52
Co-operative Party Youth.....	56
Co-operative Party Networks.....	58
Regional Party.....	60
Regional Officer Group.....	62
Model Constitution for a Society Co-operative Party ('Local Party').....	63
Voluntary Parties.....	68
Model Rules for a Branch Co-operative Party.....	71
Procedures for Party & Branch AGMs.....	73

## Terms and Abbreviations

CAC	Conference Arrangements Committee
CLP	Constituency Labour Party
Constitution	The Rules of Co-operative Party Ltd, registered with the Financial Conduct Authority
Members	For the purpose of these rules, 'members' means individual members of the Co-operative Party.
NEC	National Executive Committee. The NEC is also the Board of Co-operative Party Ltd.



## **Rules of Co-operative Party Ltd**

*These are the rules of the Society, also known as the Constitution. These rules are registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and take precedence over other rules, policies and procedures.*

*These Rules were amended by a vote following the AGM in October 2020 and are pending approval by the FCA.*

### **1. Name**

- 1.1. The name of the society is Co-operative Party Limited and it is called “the Party” in the rest of these rules.

### **2. Purpose**

- 2.1. The purpose of the Party is to promote co-operative and mutual forms of economic, social and voluntary organisation, which are based on the principles of mutual ownership and democratic control, and to support political action in pursuance of the Values and Principles of the Co-operative Movement in the UK and internationally as defined from time to time by the International Co-operative Alliance.

### **3. Commitments**

#### **To the UK Co-operative Movement and Co-operatives UK**

- 3.1. The Party was created to serve the Co-operative Movement of the United Kingdom, and it is committed to working in support of the aims of that Movement.

#### **To the Labour Movement**

- 3.2. The Party is allied to the Labour Party through an electoral agreement, and it is committed to working with the Labour Party and the Trade Union Movement to achieve their common goals.

#### **To the wider co-operative and mutual sector**

- 3.3. The Party is committed to working in co-operation with bodies representing the co-operative and mutual sector in the United Kingdom, in other countries and internationally to achieve their common goals.

#### **Respect for the rights of people**

- 3.4. In conducting its affairs, the Party shall respect the rights of everyone it deals with, as set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

#### **Prohibition on distribution**

- 3.5. The Party is carrying on its activities for the purpose set out above, and not in order to make a trading profit. Any profits or surpluses generated by the Party's activities shall not be distributed either directly or indirectly in any way whatsoever among members of the Party but shall be applied:
  - 3.5.1. to maintain prudent reserves;
  - 3.5.2. on expenditure in carrying out the Party's functions.



#### **4. Functions**

- 4.1. The functions of the Party are to provide goods and services in pursuit of its purpose, including:
  - 4.1.1. seeking the election of co-operators into public office;
  - 4.1.2. campaigning;
  - 4.1.3. providing education and training;
  - 4.1.4. undertaking research;
  - 4.1.5. publishing;
  - 4.1.6. engaging, as principals or agents, in any other business, trade or activity which seems to the Party directly or indirectly in pursuit of its purpose.

#### **5. Powers**

- 5.1. The Party may do anything which appears to it to be necessary or desirable in connection with its functions.
- 5.2. In particular it may:
  - 5.2.1. acquire and dispose of property;
  - 5.2.2. enter into contracts;
  - 5.2.3. raise money by subscription;
  - 5.2.4. accept gifts of property;
  - 5.2.5. employ staff;
  - 5.2.6. establish a Co-operative Party Disciplinary Committee to deal with disciplinary matters concerning individual members of Local Parties.
- 5.3. Any power of the Party to pay remuneration and allowances to any person includes the power to make arrangements for providing, or securing the provision of pensions or gratuities (including those payable by way of compensation for loss of employment or loss or reduction of pay).
- 5.4. Subject to the approval of the National Executive Committee, the Party may borrow money for the purposes of or in connection with its functions, subject to a limit of £5,000,000.
- 5.5. The Party may invest money for the purposes of or in connection with its functions. The investment may include investment by:
  - 5.5.1. forming, or participating in forming bodies corporate;
  - 5.5.2. otherwise acquiring membership of bodies corporate.

#### **6. The organisation of the Party**

- 6.1. The Party consists of:
  - 6.1.1. its members, comprising individuals and affiliated organisations;
  - 6.1.2. the National Executive Committee;
  - 6.1.3. the General Secretary;
  - 6.1.4. Party Conference;



# co-operative party

6.1.5. local and regional parties

6.2. Their respective responsibilities and functions, which shall at all times be exercised and performed in accordance with these rules, are as follows.

## **Members**

6.3. Individual members and Organisational members (through their delegates) attend and participate at meetings, vote in elections to and stand for election for the National Executive Committee, and take such other part in the affairs of the Party as is provided in these rules.

## **Local and Regional Parties**

6.4. Individual members shall be organised into local and regional parties whose constitutions have been approved by the National Executive Committee and registered with the Party, for the purpose of undertaking day-to-day activities, participating in the party's democratic structures and other such activities conducted in line with the rules of the Party. All local and regional parties and branches shall be subject to the National Rules, as made by the NEC and endorsed by Annual Conference.

## **National Executive Committee**

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

6.5.1. appoints or removes the General Secretary, and determines the terms and conditions of appointment;

6.5.2. approves an appointment by the General Secretary of other employees of the Party;

6.5.3. at each National Executive Committee meeting receives a report on the business and activities of the Party from the General Secretary;

6.5.4. in respect of each financial year, causes to be prepared an annual report, revenue account and balance sheet as required by these rules;

6.5.5. determines the Party's strategy and forward plans in consultation with the General Secretary;

6.5.6. prepares and from time to time to reviews the Party's membership strategy, its National Executive Committee Membership Policy, and when appropriate makes recommendations for change, including changes to these rules.

## **General Secretary**

6.6. The business of the Party is managed by the General Secretary.

6.7. The General Secretary shall report to each National Executive Committee meeting on the business and activities of the Party.

## **Party Conference**

6.8. Resolutions of the Annual Party Conference and any Special Conferences are advisory for the National Executive Committee.



### **Board Secretary**

- 6.9. The Party shall have a Board Secretary who may be an employee but may not be the General Secretary. The Board Secretary's functions shall include:
- 6.9.1. acting as secretary to the National Executive Committee;
  - 6.9.2. keeping the register of members and other registers and books required by these rules to be kept;
  - 6.9.3. summoning and attending all meetings of the Party, and of its National Executive Committee, and keeping the minutes of those meetings;
  - 6.9.4. acting as Returning Officer in any elections;
  - 6.9.5. publishing to members in an appropriate form information about the Party's affairs to enable its purpose to be achieved;
  - 6.9.6. preparing and sending to the Financial Services Authority and any other statutory body all returns which are required to be made.

## **7. Members**

- 7.1. The members of the Party are the individual members, and affiliated organisations whose names are entered in the register of members.

### **Individual members**

- 7.2. Membership of the Party is open to any individual who meets the criteria for membership as determined by the National Executive Committee and complies with the Rules of the Party.

### **Societies**

- 7.3. Membership of the Party is open to any co-operative or mutual society which submits an application for membership in the form specified by the National Executive Committee, and whose purpose is, in the opinion of the National Executive Committee, compatible with the Party's purpose.

### **Other Affiliated Organisations**

- 7.4. Membership of the Party is open to organisations such as trade unions and their branches; campaign groups and voluntary/community organisations whose purpose is, in the opinion of the National Executive Committee, compatible with the Party's purpose.

### **Shares and subscriptions**

- 7.5. Individual members shall pay a subscription approved annually by the National Executive Committee and Party Conference.
- 7.6. An affiliated organisation shall pay such a subscription as agreed by the National Executive Committee.
- 7.7. Co-operatives UK shall pay such subscription as its Board determines.
- 7.8. An affiliate or society member shall cease to be a member if:
- 7.8.1. it ceases to exist;
  - 7.8.2. it is expelled or ceases to be entitled to be a member under these rules;



7.8.3. it withdraws from membership by giving at least one month's written notice to the Secretary; or

7.8.4. the Secretary removes it from the Register of members on the basis that it has failed to pay its annual subscription, but not until the Secretary has complied with procedures approved by the National Executive Committee.

7.9. An individual shall cease to be a member if s/he resigns, dies or fails to meet the conditions laid out in the Membership Rules.

## **8. Shares**

8.1. The shares of the Party have the nominal value of £1 each, which shall not be payable unless demanded by the Society. A share may not be transferred or withdrawn.

8.2. Every member shall hold one share, which shall be allotted upon admission to membership. No member may hold more than one share.

8.3. On termination of membership, the share registered in the name of the former member is to be cancelled and any amount subscribed for the share is to become the property of the Party.

8.4. Shares do not carry any right to interest, dividend or bonus.

## **9. Expulsion from membership**

### **Organisations**

9.1. A member may be expelled by a resolution approved by not less than two-thirds of the members of the National Executive Committee attending and voting at a meeting. The following procedure is to be adopted.

9.1.1. Any member may complain to the General Secretary that another member has acted in a way detrimental to the interests of the Party.

9.1.2. If a complaint is made, the National Executive Committee may itself consider the complaint having taken such steps as it considers appropriate to ensure that each member's point of view is heard and may either:

9.1.2.1. dismiss the complaint and take no further action; or

9.1.2.2. for a period not exceeding twelve months suspend the rights of the member complained of to attend members meetings and vote under these rules;

9.1.2.3. arrange for a resolution to expel the member complained of to be considered at the next meeting of the National Executive Committee.

9.1.3. If a resolution to expel a member is to be considered at a meeting of the National Executive Committee, details of the complaint must be sent to the member complained of not less than one calendar month before the meeting with an invitation to answer the complaint and attend the meeting.

9.1.4. At the meeting, the National Executive Committee will consider evidence in support of the complaint and such evidence as the member complained of may wish to place before them.



9.1.5. If the member complained of fails to attend the meeting without due cause the meeting may proceed in their absence.

9.2. A member expelled from membership will cease to be a member upon the declaration by the Chair of the meeting that the resolution to expel them is carried.

9.3. No former member who has been expelled from membership is to be re-admitted except by a resolution carried by the votes of two-thirds of the National Executive Committee at a meeting.

#### **Individual Members**

9.4. All individual members must comply with the Membership Rules as agreed by the National Executive Committee and endorsed by Annual Conference.

## **10. General Meetings and Party Conferences**

### **General Meetings**

10.1. The Party is to hold a general meeting (called the annual general meeting) each year, normally at the same venue and on the same occasion as the Annual Party Conference. The annual general meeting is to be convened by the Board Secretary by order of the National Executive Committee.

10.2. The business of the annual general meeting comprises:

10.2.1. receiving:

10.2.1.1. the revenue account and balance sheet for the previous financial year; and

10.2.1.2. a report on the Party's performance in the previous year;

10.2.1.3. forward plans for the current year and the next 2 years;

10.2.2. appointing financial auditors;

10.2.3. such other business as the National Executive Committee approves.

10.3. All general meetings other than annual general meetings are called special general meetings and are to be convened by the Board Secretary either:

10.3.1. by order of the National Executive Committee; or

10.3.2. if a written requisition signed (except where these rules say otherwise) on behalf of members which are entitled to not less than one tenth of the total votes, is delivered (addressed to the Secretary) to the Party's registered office. The requisition must state the purpose for which the meeting is to be convened. If the Secretary is not within the United Kingdom or is unwilling to convene a members' meeting any National Executive Committee member may convene a members meeting.

10.3.3. A special meeting called in response to a members' requisition must be held within 28 days of the date on which the requisition is delivered to the registered office. The meeting is not to transact any business other than that set out in the requisition and the notice convening the meeting.

10.4. General meetings are open to delegates appointed by affiliated organisations and local parties. Individual members may attend and ask



questions in their own right but can only vote if duly appointed as a delegate by their party.

**Notice and procedures for General Meetings**

- 10.5. Notice of a members meeting is to be given:
  - 10.5.1. by notice to all members; and
  - 10.5.2. by notice on the Party's websiteat least 14 clear days before the date of the meeting. The notice must:
  - 10.5.3. be given to the members of the National Executive Committee, members of the Management Executive and to the auditors;
  - 10.5.4. state whether the meeting is an annual or special general meeting;
  - 10.5.5. give the time, date and place of the meeting; and
  - 10.5.6. indicate the business to be dealt with at the meeting.
- 10.6. Before a general meeting can do business there must be a quorum present. Except where these Rules say otherwise a quorum is delegates from 40% of local parties or affiliate members, and one member of the National Executive Committee.
- 10.7. The Chair of the National Executive Committee or in their absence some other National Executive Committee member nominated by the members of the National Executive Committee shall preside at a general meeting of the Party. If neither the Chair nor such other National Executive Committee member is present and willing to act, the National Executive Committee members present shall elect one of their number to be Chair and if there is only one National Executive Committee member present and willing to act, they shall be Chair.
- 10.8. If no quorum is present within half an hour of the time fixed for the start of the meeting, the meeting shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week at the same time and place or to such time and place as the National Executive Committee determine. If a quorum is not present within half an hour of the time fixed for the start of the adjourned meeting, the number of members present during the meeting is to be a quorum.
- 10.9. Subject to these rules and to any Act of Parliament, a resolution put to the vote at a general meeting shall, except where a card vote is demanded or directed, be decided upon by a show of hands.
- 10.10. On a show of hands every delegate present is to have one vote. In the case of an equality of votes the Chair of the meeting is to have a second or casting vote.
- 10.11. Unless a card vote is demanded, the result of any vote will be declared by the Chair and entered in the minute book. The minute book will be conclusive evidence of the result of the vote.
- 10.12. A card vote may be directed by the Chair or demanded either before or immediately after a vote by show of hands by not less than one-tenth of the delegates present at the meeting.



- 10.13. On a card vote, each Society or affiliated member shall have ten votes, plus one additional vote for every £25 or part of that amount paid to the Party during the previous financial year.
- 10.14. On a card vote, each local Party shall have one vote per member.
- 10.15. Unless these rules or an Act of Parliament say otherwise, all resolutions are to be decided by a simple majority of the votes cast.

#### **Party Conferences**

- 10.16. A Party Conference shall be held each year, called the Annual Party Conference, and convened by the General Secretary by order of the National Executive Committee.
- 10.17. A Special Party Conference may be convened by the General Secretary at any other time, by order of the National Executive Committee, or on the requisition of members carrying not less than one tenth of the total votes. Only the business for which the Special Conference was convened shall be considered.
- 10.18. Party Conferences are open to delegates of Local Parties and of affiliated organisations.
- 10.19. The National Executive Committee shall approve rules, procedures and arrangements for Party Conferences, including the maintenance of a Conference Arrangements Committee, which shall govern the procedures for the business of Party Conferences.

## **11. National Executive Committee**

### **Composition**

- 11.1. National Executive Committee Members shall comprise the following:
  - 11.1.1. eleven National Executive Committee Members elected by and from individual members on the basis of one member one vote. The National Executive Committee will approve the election procedures to be used. One Member shall be elected by and from Scotland; one by and from Wales; and one each by and from the nine Government Regions of England. The National Executive Committee shall have the power to decide on the geographical allocation of Local Parties and society members;
  - 11.1.2. one National Executive Committee Member being a person under the age of twenty-seven at the date of nomination, elected by and from individual youth members on the basis of one member one vote. The National Executive Committee will approve the election procedures to be used.
  - 11.1.3. one National Executive Committee Member appointed by the Board of Co-operatives UK Limited;
  - 11.1.4. two National Executive Committee Members appointed by the Board of the Co-operative Group Limited;
  - 11.1.5. two National Executive Committee Members elected by and from affiliated Societies other than the Co-operative Group Ltd.
  - 11.1.6. two National Executive Committee Members elected by and from the Westminster Parliamentary Group.



- 11.2. The Chief Executive Officer of Co-operatives UK, or her/his nominee, may attend meetings of the National Executive Committee, as long as they fulfil the Co-operative Party membership conditions. They shall not have a vote.
  - 11.3. National Executive Committee Members will normally serve for a maximum of three terms of 3 years (or part thereof).
  - 11.4. Those organisations appointing Members to the National Executive Committee shall make their appointments not later than one month before the Annual Meeting.
  - 11.5. No person can be a National Executive Committee Member who:
    - 11.5.1. does not meet the age requirements for an officer of a co-operative society;
    - 11.5.2. is not an individual member of the Party;
    - 11.5.3. refuses to sign a statement accepting the code of conduct for members of the National Executive Committee;
    - 11.5.4. has been declared bankrupt or compounded with their creditors and has not been discharged;
    - 11.5.5. is subject to a disqualification order made under the Company Directors Disqualification Act;
    - 11.5.6. has been convicted of an offence where the conviction is not treated as spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974;
    - 11.5.7. fails to abide by any rules for the conduct of elections made by the National Executive Committee;and any person who ceases to qualify under this rule shall immediately cease to be a National Executive Committee Member.
  - 11.6. A National Executive Committee Member may be removed from office by a resolution approved by not less than three-quarters of the remaining National Executive Committee Members present and voting at a meeting on the grounds that:
    - 11.6.1. they have committed a serious breach of the code of conduct, or
    - 11.6.2. they have acted in a manner detrimental to the interests of the Party, and
    - 11.6.3. the National Executive Committee consider that it is not in the best interests of the Party for them to continue as a National Executive Committee Member.
  - 11.7. Vacancies arising at any time amongst the elected National Executive Committee Members will be dealt with by the holding of an election. In each case the person filling the vacancy shall serve for the unexpired term of office.
  - 11.8. Vacancies arising amongst the appointed National Executive Committee Members will be filled by the organisation entitled to appoint the relevant National Executive Committee Member.
- National Executive Committee Meetings**
- 11.9. At its Annual Meeting, the National Executive Committee will appoint one of its Members to be Chair and another to be Vice-Chair.



- 11.10. The National Executive Committee will meet at such times and places as they think fit. Seven clear days' notice of the date and place of each meeting is to be given in writing by the Board Secretary to all National Executive Committee Members and to the General Secretary. A National Executive Committee meeting may be called by shorter notice if it is so agreed by all the National Executive Committee Members entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.
- 11.11. At least nine Members of the National Executive Committee will form a quorum.
- 11.12. The Chair, or in their absence the Vice-Chair, or in their absence another National Executive Committee Member is to chair meetings of the National Executive Committee.
- 11.13. The General Secretary shall attend every meeting of the National Executive Committee, unless their performance, or terms and conditions of employment are the subject matter of the meeting.
- 11.14. Meetings of the National Executive Committee may be called either by the Board Secretary, or by a notice in writing specifying the business to be discussed, given to the Secretary by the Chair of the National Executive Committee, or by not less than four National Executive Committee Members. The Board Secretary is to communicate every such notice to all National Executive Committee Members as soon as possible and the meeting is to be held at a venue decided by the Board Secretary not earlier than seven days and not later than fourteen days after the receipt by the Board Secretary of the notice.
- 11.15. The National Executive Committee may agree that its Members can participate in its meetings by telephone, video or computer link. Participation in a meeting in this manner shall be deemed to constitute presence in person at the meeting.
- 11.16. The National Executive Committee may appoint specialist advisors to advise on any issue and may invite them to attend and speak (but not vote) at its meetings.
- 11.17. Subject to the following provisions of this rule, questions arising at a National Executive Committee meeting shall be decided by a majority of votes. Each National Executive Committee Member shall have one vote. In case of an equality of votes the Chair shall have a second and casting vote.
- 11.18. A resolution in writing signed by all members of the National Executive Committee will have the same effect as a resolution passed at a meeting of the National Executive Committee and may consist of several identical copies of a document each signed by one or more National Executive Committee Members.  
**Conflict of interests**
- 11.19. Any National Executive Committee Member who has a material interest in a matter as defined below shall declare such interest to the National Executive Committee and:
  - 11.19.1. may be present in any discussion of the matter unless a majority of the National Executive Committee Members objects to their presence, but



- 11.19.2. shall not vote on the issue (and if by inadvertence they do remain and vote, their vote shall not be counted).
- 11.20. Any National Executive Committee Member who fails to disclose any interest required to be disclosed under the preceding paragraph must permanently vacate their office if required to do so by a majority of the remaining National Executive Committee Members.
- 11.21. A material interest in a matter is any interest or contractual relationship (save for the exception referred to below) held by a National Executive Committee Member or their spouse or partner in any firm or company or business which, in connection with the matter, is trading with the Party, or is likely to be considered as a potential trading partner with the Party.
- 11.22. The exception which shall not be treated as a material interest is shares not exceeding 2% of the total shares in issue held in any company whose shares are listed on any public exchange.

### **Committees**

- 11.23. The National Executive Committee shall appoint
- 11.23.1. a remuneration committee which shall determine the terms and conditions of employment of the General Secretary and other employees. No National Executive Committee Member who is an employee member shall be a member of such committee; and
- 11.23.2. an audit committee.
- 11.24. The National Executive Committee shall have the power to establish advisory, consultative and other committees consisting of National Executive Committee Members, and such other Local Party members as it may decide. These committees shall carry out such functions as may be assigned to them.
- 11.25. National Executive Committee Members will not receive any payment for serving on the National Executive Committee other than the payment of reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out their duties.

## **12. Audit**

- 12.1. The National Executive Committee will in respect of each year of account:
- 12.1.1. cause to be prepared a revenue account or accounts which deal with the affairs of the Party and any subsidiary company or society for that year; and which give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure of the Party and any subsidiary company or Party for that year;
- 12.1.2. cause to be prepared a balance sheet giving at that date a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the Party and any subsidiary company or Party.
- 12.2. The National Executive Committee is to lay a revenue account and balance sheet duly audited and signed by the financial auditor and incorporating the report of the financial auditor thereon before each annual meeting, accompanied by a report by the National Executive Committee on the position of the affairs of the Party and any subsidiary or holding company or Party signed by the chair of the National Executive Committee meeting at which the report is adopted.



- 12.3. The National Executive Committee is not to cause to be published any balance sheet unless it has previously been audited by the financial auditor and it incorporates a report by the financial auditor that it gives a true and fair view of the income and expenditure, or the state of the affairs of the Party, as the case may be. Every revenue account and balance sheet published is to be signed by the General Secretary and by two National Executive Committee Members acting on behalf of the National Executive Committee.
- 12.4. A qualified auditor must be appointed to audit the Party's accounts and a balance sheet for each financial year. In this rule "qualified auditor" means a person who is a qualified auditor under Section 91 of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and Part 42 of the Companies Act 2006.
- 12.5. The financial auditor shall, in accordance with Section 83 of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, make a report to the Party on the accounts examined by them and on the revenue account or accounts and the balance sheet of the Party for the year in question.
- 12.6. Save as provided in this rule every appointment of a financial auditor is to be made by resolution of a members meeting of the Party. The exceptions are:
- 12.6.1. the first appointment of a financial auditor is to be made within three months of the registration of the Party and is to be made by the National Executive Committee if no members meeting of the Party is held within that time;
- 12.6.2. the National Executive Committee may appoint a financial auditor to fill any casual vacancy occurring between members meetings of the Party.

### **13. Annual Returns**

- 13.1. The Party will make an annual return to the Financial Services Authority as required by the Act.
- 13.2. The Party will supply a copy of the last annual return with all supporting documents to any member on request and without charge.

### **14. Amending these rules**

- 14.1. Unless these rules say otherwise, any rule may be altered or rescinded, or any new rule may be made, by resolution passed by at least two thirds of the votes cast on a card vote at a members meeting. No change to these rules shall be valid until registered by the Financial Services Authority. When submitting rule amendments for registration the secretary may at their sole discretion accept any alternation required or suggested by the Financial Services Authority without reference back to a further special meeting of the society.
- 14.2. Rules 2 and 5 and this rule may only be changed by a majority of at least three quarters of the members who vote at a members' meeting.

### **15. Dissolution**

- 15.1. A duly appointed receiver or manager of the whole or part of the Party's property may assume such powers of the National Executive Committee or



the General Secretary as they consider necessary to carry out their duties under the instrument of appointment.

15.2. The Party may be dissolved by the consent of three-quarters of the members who sign an instrument of dissolution in the directed form or by winding-up in the manner provided by the Act.

15.3. On the winding up or dissolution of the Party, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property or funds whatsoever remaining must be applied by transfer:

15.3.1. to one or more other bodies with the same purpose as the Party;  
or

15.3.2. where no such bodies exist, to another body or bodies established for exclusively charitable purposes with functions the same as or similar to the functions of the Party;

in each case as determined by the members at a meeting called to decide the issue.

15.4. No funds or part of any funds remaining after satisfaction of all debts and liabilities may be distributed to members of the Party. This provision may not be altered or rescinded.

## **16. Indemnity**

16.1. Members of the National Executive Committee, the General Secretary and the Board Secretary who act honestly and in good faith will not have to meet out of their personal resources any personal civil liability which is incurred in the execution or purported execution of their functions. Any costs arising in this way will be met by the Party. The Party may purchase and maintain insurance against this liability for its own benefit and for the benefit of the National Executive Committee and the General Secretary and the Board Secretary.

## **17. Administrative Provisions**

17.1. Anything done in good faith by any meeting of the National Executive Committee, the General Secretary or the Board Secretary shall be valid, notwithstanding that it is afterwards discovered that there was any defect in the appointment of any National Executive Committee Member or the General Secretary or the Board Secretary, or that any one or more of them were disqualified and shall be as valid as if each of them had been duly appointed and was duly qualified to serve.

17.2. Minutes are to be kept of every members' meeting, of every meeting of the National Executive Committee, any committee appointed by the National Executive Committee. Minutes of meetings will be read at the next meeting and signed by the Chair of that meeting. The signed minutes will be conclusive evidence of the events of the meeting.

17.3. The Party's registered office is at: 83 Crampton Street, London, SE17 3BQ or such other place as the National Executive Committee decides.

17.4. The Party is to keep at its registered office:

17.4.1. a register of members in which the Secretary is to enter the following particulars:

17.4.1.1. the names and addresses of the members;



- 17.4.1.2. details of the share held by each member and of the amount paid or agreed to be considered as paid for that share;
    - 17.4.1.3. a statement of other property in the Party whether in loans or loan stock held by each member;
    - 17.4.1.4. the date at which each member was entered in the register as a member and the date at which any ceased to be a member;
  - 17.4.2. a duplicate register of members containing the names and addresses of members;
  - 17.4.3. a register of the names and addresses of the members of the National Executive Committee, the basis of their membership of the National Executive Committee and the dates on which they assumed office;
  - 17.4.4. a register of the holders of loan stock in which the Secretary is to enter such particulars as the National Executive Committee direct and register all transfers of loan stock;
  - 17.4.5. a register in which the Secretary is to enter such particulars of all mortgages and charges on land of the Party as the National Executive Committee directs.
- 17.5. Subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act the registers to be maintained by the Party may be kept in electronic form.
- 17.6. The inclusion or omission of the name of any Local Party or Society from the register of members shall, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, be conclusive evidence that such Local Party or Society is or is not a member of the Party.
- 17.7. The Party is to keep proper books of account with respect to its transactions and to its assets and liabilities in accordance with the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.
- 17.8. Members are entitled to inspect:
- 17.8.1. their own account
  - 17.8.2. the duplicate register
- at the registered office at any reasonable time.
- 17.9. The Board Secretary is to deliver a copy of these rules to every person on demand on payment of an amount fixed by the National Executive Committee subject to the statutory maximum.
- 17.10. Notice of any change in the address of the registered office is to be sent by the Board Secretary to the Financial Services Authority in the directed form within fourteen days of the change. Any such change will take effect when registered by the Financial Services Authority.
- 17.11. Any notice required by these rules to be given shall be given in writing or shall be given using electronic communications to an address for the time being notified for that purpose. "Address" in relation to electronic communications includes any number or address used for the purposes of such communications.



- 17.12. Proof that an envelope containing a notice was properly addressed, prepaid and posted shall be conclusive evidence that the notice was given. A notice shall be treated as delivered 48 hours after the envelope containing it was posted or, in the case of a notice contained in an electronic communication, 48 hours after it was sent.
- 17.13. The registered name of the Party is to be displayed on the outside of the registered office and every other office or place in which the business of the Party is carried on. The registered name of the Party is also to be mentioned in legible characters in all:
- 17.13.1. business letters, notices, advertisements and other official publications
- 17.13.2. bills of exchange, promissory notes, endorsements, cheques and orders for money or goods purporting to be signed by or on behalf of the Party
- 17.13.3. bills, invoices, receipts and letters of credit of the Party.
- 17.14. The Party is registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 (referred to as “the Act” in these Rules). Any references to the Act include reference to any statutory re-enactment and/or modification.

## **18. Disputes**

- 18.1. Every unresolved dispute which arises out of these rules between the Party and:
- 18.1.1. a member or local Party; or
- 18.1.2. any individual or organisation who has ceased to be a member within the six months prior to the date of the dispute; or
- 18.1.3. any person bringing a claim under the rules of the Party; or
- 18.1.4. an office-holder of the Party
- is to be submitted to an arbitrator agreed by the parties. The arbitrator’s decision will be binding and conclusive on all parties.
- 18.2. Any person bringing a dispute must, if so required, deposit with the Party a reasonable sum (not exceeding £200) to be determined by the National Executive Committee. The arbitrator will decide how the costs of the arbitration will be paid and what should be done with the deposit.

## **Co-operative Party Rules**

### **Scope of the Rules and their interpretation**

1. The Rules of the Party are made by the National Executive Committee (NEC) and endorsed by Annual Conference. The Rules apply to all members and to all units of the Party.
2. These rules do not replace the registered rules of Co-operative Party Ltd (also known as the Constitution) and must at all times be consistent with the registered rules. In the event of any inconsistency, the registered Rules of the Co-operative Party Ltd. will apply
3. Party organisations may amend their constitutions, so long as such amendments do not contravene the provisions contained in these Rules, and they must be submitted to the NEC for approval.
4. The decision of the NEC on how the rules and procedures, including the rules of party units, should be interpreted will be final.
5. For the purpose of these rules and procedures, 'members' refers to individual Co-operative Party members.

### **Membership Conditions**

6. It is a condition of membership that each individual member must also be a member of a recognised co-operative as determined by the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the Co-operative Party.
7. Members shall pay the annual membership subscription as approved by the National Annual Conference of the Party. An individual member shall be deemed to have lapsed from membership if they have failed to renew their membership within 12 months of the membership subscription falling due.
8. Members must be at least 14 years of age.
9. Members shall sign a declaration as follows:

**I declare myself a Co-operator. I agree to accept the rules and to promote the policy and values of the Co-operative Party. I am not a member of any political Party other than the Labour Party or the Social Democratic and Labour Party. I am a member of a co-operative recognised by the National Executive Committee of the Co-operative Party.**



10. A member of the Party who stands for election - or acts as the election agent to a person standing for election - in opposition to a Labour Candidate will automatically be ineligible to be, or to remain, a Party member or to join the Party for a period of five years following the election.
11. A member of the Party may not join or support a political organisation in opposition to an official Labour Group or other unit of the Labour Party. This may render them ineligible to become, or remain, a member of the Co-operative Party.
12. Members of the Co-operative Party who are selected and/or elected to stand as Labour or Labour & Co-operative candidates to any level of public office are required within these rules to abide by the rules and procedures of the Labour Party. If subject to investigation or disciplinary action by the Labour Party, they may be suspended from representing or from membership of the Co-operative Party until the Labour Party disciplinary action has concluded.
13. To be and to remain eligible for membership, each individual member must also:
  - a) Accept and conform to the rules, principles and policy of the Party.
  - b) Normally be a member at the address where they are registered as an elector unless having recently moved, temporarily resident abroad or otherwise prevented from being registered, in which case they must be resident at the address recorded for membership purposes. The NEC shall consider any applications to take special circumstances of a member into account.
14. British and Irish Citizens resident overseas may apply to join the Party as an International Member, subject to payment of the applicable International Members' fee and all other membership conditions.
15. The NEC may rescind endorsement as a full Party member when evidence is provided that the individual concerned is not on the electoral register and is therefore (subject to the provisions above) ineligible for membership.
16. No member of the Party shall engage in a course of conduct prejudicial, or in any act grossly detrimental, to the Party. Such conduct shall also be deemed to include harassment, abuse or discrimination against groups and/or individuals based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Such an action may render them ineligible to be or to remain a member of the Co-operative Party. Any dispute as to whether a member or applicant is or has been in breach of this provision shall be determined by the NEC.
17. Where a member has been convicted of a serious criminal offence or the subject of a serious ruling from HM Courts and Tribunals Service or Council Standards Board, the NEC shall have the right to impose the appropriate disciplinary action.
18. The NEC or CPDC may consider the member's financial support to, organisation or promotion of and/or involvement in:



- a) Candidates standing in opposition to a Labour Party candidate or who publicly declare their intent to stand against a Labour candidate
  - b) The activities of a Party or organisation acting in opposition to a Labour Party candidate.
19. The NEC and/or CPDC shall not have regard to the mere holding or expression of beliefs and opinions.
20. No member may become an officer of the Party, or a representative on any public body or organisation to which the Party is affiliated, until they have been a member for nine months since the date of their valid application. The NEC shall have the power to waive this restriction temporarily in the case of a newly formed Branch, Society or Voluntary Party.

## **Party Units and Networks**

21. All Party units and networks must register with the national Co-operative Party and accept the policy as agreed upon and as amended from time to time by the Annual Co-operative Party Conference and by the NEC and shall operate such regulations as may be approved or issued by the NEC of the Party, provided that any regulation issued as a general instruction to Parties shall be subject to confirmation by the Annual Conference of the Party.
22. No Party unit or network shall be considered registered until it has its constitution endorsed by the NEC.
23. To uphold and enforce the Constitution, Rules and Standing Orders of the Party, the Party may take any action it deems necessary for such purpose, including disbanding, suspension or otherwise disciplining any Party organisation; in furtherance of such duties it shall have the powers to suspend or take other disciplinary action against individual members of the Party subject to the provisions of the Disciplinary Rules set out in the National Rules.
24. The NEC shall have the power to adjudicate in disputes that may arise at any level of the Party including between affiliated and other Party organisations; between Party organisations and individuals in those organisations; and in disputes which occur between individual members or within the Party's organisations. Where the rules do not meet the particular circumstances, the NEC may have regard to national or local custom and practice as the case may require. The NEC's decisions shall be final and binding on all organisations and individuals concerned.
25. Party meetings and events shall be conducted in a friendly and orderly manner and organised in such a way as to maximise participation for members and so that no member shall be precluded from attendance because they cannot gain access to the meeting place for any reason.
26. The structures and officers of party units and networks shall be gender balanced.



27. Delegations to and from Party units and networks shall be gender balanced.

### **Alteration to Rules**

28. No rule for a Party Unit or Network shall be altered, or new Rule adopted, unless written notice is given to the Secretary at least 28 days prior to the meeting at which it is to be discussed and circulated at least seven days prior to this date. The proposal must be supported by two-thirds of the members voting.

29. No such Rule shall become operative until it is approved and registered by the NEC of the Party.

### **Contracts**

30. Party units shall not enter into any contract with a value in excess of £1,000 without the express permission of the NEC.

### **Annual Conference**

31. The Annual Conference of the Co-operative Party must be convened in accordance with the Constitution. A Special Conference may be called, also subject to the Constitution.

32. The procedural rules for Annual Conference are set out in Procedural Rules - Annual Conference.

33. The NEC will set the delegate fee.

34. Any Procedural Rule may be suspended by a majority vote of the delegates present.

35. All changes to the Procedural Rules for Annual Conference must be taken by Card Vote.

36. Any Procedural Rule may be suspended by a majority vote of the delegates present.



## **Procedures**

### **Procedural Rules for Annual Conference**

#### **Ex-officio delegates and visitors**

1. All delegates shall be individual members of the Co-operative Party. The organisation sending delegates to Party Conference should endeavour to ensure their delegation is gender balanced and representative of the diversity of the wider membership.
2. Ex-officio members of the Party Conference are: -
  - a) Members of the NEC
  - b) Labour and Co-operative members of the UK, Scottish and Welsh Parliaments and the London Assembly
  - c) Labour and Co-operative Councillors, Police and Crime Commissioners and Elected Mayors
  - d) Elected members of the National Youth Committee and Networks Steering Committees
  - e) Members of the UK Parliamentary, Scottish and Welsh Parliamentary Panels
  - f) The General Secretary
  - g) Members of the Conference Arrangements Committee
3. Ex-officio members may speak but may not vote unless appointed as a delegate. Staff members may also speak, where appointed by the NEC, but they may not be selected as delegates.
4. Visitors may speak at the Chair's discretion but may not vote.

#### **Conference Arrangements Committee**

5. The CAC, subject to these rules and the Constitution, will govern the procedure of the business of the Conference and make the necessary arrangements for the success of the Conference.
6. The CAC will appoint its own Chair by simple majority, who will be responsible to the Conference for its work and guidance.
7. The Secretary to the CAC will be appointed by the General Secretary acting on behalf of the NEC.
8. At the start of each Conference, the CAC will propose to Conference for confirmation a programme of business.



### **Conference business**

9. The business of the Annual Conference will include the following:
  - a) Civic Welcome (if any)
  - b) Fraternal Greetings
  - c) Chair's Address
  - d) Report of the CAC
  - e) Parliamentary Reports
  - f) Policy Debates, the topics for which will be notified by the NEC in advance
  - g) Motions and amendments on Party Organisation accepted for inclusion in the Final Agenda and emergency motions accepted in accordance with these Rules.
10. No other business than that on the Agenda will be considered unless recommended by the NEC or by the CAC.

### **Motions**

11. The NEC will set the deadline for receipt of organisational motions, which should be notified to local Parties and affiliates at least eight weeks before the preliminary agenda is circulated. Amendments to the motions must be received by head office by the closing date set by the Conference Arrangements Committee (CAC).
12. No motion concerning a general policy or principle that Conference has voted on shall appear upon the Agenda for a period of two years from that Conference (i.e. not before the third Annual Conference following the resolution) unless this, in the opinion of the NEC, is of vital importance and urgency.
13. No motion or speeches dealing with staff terms and conditions or the appointment or behaviour of any member of staff will be taken. Such matters must be referred in writing to the NEC.
14. No organisation may submit more than three motions and three amendments.
15. Motions and amendments must not exceed 300 words.
16. CAC may composite motions dealing with the same issue.

### **Emergency motions**

17. Emergency motions must be recommended to the CAC by the NEC or supported by no fewer than two organisations represented at Conference. They must be handed to the CAC, signed by lead delegates, by 5.00 pm on the first full day of the Conference. A list of lead delegates will be posted on the registration desk, where copies of emergency motions may be placed for signature.



18. Emergency motions must relate to urgent matters of policy that are not included in the subject areas for debate or organisational matters that have arisen since the motions deadline.
19. No emergency motion shall be accepted unless its submission has been expressly authorised by the delegates of promoting organisations present at Conference. Subject to the approval of Conference, the CAC shall decide the admissibility or otherwise of any emergency motion. The acceptance of an emergency motion by the CAC does not guarantee that it will be brought before the Conference for debate.

### **Speeches**

20. Unless a special time limit recommended by the CAC has been accepted by the Conference, the mover of every motion will be allowed five minutes and three for reply, and the NEC up to seven minutes to reply to the whole debate. When an amendment is made to a motion and no further amendment is carried, it will become the substantive motion.
21. No delegate will be permitted to speak more than once on the same proposition, except the proposer, who will have the right to reply before the vote is taken.
22. Any debate may be closed by a resolution "That the question be now put" having been moved, seconded and carried. Such a resolution must be put to the meeting without debate, but no speech shall be interrupted for the purpose of proposing such a motion. If carried, the debate will move immediately to the right of reply and then to the vote.

### **Voting**

23. All votes shall be taken, in the first instance, by a show of hands.
24. A card vote will be taken on any motion if it is either recommended by the CAC or requested by the delegates of ten organisations raising their voting cards.
25. On a card vote, each society or affiliated member shall have ten votes, plus one additional vote for every £25 or part of that amount paid to the Party during the previous financial year.

### **Election of the Conference Arrangements Committee (CAC)**

1. The CAC shall be composed of five people: four elected by ballot to be held at Annual Conference and one member of the NEC, elected by the NEC to represent that body.
2. Notwithstanding casual vacancies, no more than two people will be elected at each Annual Conference.
3. Voting for the CAC will be by one member, one vote by those delegates present and voting.
4. No more than one representative shall be elected from any one Region.
5. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes will serve for three years and the candidate with the next highest vote will serve for one year.



## **Membership Procedure**

1. Individual membership of the Party is organised through Society, Regional and Voluntary Parties and through the head office of the Party.
2. Individual members must pay an annual subscription as approved by Annual Party Conference and will be issued with a membership card supplied by the NEC.
3. All recruitment to the Party shall be in accordance these Rules. The NEC shall determine any dispute or question that may arise in respect of the enrolment of, and/or the membership of, a member or members, and its decision in respect of such dispute shall be final and binding.
4. Any breach of the enrolment procedure may be dealt with by the CPDC as a disciplinary offence.
5. Membership applications may be submitted to the Co-operative Party Head Office using a printed application form, through the Party's website or by telephone.
6. The applicant must sign and date the declaration on the application form. Where application forms do not require a signature, or where an application is made by telephone or through the Party web site, the applicant will be deemed to have signed the declaration.
7. The applicant must provide proof of membership of a co-operative recognised by the NEC. Such evidence should be provided within three calendar months.
8. The application must be accompanied by the appropriate membership fee or completed Direct Debit mandate.
9. Any objections to the application should be sent to the National Party within six weeks, giving the reason under these Rules by which the application should be rejected.
10. At any time before the individual is accepted as a full member, the General Secretary of the Party may decide that the application be rejected if they consider the applicant does not comply with any of these rules.
11. Where it is deemed necessary by the General Secretary or the NEC, the Party may impose a temporary moratorium on new applications in a Society/Voluntary Party or Branch and/or request additional information from all applicants before applications will be processed. This may include proof of name and address and other relevant details. The Party reserves the right to ask to see the original document rather than a photocopy.
12. Notification of any rejection of the application should be given to the applicant within three calendar months of receipt of the application. They will have the right of individual written appeal to the NEC. Such an appeal should be considered and dealt with by the Disputes Committee of the NEC in any manner that it deems fit and the decision of the Disputes Committee, once approved by the NEC, shall be final and binding on the Society/Voluntary Party, General Secretary and the individual concerned.



13. Full membership rights will commence three calendar months from the date the application is received by the Co-operative Party Head Office, providing all conditions of membership have been met and there are no objections to the application. Prior to full membership, the applicant can attend branch meetings as a visitor.
14. If a member changes address, they should inform Head Office, who will update the membership database.
15. Any dispute as to the eligibility to vote in meetings shall be resolved by a designated representative of the Party NEC using appropriate national records. It is the responsibility of the individual member to produce proof of membership of a Co-operative Society or other recognised co-operative as determined by the National Executive Committee of the Co-operative Party when required by the NEC representative or any officer of the relevant Branch.
16. A member may apply to be entered on a Head Office Register, subject to meeting the membership conditions and the approval of the NEC.
17. Members on the Head Office Register will not be a member of, or accorded rights exercised by, local Parties.

## **Disciplinary Procedure**

1. A complaint concerning a breach of the Rules, Policies or Procedures of the Party should be made in writing to the General Secretary.

### **Action by the General Secretary**

2. In relation to any alleged breach of the Rules, Policies or Procedures of the Party the General Secretary may:
  - a) Inform the member that they have breached the Rules of the Party and (subject to appeal to the Co-operative Party Disciplinary Committee) are no longer eligible to be a member, or
  - b) Inform the member that they have breached the Rules of the Party and issue a warning, or
  - c) Suspend that individual or individuals from membership of the Party and/or office or representation of the Party pending the outcome of any investigation and charges (if any). A suspended member shall not be eligible to seek any office in the Party, nor shall they be eligible for nomination to any panel of prospective candidates nor to represent the Party in any position at any level, and/or
  - d) Investigate the complaint and refer it to the NEC.

### **Action by the NEC**

3. The NEC (or Sub Committee) will consider possible breaches of the Party's rules, policies or procedures and may impose such disciplinary measures as it thinks fit and appropriate. These may include:



- a) Reprimand and/or warning
  - b) Exclusion from membership for a defined period
  - c) Exclusion from holding office in the Party, or being a candidate or elected representative or delegate to or from any Party body
  - d) Expulsion from membership of the Party.
4. At its discretion, the NEC may refer cases directly to the Co-operative Party Disciplinary Committee (CPDC) to determine.
  5. In cases determined by the NEC, the member(s) shall have the right of appeal to the CPDC.
  6. When a person applies for readmission to the Party following an expulsion by the NEC or CPDC on whatever basis or automatic exclusion under the membership rules, the application will be submitted to the NEC for consideration and decision. Such applications will not normally be considered by the NEC until a minimum of five years has elapsed since the member's expulsion. The decision of the NEC shall be binding on the individual concerned and on the local Party relevant to the application.
  7. To uphold and enforce the Constitution, Rules and Standing Orders of the Party, the NEC may take any action it deems necessary for such purpose, including disbanding, suspension or otherwise disciplining any Party organisation.
  8. The NEC shall have the power to adjudicate in disputes that may arise at any level of the Party including between affiliated and other Party organisations; between Party organisations and individuals in those organisations; and in disputes that occur between individual members within the Party's organisations. Where the Rules do not meet the particular circumstances, the NEC may have regard to national or local custom and practice as the case may require. The NEC's decisions shall be final and binding on all organisations and individuals concerned.

## **Sexual Harassment Complaints Procedure**

1. The Co-operative Party believes that our co-operative values should be reflected in our actions as well as our policies. We want all members to feel safe, welcome and respected in our Party.
2. The Co-operative Party takes seriously all complaints of harassment and discrimination and will not tolerate such behaviour by our members or at our events or meetings.
3. All complaints of inappropriate behaviour by members of the Co-operative Party including elected representatives are considered under our Membership Rules, which make it clear that members must not engage in conduct that discriminates against groups or individuals on the basis of a range of characteristics including sex. Sexual harassment is defined as a form of discrimination on the basis of sex.



### **What is sexual harassment?**

4. Sexual harassment is action of a sexual nature which is not welcomed by the person suffering it. It can include, but is not limited to:
  - a) Unwanted physical contact
  - b) Sexual teasing or suggestive remarks
  - c) Sexual assault
  - d) Requests for sexual favours
  - e) Sexist jokes
  - f) Display of explicit or indecent images
5. Any dispute as to whether a member is in breach of this provision shall be determined by the Co-operative Party Disciplinary Committee (CPDC).
6. Any member of the Co-operative Party who wants to make a complaint about sexual harassment by another member of the Party or by a non-member at a Co-operative Party event or meeting, should contact the Party's Deputy General Secretary. This is Karen Wilkie and her email address is [k.wilkie@party.coop](mailto:k.wilkie@party.coop)
7. Where a complainant wants to proceed with a formal complaint under the Party's rules the Deputy General Secretary will oversee an investigation conducted by a member of Party staff. The matter will then be referred to the National Executive Committee. The NEC may refer cases to the CPDC or consider the case themselves. In cases determined by the NEC, the members concerned shall have the right of appeal to the CPDC.
8. Where we believe a criminal offence may have taken place, the complainant will be encouraged to report the incident to the Police; and the Party will provide appropriate on-going support in this process.
9. The procedures followed by the Disciplinary Committee are set out in in the Disciplinary Procedure.
10. At no point will the complainant be required to confront the respondent face to face and all details will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.
11. The National Executive Committee will receive regular reports on the number of complaints being made of sexual harassment.



## **Remit of the Co-operative Party Disciplinary Committee**

1. There shall be a Co-operative Party Disciplinary Committee (CPDC), to be elected in accordance with procedural rules set out.
2. The duties and powers of the CPDC shall be:
3. To determine by hearing or otherwise such disciplinary matters as are presented to it by the officials of the Party on the instructions of the NEC.
4. To determine appeals by members in respect of decisions by, or on behalf of the NEC, on disciplinary matters.
5. Where a determination has been made as a result of a case brought under either of the above, to impose such disciplinary measures as it thinks fit whether by way of reprimand or suspension from holding office in the Party, or being a delegate to or from any Party body, or expulsion from membership of the Party or removal or qualification of any right of membership.
6. The decisions of the CPDC in determining disciplinary matters brought before it and imposing such disciplinary measures as it sees fit, shall be final.
7. The CPDC shall elect its own Chair and two Vice-Chairs. The Secretary to the CPDC shall be appointed by the General Secretary acting on behalf of the NEC.
8. The quorum for full meetings of the CPDC or hearings in front of the full CPDC shall be not less than four members, who shall be present for the entirety of a hearing involving any individual.
9. The CPDC may, for the better ordering of its business from time to time and as it thinks fit, divide into panels of not less than three members, who shall have the full powers of the CPDC.
10. Each such panel shall elect a Chair as occasion requires it. Each such panel will consist of members from regions other than the source of the dispute. If a member of such a panel is unable to attend a hearing, the Chair of the CPDC may appoint another member of the CPDC to the panel as a replacement.
11. The CPDC or any panel thereof shall meet at such time and such place as it thinks fit, having regard to the convenience of the individual concerned, the members of the CPDC or panel, any witnesses, the effective and proper conduct of any hearing, and cost.
12. The CPDC or any panel thereof in hearing and determining charges against an individual shall have regard to the Disciplinary Rules. The CPDC shall have the power to supplement such guidelines from time to time and to modify its procedures in order to meet the circumstances of any particular case to ensure fairness to both the individual and the Party.
13. The CPDC shall have the right to dismiss, without full hearing or at any point, any case presented to it or the panel appointed to hear the case it considers by a majority vote to



be frivolous, vexatious, an abuse of the process of the CPDC, or where it considers no case to answer has been established.

14. The CPDC can refuse to hear or deal with any case referred to it if such referral is more than 90 days after the events to which it relates.

## **Election of the Co-operative Party Disciplinary Committee (CPDC)**

1. The CPDC shall consist of twenty-two members of the Party: two each from Scotland & NI (combined), Wales and the nine English regions, each of whom has been a member of the Party for a continuous period of not less than five years.
2. For the purpose of nomination and election the CPDC shall be based upon the same regions as for the election of the NEC.
3. The CPDC shall be elected every three years by ballot of affiliated Organisations and Registered Parties.
4. No more than two members, one woman and/or one man, shall be elected from each region.
5. Nominations for the CPDC shall be made in accordance with the following conditions:
6. Nominees must be bona fide members of the organisation/s submitting their nomination/s. Not more than two people shall be nominated by any one organisation.
7. No member of the NEC or CAC, no MP, MSP, AM or employee of the Party is eligible for nomination
8. No member with less than five years' continuous membership is eligible for nomination.
9. Nominees must inform the Secretary in writing of the acceptance or otherwise of that nomination by one week before the commencement of the ballot. Failure to provide such evidence shall render the nomination null and void.
10. Nominees must agree to undergo appropriate training if and as necessary
11. Any vacancy that occurs amongst members of the CPDC during the period of office shall be filled by ballot as soon as practicable after the vacancy arises. The person thus elected will be eligible for re-election at the conclusion of the original term of the member who gave rise to the vacancy.
12. The NEC may co-opt up to four additional members to the Committee, if it deems necessary, to address issues of under-representation. Such co-optees shall meet the same criteria for eligibility as elected members of the CPDC.

## **Procedural Guidelines in Disciplinary Cases brought before the CPDC**

### **Cases referred by the NEC:**

1. Each individual should be contacted by letter and email with the charge and full details of the evidence.
2. They will be asked to provide a written statement and, if relevant, witness statements or other supporting evidence with 28 days.
3. They will be required to inform the Secretary of the CPDC within 14 days if they wish to contest the charge and that, if they do not wish to contest the charge or fail to respond, the CPDC may proceed with the case and impose the appropriate sanction.

### **Appeals to cases determined by the NEC:**

4. Each individual should be contacted by letter and email with the charge and full details of the evidence.
5. They will be asked to provide a written statement and, if relevant, witness statements or other supporting evidence with 28 days.

### **Witnesses**

6. Should any individual wish to apply to the CPDC for it to hear the oral evidence of witnesses on their behalf, they should apply in writing no later than 14 days before the date of the hearing; and the CPDC should consider as soon as practicable after the application is made, but in any event no later than four days before the date of the hearing, whether fairness to the individual requires that this should be approved, having regard to the following:
  - a) The reasons given in support of the application
  - b) The relevant evidence that the witnesses are said to have to give.
  - c) The evidence already given in writing by the individual making the application
  - d) Whether that individual has taken the opportunity to submit a witness statement containing the evidence of the witness whom the individual is now applying to be heard orally.
  - e) The content of any such witness statement and any other considerations that appear to the CPDC to be relevant to determining whether fairness to the individual requires that any witness the subject of such an application be heard by the CPDC.

### **Accompanying Friend**

7. Any individual charged should have a right at the hearing concerning them to be accompanied by a member of the Party of their choice, who may not address the CPDC in the course of the proceedings.



## **Representation**

8. Any individual charged shall have a right to be represented by their advocate of choice, but any costs incurred by this advocacy shall be borne by the individual charged and not by the Party.

## **The procedure for each individual should be as follows:**

9. Meetings and hearings of the CPDC shall take place by video conference wherever practical
10. The panel shall consist of five members of the CPDC who shall not represent the same nation or region as the member(s) charged or complainant(s).
11. The panel shall consist of at least two men and two women.
12. Each member of the CPDC or any panel thereof should have, prior to the hearing, before them, separately for each individual charged, the charge or charges together with any written statement by that individual and any witness statements supplied by that individual or to be relied upon by the presenter.
13. Each individual's case should be dealt with separately, except where the same charges are being brought by an organisation and the individuals concerned have agreed to be heard collectively.
14. At the conclusion of the hearing of the case against each individual, the hearing against the next individual should proceed as a separate hearing.

## **Process**

15. The investigating officer should open and present the charge by making a short oral presentation explaining the particulars and evidence relied upon and calling any witnesses in support of the case.
16. After opening and presenting the charge or charges the panel should invite the individual(s) to reply, which they may do in writing, orally, or both and by calling witnesses to give evidence in accordance with the ruling on the application referred to above.
17. The individual charged and any witnesses may be subject to questions from any member of the CPDC, relating to the charges as particularised and on no other matters.
18. The individual charged shall be given the opportunity to make a further statement at the end of the hearing of the charge, during which neither shall introduce any new material.
19. At the conclusion of the hearing for each individual there should be a period for consideration by the CPDC followed by a vote on the question whether the charge or charges or any of them be found proved. Such question to be determined, if need be, by a simple majority vote.
20. If the CPDC finds the charge, or any of the charges, to be proved then the meeting should reconvene. The individuals should be informed and invited to address the CPDC



(orally, in writing, or both) by way of mitigation on the disciplinary action to be taken against them.

21. Before addressing the CPDC the individual should be informed by the Chair of the meeting that one of the options to be considered may be that of expulsion from the Party. At the conclusion of an address by an individual in mitigation, members of the CPDC may question the individual on that issue.
22. At the conclusion of the address in mitigation and any questions to the individual there shall be a period for further consideration by the CPDC followed by a decision on the disciplinary action to be taken. Such decision shall be taken, if need be, on a simple majority vote.
23. No member of the CPDC or panel thereof may vote on the charge against any individual or on any disciplinary action to be taken unless they have been present for the whole hearing of the charge or charges against that individual and the address in mitigation by that individual or their advocate.
24. The presenter of the case shall not have a vote on the CPDC or any panel thereof nor shall they participate whilst the CPDC is considering the case against any individual or disciplinary action to be taken.
25. Decisions in cases shall be announced by the CPDC or panel thereof as it considers fit and such decisions shall be final.

## **Parliamentary Panel**

### **Nominations**

1. Candidates may self-nominate by applying in writing to the Co-operative Party Head Office.
2. Applicants in Scotland or with an interest primarily in constituencies in Scotland will be considered by the Scottish Co-operative Party in line with criteria agreed between the NEC and the Scottish Co-operative Party.
3. Applicants in Wales or with an interest primarily in constituencies in Wales will be considered by the Wales Co-operative Party in line with criteria agreed between the NEC and the Wales Co-operative Party.

### **Eligibility**

4. A nominee must be an individual member of the Co-operative Party and of a Co-operative Society at the time of application.
5. Nominees must meet Labour Party eligibility criteria for nomination as a Prospective Parliamentary Candidate.
6. Prospective Parliamentary Candidates are ineligible.



### **Applications**

7. Applicants must complete the prescribed form in full and sign the declaration on the application form.

### **Empanelment**

8. Nominees will be included on the Panel only after interview by the NEC, NEC Sub-Committee or the Scottish or Wales Party.
9. The NEC, Scottish or Wales Party may turn down applications with or without interview.
10. Nominees whose applications are turned down may not reapply for membership of the Panel for at least one year.

### **Appeal**

11. Nominees whose applications are turned down may appeal in writing to the NEC setting out the grounds on which the NEC should consider the decision. Any appeal must be lodged within two months of the date on which the nominee receives notification of the rejection of their application.

### **Membership of the Panel**

12. Membership of the Co-operative Party's Parliamentary Panel conveys considerable advantages but also involves panellists accepting a number of obligations. Panel membership is official recognition by the Co-operative Party that you have the required calibre to be an excellent MP. Full time Co-operative Party Officials will promote you as a possible prospective Parliamentary Candidate.
13. You will enjoy speaking rights at the Co-operative Party Annual Conference.
14. In the case of an official nomination only members of the Parliamentary Panel will be considered for short listing by the local Co-operative Party.
15. If you are selected as the Official Labour and Co-operative Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, the Co-operative Party will enter into a Constituency Plan Agreement with the adopting Constituency Labour Party.
16. You must accept the following obligations
  - a) You must agree to abide by the Co-operative Party's rules and codes of conduct
  - b) You will no longer be a free agent to pursue Parliamentary Selections. You must keep in touch with the relevant Party staff, advising them at the outset of the Parliamentary seat (s) you wish to pursue.
  - c) No member of the Parliamentary Panel of the Co-operative Party may seek nomination from Labour Party Branches or other affiliated organisations against the official nominee of the Co-operative Party.
17. If the Co-operative Party is not making official nominations it is likely that permission will be granted for you to seek nomination as a non-official candidate.



18. Panel members are expected to support the official nominee of the Co-operative Party.
19. You must seek the permission of the Co-operative Party before allowing your name to go forward for any seat. Permission will always be refused when the selection involves the re-selection of a seat. Permission will always be refused when the selection involves the re-selection of a sitting MP, unless a trigger ballot has taken place under Labour Party rules. Local Co-operative Parties may not initiate the trigger ballot. In the case of Co-operative Party official nominations you may not, under any circumstances, oppose the Co-operative Party nominee. If you are not the Co-operative Party nominee, you must withdraw all interest in the seat during the two days following the Co-operative Party nomination meeting. That includes rescinding any nominations already received.
20. You may resign from the Panel at any time, but you may not resign simply to have a free hand to oppose the official nominees of the Co-operative Party.
21. Failure to observe these Rules may cause your exclusion from this Panel and future Panels. If you breach these Rules you will be asked for a written explanation of your actions by the NEC. If you are or have been so excluded, the NEC may not consider you for membership of this or future Parliamentary Panels.

### **Alteration to Rules**

22. The NEC may, subject to endorsement of Annual Conference, alter the Rules of the Parliamentary Panel. Any Rule change becomes effective immediately upon the decision of the NEC, subject to the endorsement of Annual Conference.

## **Nomination of Parliamentary Candidates**

### **Official Nominations**

1. The first step is for the local Party to obtain NEC approval for the submission of an official nomination.
2. If the NEC agrees to make an official nomination it will appoint a person to be its Representative throughout the procedure. This is likely to be a Co-operative Party member of staff, who will act with the full authority of the NEC.
3. Upon receipt of this approval the local Party Secretary must arrange for the NEC Representative to attend a special meeting of the local Party's Executive Committee to assist it in drawing up a timetable for the nomination. That same meeting shall verify those Co-operative Party members eligible to participate in the nomination procedure. All those eligible to participate in the procedure must be fully paid up members of the Co-operative Party at the "freeze" date for membership.
4. The "freeze" date will be either that date agreed by the Labour Party for Labour Party members or the date of the Co-operative Party verification meeting, whichever is earlier.
5. Where there are four or fewer members of the Co-operative Party Parliamentary panel who have declared an interest to the Labour Party procedures secretary by the due date, all will be invited to the Selection meeting. All Co-operative Party members eligible to participate in the short-listing and selections meetings should be informed that this is the



case and that a short-listing meeting will not be required. In this case, the allocation of time for speeches and questions should be decided at the beginning of the selection meeting, subject to an overall time limit of 20 minutes per candidate, and all candidates must then be notified of this immediately after the decision has been taken.

**Those qualified to attend the short listing and selection meetings**

6. Those qualified to attend the shortlist and selection meetings shall be only those Co-operative Party members resident or registered in the Constituency as verified under these rules, together with the Executive Committee (EC) of the Party Council or Party Council in the absence of an EC.
7. Where no members are resident or registered in the Constituency the EC/Party Council will make the nomination.
8. No person with an interest in the nomination may take part in setting the timetable, the membership verification procedure, the short listing or nomination meeting.

**The Shortlist**

9. The local Party Secretary must notify those entitled to attend, together with the Branch Chair and Secretary (for information) of the date, time and place of the meeting at which a short list of candidates for interview will be compiled.
10. Except in special circumstances such notice must be in writing and must be issued so as to be received not less than seven clear days prior to the meeting.
11. Notices must point out that those attending must be currently in membership of the Co-operative Party and of a recognised co-operative and that they will be required to provide proof of membership of both.
12. The meeting to compile a short list for interview shall be chaired by the Branch Chair if qualified under rule 6 above . If not present, then members must elect a Chair from those eligible members present. The Branch Chair and Secretary may attend this meeting 'ex officio' but may not participate or vote unless qualified under Rule 6 (above).
13. The NEC Representative will attend the meeting to compile the short list of candidates for interview and will bring an up to date copy of the Co-operative Party's Parliament Panel. Only candidates who are on the Co-operative Party's Parliamentary Panel are eligible for inclusion on the short list for interview. The meeting should fix the allocation of time for candidates at the selection to speak and answer questions, subject to an overall time limit of 20 minutes per candidate.
14. In compiling a short list, members should be informed of any restrictions on eligibility of candidates laid down by the Labour Party but are not bound by them.
15. At least 50% of the candidates short listed must be women.
16. Immediately after this meeting the Secretary must contact each person included on the short list inviting them to attend a Co-operative Party selection meeting and advising them of the time available for speaking and answering questions. Copies should be sent to the NEC Representative.



### **The Selection Meeting**

17. After the closing date for receipt of replies from the short-listed candidates the Secretary should:
  - a) Send notice of the selection meeting to all members eligible to attend.
  - b) Prepare ballot papers for the selection meeting.
18. The Secretary must notify in writing (by post or email) all fully paid up individual members of the Co-operative Party resident within the Parliamentary Constituency concerned, together with those members of the Executive Committee or Party Council entitled to attend. Except in special circumstances, these notices must be received not later than seven days before the date of the Selection meeting.
19. The notices of the meeting should include biographical details of the candidates to be interviewed, if available. They should also remind those invited to attend that at the meeting they will be required to provide proof of current membership of a recognised Co-operative Society.
20. The procedure for the selection meeting with the NEC Representative present throughout, is as follows:
21. Except when they are being interviewed, all the candidates must remain in a separate room to the meeting.
22. A candidate cannot take part in the meeting even if they are qualified to do so.
23. The candidates must be asked to ballot amongst themselves to decide their order of appearance.
24. Arrangements must be made to confirm that that all those present are current members of the Co-operative Party and of a recognised Society.
25. Any member who arrives after the first candidate has started speaking will not be eligible to vote in the selection, and the Chair should stress this fact at the commencement of the meeting.
26. Each candidate may be allowed up to a total of 20 minutes to both address the Conference and answer questions, as determined in accordance with Rule 5 above.
27. After all the candidates have been interviewed the Chair must then ask for a motion to be moved from the floor 'That this Co-operative Party Selection Conference resolves to proceed to ballot'.
28. If this motion is not carried it means that the members feel that none of the candidates are in their opinion suitable for submission to the Labour Party Selection.
29. In this event the Chair should recall the candidates and advise them accordingly. They should then ascertain whether the members desire to arrange a further Co-operative Party Selection meeting to interview a new short list of candidates, and if the decision is



in favour of this and the Labour Party selection timetable allows, the NEC Representative will then make suitable arrangements for a further Selection meeting.

30. Should the meeting carry the motion 'That this Co-operative Party Selection Conference resolves to ballot' the Chair must call on the tellers. These tellers, who will act under the jurisdiction of the NEC Representative, must issue to and collect from every member entitled to vote a ballot paper. The tellers and the NEC Representative must count the votes cast and the result should be handed to the Chair to convey to the meeting.
31. Unless there is an overall majority for one of the candidates, the candidate or candidates receiving the lowest number of votes should be declared not selected and the tellers must then issue further ballot papers so that the members can vote on the remaining candidates on the list. Advice regarding second and subsequent ballots will be given by the NEC Representative and these must continue until one of the candidates has received an overall majority of votes. In the event of there being a tie between the two last remaining candidates, a further vote shall be taken and if this also results in a tie the decision shall be by lot.
32. When the meeting has selected one of the candidates by means of these exhaustive ballots the Chair must then ask for a motion from the floor in the following terms:  
Resolved – 'That this Co-operative Party Selection Conference nominates (name of successful candidate) to the Labour Party Selection Conference. This motion must be voted upon by a show of hands, the figures being recorded in the minutes.
33. After this has been done the Chair must call all the candidates into the room and without disclosing the actual voting figures should advise them which candidate has been selected by the Co-operative Party Selection Conference. An opportunity should be given for the successful candidate to address the meeting for a few minutes each.
34. Before the meeting terminates the Chair must call upon the NEC Representative to advise members present on steps that they should now take in support of their nominee.
35. It is accepted that it may not be possible for all the short list to attend and this may dilute the 50% quota. So long as every effort has been made to maintain a 50% quota by operating a reserve list of candidates, the Selection meeting may proceed.

### **Parliamentary By-Election**

36. In the event of a Parliamentary by-election, the NEC will determine whether to make an official nomination.
37. The NEC, as far as practicable, shall co-operate with the appropriate Party Council and members resident in the relevant constituency in drawing up a timetable for selection of an official Co-operative Party nominee. This will be in line with procedures above, modified as necessary to meet the circumstances of the particular by-election.

### **The Nomination**

38. After the Co-operative Party Selection Conference has concluded the Secretary and the selected nominee should complete the Labour Party's nomination form in the presence of the NEC Representative. They will also arrange for the letter of endorsement, which



is required in the case of official candidates, to be sent direct to the CLP from Co-operative Party Head Office.

39. The nomination form together with the biographical details of the candidate must then be forwarded without delay to the Procedures Secretary of the Constituency Labour Party.
40. In the event of the Co-operative nominee being successful at the Labour Party Selection Conference, full details concerning the additional responsibilities of the Co-operative Party in respect of that constituency will be forwarded to the Secretary of the Constituency Labour Party.

### **Unofficial Nominations**

41. If a Branch wishes to make an unofficial nomination it must first obtain the permission of the Party Council.
42. The procedure for making the nomination is set below.
43. It will be overseen by the Party Council who shall be guided by the appropriate Co-operative Party National Official.
44. No nomination may be made against a sitting MP who is seeking re-selection in a Constituency in which they have a substantial territorial interest.
45. Unofficial nominations to Labour Party Parliamentary selections may be made by those members resident or registered in the Parliamentary Constituency concerned.
46. The Secretary of the Branch should give written notice (by post or email) at least seven clear days before the date at which the nomination is to be considered. Voting shall be by secret ballot. Head Office and the Party Council Secretary should receive a copy of the notice.
47. If the Co-operative Party is affiliated to a Constituency where there are fewer than five members resident or registered, the nomination should be exercised by the Branch or Party Council Executive jointly with those members and in accordance with procedures set out above.
48. The quorum for a nomination meeting shall be five. In the event of a quorum not being present the Party Council shall be informed, and they shall if they so wish make a nomination in accordance with these Rules.

### **Sitting Official Co-operative MPs**

49. A meeting should be convened by the NEC's Representative.
50. The procedures to be used and those qualified to vote as defined above except that the meeting will be asked to consider a motion in the following terms:

*The meeting of the Co-operative Party members affirms its support for (...) MP, its Official Co-operative Member in (...) Constituency and resolves that the (...) Branch Co-operative Party nominate him/her as the official Co-operative Candidate to the (...) Labour Party when the selection process commences.*



51. After the motion has been formally moved and seconded the sitting MP will be invited to address the meeting for no longer than 10 minutes.
52. The meeting may ask questions of the sitting MP for a further 10 minutes.
53. The meeting will proceed to vote on the motion by secret ballot.

## **Scottish Parliament Elections**

### **Scottish Parliament Sub-Committee**

1. A sub-committee of the Scottish Executive Committee shall be established to interview potential candidates. The sub-committee shall have a flexible membership and would normally consist of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, with at least one of these office bearers in attendance at all interviews, a minimum quorum of 3.
2. The sub-committee shall act on behalf of Scottish Executive Committee and the decisions of the sub-committee shall be final. The Scottish Executive Committee, minus the sub-committee concerned, shall act as an appeal body where required.

### **First Past The Post Candidates – winnable seats**

3. Where a member of the Co-operative Party has been nominated by a Co-operative Party Council in a winnable, vacant seat, and wishes to stand as a Labour and Co-operative Party Candidate, the member must indicate their intention to the Secretary of the Scottish Co-operative Party in writing and will be interviewed as soon after the nomination has been made as is practicable and before the final selection meeting.

### **First Past The Post Candidates – unwinnable seats**

4. If a member with a very strong Co-op background wishes to stand in such a seat, they shall follow the same procedures as above. However, financial support shall be kept to a minimum.

### **List Candidates – winnable positions**

5. Any Co-operative Party member who has been placed in a winnable position on a Labour List and who wishes to serve in the Co-op Group in the Scottish Parliament shall indicate their intention to the Secretary of the Scottish Co-operative Party in writing and will then be interviewed by the sub-committee.

### **List Candidates – unwinnable positions**

6. Any member of the Co-operative Party who is placed in an unwinnable position on a Labour List and who wishes to indicate their Co-op credentials shall be allowed to do so with the permission of the Secretary of the Scottish Co-operative Party.



## **Welsh Parliament/Senedd Cymru Elections**

### **Co-operative Party Panel**

#### **Eligibility**

1. A nominee must be an individual member of the Co-operative Party and of a Co-operative Society at the time of application.
2. Prospective Welsh Parliament Candidates are ineligible.

#### **Applications**

3. Applicants must complete and sign the prescribed application form.

#### **Empanelment**

4. The Wales Co-operative Party Council/Cyngor Cymru y Blaid Gydweithredol or Sub-Committee may turn down applications with or without interview.
5. Unsuccessful applicants may not reapply for at least one year.

#### **Appeal**

6. Applicants who are not accepted may appeal in writing to the Wales Council setting out the grounds on which the Wales Council should consider the decision. Any appeal must be lodged within two months of the date on which the applicant receives notification of their rejection.

#### **Nomination Process**

7. The Wales Co-operative Party Council will agree a nomination process consistent with the Co-operative Party's rules and the current Welsh Labour Selection process.
8. Members of the panel selected by Welsh Labour will be considered 'Labour and Co-operative Party' candidates.



## **Policies**

### **National Agreement between the Labour Party and the Co-operative Party (2003)**

#### **Preamble**

1. This is an Agreement between the Labour Party and the Co-operative Party, to provide for consultation on matters of mutual political interest and to define the relationship between the Labour Party and the Co-operative Party.
2. This agreement cancels all previous National Agreements between the Labour Party and the Co-operative Union, and shall be terminable after twelve months' notice given by either side to the other.
3. The Co-operative Party is recognised as the political party of the Co-operative Movement.
4. The Co-operative Party undertakes to support the Labour Party in all matters except as provided for within this Agreement, that is, matters of special concern affecting the policy of the Co-operative Party, dealing with any differences via the Liaison Committee.
5. This Agreement is an Electoral Agreement between the Labour Party and the Co-operative Party. No Co-operative Party member shall be permitted to stand against the official candidate of the Labour Party in any public election. Official Co-operative Party Members of Parliament, the European Parliament, Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly or local authority must join the official Labour Group.

#### **National Policy**

6. It is agreed that for the purposes of consultation on political policy matters which may affect their mutual interests and the operation of this Agreement, the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the Labour Party and NEC of the Co-operative Party, shall establish such machinery as may be found mutually convenient. It is understood that the authority of either body to reach policy decisions is in no way impaired.
7. The Co-operative Party shall engage actively with the Labour Party policy development process, and have the right to be represented as a partner in the National Policy Forum and its representative bodies.

#### **Relationships**

##### **National**

8. The Labour Party and the Co-operative Party commit themselves to developing the mutually beneficial national relationships which have existed between the Parties for many years in whatever ways are deemed expedient within the rules and policies of the Labour Party and the Co-operative Party.



### **Scotland, Wales and the English Regions**

9. The Co-operative Party shall affiliate to the Scottish Labour Party, (where the Co-operative Party shall be known as the Scottish Co-operative Party) and Wales Labour Party and Regional Labour Parties as the political party representing the Co-operative Movement.

### **Constituency Level**

10. Society Co-operative Parties registered and affiliated to the Co-operative Party shall be eligible for affiliation to each Constituency Labour Party in their area as the representative of the wider Co-operative Movement. Representation shall be on the same basis and subject to the same limitations as to the maximum number of delegates as apply to other affiliated organisations.
11. Voluntary Co-operative Parties registered by and affiliated to the Co-operative Party may affiliate to each Constituency Labour Party in their area but shall not be regarded as the representative of the wider Co-operative Movement.
12. Society Parties shall be regarded as the representatives of the wider Co-operative Movement on Labour Party local government committees.

### **Liaison Committee**

13. A committee, representative of the National Executive Committees of the Labour Party and the Co-operative Party, shall be established to consider matters of mutual interest and the application of this Agreement in special cases referred to it by either side.
14. The Committee shall consist of members nominated from each body and shall meet at the request of either organisation.
15. The General Secretary of the Labour Party and the National Secretary of the Co-operative Party shall act as Joint Secretaries of the Liaison Committee.

### **Official Candidates and Representatives**

#### **Official Co-operative Parliamentary Candidates**

16. Co-operative Parliamentary Candidates shall be nominated to and selected by Constituency Labour Parties under the Rules of the Labour Party, but shall sign the prescribed form containing the following declaration:

*'I accept nomination as a Parliamentary Candidate of the Co-operative Party in running association with the Labour Party. If elected to Parliament, I undertake to join the Parliamentary Labour Party and to accept and to act in harmony with the Standing Orders of the Parliamentary Labour Party for the time being in force'.*

17. Official Candidates of the Co-operative Party will be regarded as joint candidates of both the Co-operative Party and the Labour Party. Where special circumstances obtain, the designation of joint candidates shall be determined by the Liaison Committee.
18. Whilst it is clear that the Standing Orders of the Parliamentary Labour Party apply to members returned to Parliament on the nomination of the Co-operative Party in the same way that they apply to anyone else, the Labour Party recognises their special concern in matters affecting the political policy of the Co-operative Party. It is, therefore,



**co-operative  
party**

agreed that, if differences over such matters arise, there shall be consultation between the Co-operative Party and the Labour Party to ensure that, if possible, mutually acceptable decisions are reached.

19. After each General Election the number of Parliamentary Candidates which may be regarded as Official Co-operative Party Candidates shall be settled after consultation.
20. The National Executive Committees of the Labour Party and the Co-operative Party shall have the right to make representations to each other about the number of Official Candidates.
21. Official Co-operative Parliamentary Candidates endorsed by the Labour Party shall be designated 'Labour and Co-operative Party Candidates'. In Scotland and Wales there may be a variation in the designation, including the inclusion of the official Gaelic and Welsh equivalents but the word 'Co-operative' and its translations must be included.
22. Candidates, other than those regarded as Official, selected by a Constituency Labour Party on the nomination of an affiliated Co-operative Party, shall be subject to the same conditions as all other candidates, and shall be designated as "Labour Party Candidates" only.

#### **Official Co-operative Local Government Candidates**

23. Co-operative Parties affiliated to Constituency Labour Parties shall have the same rights of nomination as other affiliated bodies under the appropriate Rules of the Labour Party.
24. Such Candidates shall be designated "Labour and Co-operative Party Candidates" except in multi-member ward elections where they shall be designated as "Labour" but their links with the Co-operative Party shall be acknowledged in the literature. Where all the candidates in a multi-member ward are Labour and Co-operative Party Candidates they shall be designated as such.



## **Conduct**

As a Party, our co-operative values should be reflected in our actions as well as our policies.

All members should feel welcome and encouraged to participate, in meetings, events and on social media. There is no place in the Co-operative Party for intolerance or abuse.

To enable this, we will:

1. Make meetings and events accessible and welcoming, encouraging maximum attendance and participation
2. Conduct all meetings in a friendly and co-operative way, in accordance with the rules & standing orders and in a manner that enables all views to be heard
3. Not tolerate harassment or discrimination based on age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, colour, race, ethnic origins or religion, or any form of personal abuse in meetings or on-line.

## **Statement on Social Media Conduct**

The Co-operative Party recognises that social media and other forms of digital communications are a vital part of modern campaigning and communications.

We have an important part to play in political and public debates and a vital contribution to make in discussions about how to create a more co-operative United Kingdom. We should be loudly and proudly making the case for co-operation using all appropriate channels.

We are absolutely clear that the rules of the Co-operative Party apply just as much to activity that takes place on-line as it does to more traditional political activities like Party meetings.

Our co-operative values dictate that we will treat others with respect and not make personal attacks or abusive or intimidating remarks. Individual members not meeting these high standards in their conduct online may be subject to disciplinary action under the Party's Rule Book.

High-profile members of the Party and those holding official positions within the Party including Party Officers, NEC members and elected representatives should be particularly mindful that their conduct online has the potential to reflect on the Party. Views expressed could be interpreted as reflecting the view of the Party even where this is not the intention.

We increasingly encourage local Co-operative Parties and networks to use digital and social media to build support for the Party and our ideas. However, Party Officers responsible for placing such content online must ensure that content is relevant to the work of the Co-operative Party; and that no content is placed on an official Co-operative Party communications channel which could bring the Party into disrepute or that is not consistent with the policy of the Party.

Content on official Co-operative Party social media channels in particular during both internal and external elections and selections must comply with the rules of those elections and selections. Communications using these channels must not be used to promote candidates in internal Co-operative Party elections or to promote Co-operative



Party candidates in Labour Party selections unless the individual has been formally nominated as the Co-operative Party's candidate.

## **Safeguarding**

The welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount and it is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers, members and elected representatives to behave with integrity, maturity and good judgement.

### **Abuse of a position of trust**

Staff, members and volunteers, including elected representatives, should be aware that they may be seen as role models by children, young people and adults at risk and therefore they must act in an appropriate manner at all times.

They must not engage in sexual activity or allow a sexual relationship to develop with any member under the age of eighteen years old.

### **It is essential that staff, volunteers, members and elected representatives do not:**

- Conduct a sexual relationship with a child or have any form of sexual contact with a child involved in Co-operative Party activity. Any such behaviour between an adult member of staff, member, volunteer or elected representative and a child involved in Co-operative Party activity represents a serious breach of trust on the part of the staff member, party member or volunteer;
- Physically, emotionally or sexually abuse, maltreat or exploit any child or an adult at risk or neglect their basic physical and psychological needs;
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse or the abuse of adults at risk;
- Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to, or in front of, children or discuss adult sexual relationships in front of them;
- Rely on their reputation or that of the Co-operative Party or any elected office that they hold to protect them;
- Give or receive gifts and/or substances such as drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, e-cigarettes to or from a child;
- Encourage or appear to encourage children to drink alcohol or take drugs;
- Allow their judgment to be impaired by alcohol or any other substance when acting in a position of trust

### **Definitions**

**Child:** A person under the age of eighteen years old. The fact that a young person has reached the age of sixteen, is living independently, is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or is in custody does not change their entitlement to protection.

**Adult at risk:** A person aged eighteen years old or over, who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is, or may be, unable to take care of him themselves, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.



## Antisemitism

Party Officers must ensure that meetings and event speaker invitations are carefully considered so that they do not provide a platform for individuals or organisations that are known to hold anti-Semitic views. If you are not sure, please contact Head Office before issuing the invitation to speakers or accepting invitations from other organisations to host joint meetings – we are happy to help or advise.

The Co-operative Party's political representatives are asked to consider very carefully before sharing platforms with individuals or organisations that may hold views that by association could bring the Party into disrepute; and not to share platforms with individuals or organisations that are known to hold anti-Semitic views.

The Party will use the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism and the examples that go alongside it to inform decision making about disciplinary cases or in other circumstances in which the Party is called upon to determine whether actions amount, in the Party's view, to anti-Semitism.

**'Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.'**

Source: International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

To guide IHRA in its work, the following examples may serve as illustrations:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for "why things go wrong." It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.



- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.'

Source: [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance](#)

## Islamophobia

The NEC has adopted the working definition of Islamophobia recommended by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims

**Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.**

Following the principles used by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), the APPG has used guidelines and examples to illustrate the definition:

Contemporary examples of Islamophobia in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in encounters between religions and non-religions in the public sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, instigating or justifying the killing or harming of Muslims in the name of a racist/ fascist ideology, or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Muslims as such, or of Muslims as a collective group, such as, especially but not exclusively, conspiracies about Muslim entryism in politics, government or other societal institutions; the myth of Muslim identity having a unique propensity for terrorism, and claims of a demographic 'threat' posed by Muslims or of a 'Muslim takeover'.
- Accusing Muslims as a group of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Muslim person or group of Muslim individuals, or even for acts committed by non-Muslims.
- Accusing Muslims as a group, or Muslim majority states, of inventing or exaggerating Islamophobia, ethnic cleansing or genocide perpetrated against Muslims.
- Accusing Muslim citizens of being more loyal to the 'Ummah' (transnational Muslim community) or to their countries of origin, or to the alleged priorities of Muslims worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.



- Denying Muslim populations the right to self determination e.g., by claiming that the existence of an independent Palestine or Kashmir is a terrorist endeavour.
- Applying double standards by requiring of Muslims behaviours that are not expected or demanded of any other groups in society, e.g. loyalty tests.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic Islamophobia (e.g. Muhammed being a paedophile, claims of Muslims spreading Islam by the sword or subjugating minority groups under their rule) to characterize Muslims as being 'sex groomers', inherently violent or incapable of living harmoniously in plural societies.
- Holding Muslims collectively responsible for the actions of any Muslim majority state, whether secular or constitutionally Islamic.

The APPG also lists reported cases to further illustrate ways in which Islamophobia is experienced. These can be seen in the report [here](#).



## **Rules for Party Units**

### **Scottish Co-operative Party**

#### **Name**

1. The Organisation shall be called The Scottish Co-operative Party.

#### **Functions of the Scottish Co-operative Party**

2. The functions of the Scottish Co-operative Party shall be:
  - To work in partnership with affiliated Co-operative Societies
  - To develop local Co-operative Party branches
  - To secure direct Co-operative representation in Parliament
  - To set up a Panel of Candidates to secure direct Co-operative representation in the Scottish Parliament
  - To secure direct Co-operative representation in local government and other appropriate bodies
  - To co-ordinate the activities of the Co-operative Party in Scotland
3. In furtherance of these objects, to undertake educational and campaigning activity and use appropriate media to communicate with the Co-operative Movement and the general public on the policies, aims and objectives of the Co-operative Party.
4. To work in partnership with the National Executive Committee of the Co-operative Party and to support the decisions of the Annual Conference of the Co-operative Party.

#### **The Scottish Council**

5. There shall be a Co-operative Party Scottish Council.
6. The Council shall consist of:
  - a) The Scottish representative on the National Executive Committee of the Co-operative Party
  - b) Four representatives from Scotmid Society and four representatives from the Co-operative Group
  - c) The Scottish representative on the Co-operative Party Youth Committee
  - d) One representative from the Scottish Co-operative Women's Guild
  - e) One representative from Scottish affiliates
  - f) Two representatives from each Party Branch with less than 100 members and three representatives from each Party Branch with 100 or more members. At least one representative from each branch must be a woman.
  - g) The Secretary of the Scottish Co-operative Party who shall be a non-voting member of the Council.



7. The Scottish Council shall establish committees or working groups as required.

### **Conditions of Membership**

8. Membership of the Council shall be confined to persons who are members of the Co-operative Party.

### **The Executive Committee**

9. The Council shall be constituted annually, and appointments and elections arranged so that representatives can attend the first meeting of the Scottish Council held in the calendar year.
10. This meeting shall elect an Executive Committee.
11. The Executive Committee shall consist of:
  12. The Chairperson of the Scottish Council who shall be elected by the Scottish Council and who shall chair the Executive Committee
  13. Four members of the Scottish Council one of whom shall serve as Vice Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson shall be elected by the Scottish Council.
  14. Two representatives from the four Scotmid Society representatives on the Scottish Council and two representatives from the four Co-operative Group representatives on the Scottish Council
  15. The Scottish representative on the National Executive Committee
  16. The Secretary of the Scottish Co-operative Party who shall be Secretary of the Executive Committee and a non-voting member of the Executive Committee
17. No person shall serve more than four years as Chairperson without there being an intervening period of at least two years.
18. The date, hour and place of meetings of the Scottish Council and the Executive Committee for the year shall be arranged at the first meeting each year of the Scottish Council, special meetings to be arranged by the Officers as and when circumstances warrant such action.

### **Finance**

19. The finances of the Scottish Co-operative Party shall be agreed between the Scottish Co-operative Party and the affiliated societies on an annual basis.
20. The Scottish Co-operative Party shall have the power to create a fund for the purpose of assisting local organisations seeking agreements to promote Co-operative Party candidates in Parliamentary Elections and, in general, advancing the policy of securing representation in Parliament, the Scottish Parliament and in local government.

### **Audit**

21. At least once every year, the Scottish Executive Committee shall submit its accounts for audit to auditors appointed by the Scottish Council and shall be made available to the



Scottish Council once audited. Copies of the audited accounts shall be made available to the National Executive Committee.

### **Policy**

22. The Scottish Co-operative Party shall be responsible for formulating policy on purely Scottish political matters.
23. All policy is subject to approval by the Scottish Council.

### **Scottish Campaign Convention**

24. The Scottish Co-operative Party shall convene an Annual Campaign Convention which shall be held, at such date, place and hour as the Executive Committee may determine.
25. The Campaign Convention shall be a major Scottish Co-operative Party event held each year; shall be open to all members and shall be used to promote the policy and campaigning priorities of the Scottish Co-operative Party.

### **Amendments to the Rules**

26. Amendments or alterations to the Rules can only be made by the Scottish Council and only when such amendment or alteration has been received by the Secretary 28 days before the date of Scottish Council meeting.
27. No alteration or amendment to the Rules shall take effect unless it is supported by two-thirds of the Scottish Council and is approved by the National Executive Committee of the Co-operative Party.

### **National Organisation**

28. The Scottish Co-operative Party shall register with the National Co-operative Party and accept the policy as agreed upon and as amended from time to time by the Annual Co-operative Party Conference, and shall operate such regulations as may be approved or issued by the National Executive Committee of the Party, provided that any regulations issued as a general instruction shall be subject to confirmation by the Annual Conference of the Party.

### **National Rules**

29. The National Rules of the Co-operative Party are deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution.
30. If the National Rules are altered or amended in the future, then such altered or amended National Rules shall be deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution as at the date of the alteration or amendment to the National Rules. The incorporation of the National Rules and any future alteration or amendment them will be automatic and will not require a meeting or vote by members of this Society Party.

## **Wales Co-operative Party**

### **Name**

1. The organisation shall be called The Wales Co-operative Party.



## **Functions of the Wales Co-operative Party**

2. The functions of the Wales Co-operative Party shall be:
  - a) To develop, promote and campaign in support of Co-operative Party policy on devolved matters
  - b) To contribute to, promote and campaign in support of UK Co-operative Party policy
  - c) To work in partnership with affiliated Co-operative Societies and organisations and the co-operative movement in Wales
  - d) To secure co-operative representation in Westminster, the Welsh Parliament, local government and Police and Crime Commissioner elections in Wales
  - e) To support and co-ordinate the activities of Co-operative Party branches in Wales
  - f) To work alongside the Labour Party and Labour movement to promote co-operation in Wales.
  - g) To work in partnership with the National Executive Committee of the Co-operative Party and to support the decisions of the Annual Conference of the Co-operative Party

## **Boundary**

3. The Party shall operate within Wales and shall consist of all Co-operative Party members resident in Wales.

## **The Wales Council**

4. There shall be a Co-operative Party Wales Council. The Council shall consist of the following voting members:
  - a) The Wales representative on the National Executive Committee of the Co-operative Party
  - b) Two Labour and Co-operative MPs in Wales
  - c) Two Labour and Co-operative MSs in Wales
  - d) One Labour and Co-operative PCC in Wales
  - e) Two Labour and Co-operative Councillors, elected annually by a process agreed by the Wales Council
  - f) Up to four representatives from affiliated societies and organisations in Wales
  - g) The Wales representative on the Co-operative Party Youth Committee
  - h) Three representatives from each Party Branch. At least one representative from each branch must be a woman.
  - i) Permanent staff based in Wales (who shall be non-voting members of the Council).



5. The Wales Council shall ensure a gender balance when electing delegates.
6. If a representative ceases to be a member of the electing/nominating body, that body shall be asked to elect/nominate another member.
7. Meetings of the Wales Council for the year shall be arranged at the first meeting each year, subject to special and/or additional meetings agreed by the Officers if deemed necessary.
8. The Council shall be constituted annually, and appointments and elections arranged so that representatives can attend the first meeting of the Wales Council held in the calendar year.
9. The Annual Meeting shall elect a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Women's Officer, at least three of whom shall be women. No person shall serve more than four years as Chair without there being an intervening period of at least two years.
10. Officers shall have been individual members of the Co-operative Party for not less than six months at the date of election. This rule shall also apply in respect of nominees for public bodies and representatives of the Co-operative Party on other bodies to which this Party is affiliated.
11. Where finances allow, reasonable expenses may be reimbursed.
12. In exceptional circumstances, Honoria may be paid to officers, subject to approval of the NEC.
13. Any officer or delegate shall be deemed to have vacated their position if they fail to attend three consecutive meetings of the Party Council or the body they have been delegated to. This shall not preclude them from standing for re-election to the position.
14. The Wales Council shall establish committees or working groups as required.

### **Conditions of Membership**

15. Membership of the Wales Council shall be confined to persons who are members of the Co-operative Party.

### **The Executive Committee**

16. The Annual Meeting shall elect an Executive Committee, to consist of:
  - a) The Chair of the Wales Council, who shall chair the Executive Committee
  - b) The Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Women's Officer of the Wales Council
  - c) One member for each branch not otherwise represented above.
  - d) The Wales representative on the National Executive Committee
17. The Executive shall meet as and when required, including by phone, web conference or email, to deal with urgent business.



### **Finance**

18. The Wales Co-operative Party shall be funded by a portion of annual members' subscriptions and annual grant from the Co-operative Group and other subscribing societies if appropriate.
19. Co-operative Party Branches in Wales shall be funded by a grant from the Wales Council and applications to the National Activity Fund.

### **Audit**

20. At least once every year, the Wales Council Executive Committee shall submit its accounts for audit to an Auditor appointed by the Wales Council and forwarded to the National Executive Committee.

### **Policy**

21. The Wales Co-operative Party shall be responsible for formulating policy on matters wholly relating to Wales.
22. All policy is subject to approval by the Wales Council.

### **Branch Parties**

23. Branch Parties may be established comprising individual members and organised to carry on the political work of the Wales Party in accordance with model constitutions for Branches approved by the NEC.
24. Branch Parties shall operate and be financed under regulations laid down by the Wales Party.
25. The Wales Council may delegate some of its functions to Branch Parties. However, in all respects Branch Parties shall be subordinate to the Wales Council, especially in matters of affiliations, finance and candidatures.

### **Delegations**

26. The Wales Council may itself appoint delegates to Constituency Labour Parties, with or without seeking advice from the relevant Branches. The Wales Council may also delegate this function, in whole or part, to Branches. Where such delegation is made, the Party Council shall determine which members may vote in the appointment of delegations.

### **Affiliated bodies**

27. Auxiliary bodies (as defined by the NEC) may affiliate to the Society Party and shall pay an affiliation fee.

### **Wales Co-operative Party Conference**

28. The Wales Co-operative Party shall convene an Annual Conference, open to all members in Wales to promote the policy and campaign activities of the Party in Wales.



### **Amendments to the Rules**

29. Amendments or alterations to the Rules can only be made by the Wales Council and only when such amendment or alteration has been received by the Secretary 28 days before the date of Wales Council meeting.
30. No alteration or amendment to the Rules shall take effect unless it is supported by two-thirds of the Wales Council and is approved by the National Executive Committee of the Co-operative Party.

### **National Organisation**

31. The Wales Co-operative Party shall register with the National Co-operative Party and accept the policy as agreed upon and as amended from time to time by the Annual Co-operative Party Conference, and shall operate such regulations as may be approved or issued by the National Executive Committee of the Party, provided that any regulations issued as a general instruction shall be subject to confirmation by the Annual Conference of the Party.

### **National Rules**

32. The National Rules of the Co-operative Party are deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution.
33. If the National Rules are altered or amended in the future, then such altered or amended National Rules shall be deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution as at the date of the alteration or amendment to the National Rules. The incorporation of the National Rules and any future alteration or amendment them will be automatic and will not require a meeting or vote by members of this Society Party.

## **Co-operative Party Youth**

### **Introduction**

1. These Rules do not replace the registered Rules of Co-operative Party Ltd and shall at all times be consistent with the registered Rules. In the event of any inconsistency, the registered Rules of the Co-operative Party Ltd shall apply.

### **Name**

2. Co-operative Party Youth

### **Objects**

3. To support the NEC of the Co-operative Party in the fulfilment of its objectives, notably to secure direct Co-operative representation in the UK, Scottish and Welsh Parliaments, and local government, as appropriate in accordance with the decisions of the NEC to promote the political policy of the Co-operative Party.
4. To recruit young members into the Co-operative Party, support, educate and develop them and also to encourage their participation in other Co-operative Party structures and the wider co-operative movement.



### **Eligibility**

5. Co-operative Party Youth shall consist of all Co-operative party members aged 30 or under.

### **Constitution of Co-operative Party Youth**

6. Co-operative Party Youth shall be governed by a Council, known as the 'National Youth Committee' (NYC) consisting of:
  - a) One representative from each of the English Regions plus 1 each for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
  - b) The Youth Member of the NEC.
  - c) The national and regional representatives will be elected for a term of two years in a ballot incorporating all woman shortlists in four randomly selected regions/nations.
7. All such representatives shall be individual members of the Co-operative Party.
8. If a representative ceases to be a member of the Co-operative Party a new member shall be elected/co-opted.
9. If the NEC member ceases to be a member of that body, the NEC shall be asked to nominate another member to sit on the NYC until a new NEC Youth Representative is elected.

### **Affiliations**

10. Society Party Councils, Student Labour Clubs and Local Young Labour Groups may affiliate to Co-operative Party Youth and shall pay an affiliation fee to do so.
11. Members of Co-operative Party Youth are primarily members of a Society/Voluntary Party and must adhere to the membership rules of the Co-operative Party.

### **Officers, Representatives and Candidates**

12. The Officers of Co-operative Party Youth and the NYC shall consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer/Secretary and the NEC member. With the exception of the NEC member, they shall remain in office for one year and be eligible for re-election.

### **Auditor**

13. An auditor shall be appointed by to audit the accounts which shall be submitted to the NEC of the Co-operative Party and to the annual general meeting of Co-operative Party Youth.

### **Meetings**

14. The Co-operative Party Youth Committee shall hold at least four meetings a year including an annual general meeting, at such times as may be decided by the respective members.

### **Funds**

15. The funds of Co-operative Party Youth are to be provided by:



- a) A grant on behalf of Co-operative Group Society Party Councils
  - b) Affiliation fees from Independent Society Party Councils
  - c) Money raising efforts approved by the Committee
  - d) Individual membership subscriptions in the first year of Party membership.
  - e) Other sources as deemed appropriate by a majority of the NYC
16. Funding arrangements shall be reviewed by the NYC on at least an annual basis.

### **National Organisation**

17. Co-operative Party Youth shall register with the national Co-operative Party and accept the policy as agreed upon and as amended from time to time by the Annual Co-operative Party Conference and by the NEC and shall operate such regulations as may be approved or issued by the NEC of the Party, provided that any regulation issued as a general instruction to Parties shall be subject to confirmation by the Annual Conference of the Party. No Party organisation shall be considered registered until it has its constitution endorsed by the NEC.

### **Incorporation of the National Rules into this Constitution**

18. The National Rules of the Co-operative Party are deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution.
19. If the National Rules are altered or amended in the future, then such altered or amended National Rules shall be deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution as at the date of the alteration or amendment to the National Rules. The incorporation of the National Rules and any future alteration or amendment them will be automatic and will not require a meeting or vote by members of this Society Party.

## **Co-operative Party Networks**

### **Introduction**

1. These Rules do not replace the registered Rules of Co-operative Party Ltd and shall at all times be consistent with the registered Rules. In the event of any inconsistency, the registered Rules of the Co-operative Party Ltd shall apply.

### **Name**

2. Co-operative Party () Network

### **Objects**

3. To support the recruitment and retention of () members to the Co-operative Party and to encourage their participation in other Co-operative Party structures and the wider co-operative movement
4. To support members of the () network to be active at all levels of organisation and representation
5. To support the Co-operative Party to secure direct Co-operative representation in the UK, Scottish and Welsh Parliaments and all levels of local government and to promote



the selection and election of ( ) members of the Co-operative Party as appropriate in accordance with the decisions of the NEC to promote the political policy of the Co-operative Party.

6. To support, promote and to assist in the development of the Party's campaigns and policies

### **Eligibility**

7. The Co-operative Party ( ) network shall consist of all Co-operative Party members who identify as ( ).

### **Steering Committee**

8. A Steering Committee will be elected bi-annually by and from members of the network by one member, one vote.
9. The NEC shall determine the procedure for each steering committee election, which may include actions to secure gender balance.
10. The Steering Committee may elect a Chair, who shall remain in office for one year and be eligible for re-election
11. If a member of the Steering Committee ceases to be a member of the Co-operative Party a new member shall be elected/co-opted.
12. The Steering Committee will agree the network's plans and budget for the year. These will include at least two all member meetings, which may be by video conference.
13. The Steering Committee will elect a secretary to undertake the agreed actions of the network.

### **Funds**

14. The funds of the Co-operative Party ( ) Network are to be provided by
  - a) A portion of the Youth and Diversity Fund, as allocated to each of the networks
  - b) Other fundraising approved by the Steering Committee and the NEC

### **Incorporation of the National Rules into this Constitution**

15. The National Rules of the Co-operative Party are deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution.
16. If the National Rules are altered or amended in the future, then such altered or amended National Rules shall be deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution as at the date of the alteration or amendment to the National Rules. The incorporation of the National Rules and any future alteration or amendment them will be automatic and will not require a meeting or vote by members of this Society Party.



## Regional Party

This document sets out the arrangements for co-ordinating society party councils within an English Region. The Regional Parties may alternatively opt for a Regional Group in place of a formal Regional Party (see separate model rules)

### Notes

Clauses in **bold** must be included in every Regional Co-operative Party constitution and may not be amended or altered.

Clauses in normal text may be amended, subject to the approval of the NEC.

Clauses in *italics* are recommended and may be amended with the agreement of the Party Council.

### Members of the Regional Party

1. Members of the Regional Party shall be:
  - a) Delegates to the Regional Party shall be elected annually by and from Society and Voluntary Co-operative Party Councils on the following basis: one delegate per 50 members (or part thereof) up to a membership of 200, thereafter one delegate per 100 members (or part thereof). A minimum of 50% must be women
  - b) Substitute delegates may be authorised to attend by Co-operative Party Councils.
  - c) **Regional National Executive Committee member, ex officio**
  - d) **Regional National Youth Committee member, ex officio**
  - e) Co-operative Party nominated member(s) of the Labour Party regional board should be additional delegates, ex-officio

### Remit

2. To co-ordinate the work of the Co-operative Party within the region, including:
  - a) To agree whether a Regional Co-operative Party Conference should be held to bring together members and branches to debate policy, provide training, support candidates and develop campaigns.
  - b) The Regional Officer Group will receive reports from the NEC member. It may also make recommendations and provide information to the NEC through the NEC member for the Region.
3. To co-ordinate the Co-operative Party's relationship with the Regional Labour Party, including:
  - a) Regional Labour Party Affiliation Fee
  - b) Regional Labour Party Conference
  - c) Regional Labour Party Board
4. Delegates to and motions for the regional Labour Party conference and nominees to the Labour Party Regional Board shall be elected at an appropriate time by a full meeting.
5. Where the Co-operative Party appoints or nominates two members to the Regional Labour Party Board, at least one must be a woman.



### **Officers**

6. The Officers of the Regional Party will be elected at the AGM, except where stated.
  - a) Secretary
  - b) Treasurer
  - c) Chair
  - d) Vice Chair
  - e) Youth Officer (who shall be the elected member of the National Youth Committee for the region)
  - f) NEC Representative (who shall be the elected member of the NEC for the region)
  - g) Women's Officer
  - h) Equalities Officer

### **Meetings**

7. The quorum for the annual and ordinary meetings is one third of those eligible to attend and vote.

### **Finance**

8. The Regional Party may raise funds from Co-operative Party Councils in the region to , support: -
  - a) The administration of the Regional Party
  - b) The affiliation to the regional Labour Party
  - c) The delegation to the Labour Party Regional Conference
  - d) Regional weekend schools/conferences and policy forums
  - e) The work of the regional Youth Forum
  - f) Other activities within the remit of the Regional Party.
9. Only delegates from Parties that are paid-up affiliates to the Regional Party may attend Regional Party meetings, serve as officers or be nominated as delegates from the Regional Party.
10. Additional funds may be raised from time to time should the Regional Party deem it necessary.
11. **All cheques require at least two signatories, to be from the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Chair or the Vice Chair.**
12. **Two members of the committee shall be elected as Auditors.**
13. **Audited accounts will be submitted at the Annual Meeting and also forwarded to the NEC.**
14. **The financial year shall run from 1 January to 31 December.**



### **National Organisation**

15. **The Regional Party shall register with the National Co-operative Party and accept the policy as agreed upon and as amended from time to time by the Annual Co-operative Party Conference, and shall operate such regulations as may be approved or issued by the National Executive Committee of the Party, provided that any regulations issued as a general instruction shall be subject to confirmation by the Annual Conference of the Party.**

### **National Rules**

16. **The National Rules of the Co-operative Party are deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution.**
17. **If the National Rules are altered or amended in the future, then such altered or amended National Rules shall be deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution as at the date of the alteration or amendment to the National Rules. The incorporation of the National Rules and any future alteration or amendment to them will be automatic and will not require a meeting or vote by members of the Regional Party.**

## **Regional Officer Group**

This document sets out the arrangements for co-ordinating society party councils within an English Region. This model may be used in place of a formal Regional Party.

### **Introduction**

1. The Co-operative Party uses the English regions to fulfil several functions, including for NEC elections, links with the Regional Labour Party and co-operation between society parties.
2. As there are only a small number of decisions made at the regional level, a formal regional party council may not always be appropriate or the best uses of the time and energy of local officers.
3. In these cases, the society party councils may decide to operate a more informal 'Regional Officer Group' with the support of Head Office.
4. The Regional Officer Group will normally meet by phone or make decisions by email, however meetings may also be held in person if required.
5. Regions that use a Regional Officer Group structure will not have a bank account, with payments made by Head Office on behalf of the region and charged to the relevant society parties in proportion to their size.

### **Members of the Regional Officer Group**

6. The Regional Officer Group shall normally be made up of the following:
  - a) the Chair and Secretary of each Society Party within the region;
  - b) the Regional National Executive Committee member;
  - c) the Regional National Youth Committee member;



- d) the Co-operative Party delegates to the Regional Labour Party Board;
- e) a member of staff who shall act as a Secretary/Co-ordinator.

### **Remit of the Regional Officer Group**

- 7. To co-ordinate the work of the Co-operative Party within the region, including:
  - a) Agree whether a Regional Co-operative Party Conference should be held to bring together members and branches to debate policy, provide training, support candidates and develop campaigns.
  - b) The Regional Officer Group will receive reports from the NEC member. It may also make recommendations and provide information to the NEC through the NEC member for the Region.
- 8. Co-ordinate the Co-operative Party's relationship with the Regional Labour Party, including:
  - a) To propose a level of affiliation to be paid to the Regional Labour Party. The affiliation will be paid by Head Office and charged to each party council based on the size of their membership.
  - b) To agree how many delegates to send to the Regional Labour Party Conference and implement a process to select these delegates. The delegate fees will be paid by Head Office and charged to each party council based on the size of their membership. The same process shall apply for the costs of other activities, such as a fringe event.
  - c) To co-ordinate the election of the Co-operative Party's delegates to the Regional Officer Board. Where the Co-operative Party appoints or nominates two members to the Regional Labour Party Board, at least one must be a woman. Each party council will be able to nominate up to two members, at least one should be a woman. If more nominations than places are received, Head Office will facilitate an election.

## **Model Constitution for a Society Co-operative Party ('Local Party)**

### **Notes**

Clauses in **bold** must be included in every Society Co-operative Party constitution and may not be amended or altered.

Clauses in normal text may be amended, subject to the approval of the NEC.

Clauses in *italics* are recommended and may be amended with the agreement of the Party Council.

### **Single Region Parties**

Where there is only one local Party for the Region, it should adopt the model rules for a Party Council, with the addition of the remit for Regional Parties.

## **Introduction**

1. These Rules do not replace the registered Rules of Co-operative Party Ltd and shall at all times be consistent with the registered Rules. In the event of any inconsistency, the registered Rules of the Co-operative Party Ltd. shall apply.

## **Name**

2. The ..... Co-operative Party.<sup>1</sup>

## **Remit**

3. To support and promote *Co-operative Values and Principles*<sup>2</sup>
4. To support, promote and develop the Co-operative movement through the following:
  - a) Supporting the selection and election of Labour and Co-operative elected representatives in Westminster and all levels of government to implement co-operative policy
  - b) Promoting the Party's nationally agreed policies and campaigns
  - c) Contributing to the Party's policy and campaign development
  - d) Working with the Party's subscribing societies
  - e) Working with other Co-operatives and Mutuals and representing the Co-operative Party to them as a positive vehicle for change

## **Boundary**

5. The Party shall operate within the .... NEC Region and shall consist of all Co-operative Party members resident within the local authority boundaries of .....<sup>3</sup>

## **Constitution of the Party Council**

6. The Society Party shall be governed by a Council consisting of:
  - a) ( ) Representatives from each of the Branch Parties<sup>4</sup>.
  - b) (not more than 2) representatives from each affiliated organisation, appointed as determined by the affiliated organisation
  - c) ( ) Representatives as determined by the relevant Subscribing Society or Societies
  - d) If not already delegates, the regional NEC member, the regional Youth Representative<sup>5</sup> and the Co-operative Party nominated member(s) of the Labour Party Regional Board should be invited to attend.
  - e) The Party Council's official Labour & Co-operative MPs, Assembly Members and candidates shall also be invited as ex-officio members.

---

<sup>1</sup> Local Parties may propose an alternative name, subject to the approval of the NEC.

<sup>2</sup> Link to ICA Values and Principles

<sup>3</sup> The boundaries for local Parties are set by the NEC and must match local authority boundaries.

<sup>4</sup> Normally two but amend up/down if required for small/large parties

<sup>5</sup> Parties may also add the regional elected representatives for the networks' steering committees



7. All such representatives shall be individual members of the Co-operative Party.
8. If a representative ceases to be a member of the electing nominating body, that that body shall be asked to elect/nominate another member.

### **Branch Parties**

9. Branch Parties may be established comprising individual members and organised to carry on the political work of the Local Co-operative Party in accordance with model constitutions for Branches approved by the NEC.
10. Branch Parties shall operate and be financed under regulations laid down by the Party Council.
11. Party Councils may delegate some of their functions to Branch Parties. However, in all respects Branch Parties shall be subordinate to the Party Council, especially in matters of affiliations, finance and candidatures.

### **Delegations**

12. The Party Council may appoint delegates to Constituency Labour Parties, with or without seeking advice from the relevant Branches. The Party Council may also delegate this function, in whole or part, to Branches. Where such delegation is made, the Party Council shall determine which members may vote in the appointment of delegations.

### **Affiliated Bodies**

13. Auxiliary bodies (as defined by the NEC) may affiliate to the local Party and shall pay an affiliation fee.

### **Executive Committee**

14. The Party Council may elect annually an Executive Committee by and from members of the Society Party Council. The Executive Committee shall comprise the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary/Convenor, Treasurer and ( ) other members.

### **Officers, Representatives and Candidates**

15. The Officers of the Party shall (except in the case of full-time Officials) be elected by ballot vote at the annual meeting. They shall remain in office for one year and be eligible for re-election.
16. The officers shall be:
  - a) The Chair
  - b) The Vice-Chair,
  - c) The Secretary/Convenor
  - d) The Treasurer
  - e) *Others as determined by the Party Council e.g. Campaigns Officer/Education Officer/Co-operative Liaison Officer/Youth Officer/ Equality Officer/Women's Officer/BAME Officer*



17. The Officers must include a Treasurer and 'Second Officer' (normally the Secretary/Convenor) who will be registered with the Electoral Commission. Head Office must be notified as soon as possible when these officers change.
18. Officers shall have been individual members of the Co-operative Party for not less than six months at the date of election except in the case of a newly formed Society/Voluntary Party or Branch Party, where the NEC shall have power to waive temporarily this restriction.
19. This rule shall also apply in respect of nominees for public bodies and representatives of the Co-operative Party on other bodies to which this Party is affiliated.
20. The Party Council must at all times seek to secure a gender balance in delegations, representatives, officers and the Executive Committee.
21. Where finances allow, reasonable expenses may be reimbursed.
22. In exceptional circumstances, Honoria may be paid to officers, subject to approval of the NEC.
23. Any officer or delegate shall be deemed to have vacated their position if they fail to attend three consecutive meetings of the Party Council or the body they have been delegated to. This shall not preclude them from standing for re-election to the position.

### **Auditor**

24. An auditor shall be appointed by the Party to audit the accounts and they shall submit a report to the annual meeting of the Party. Where appropriate the Auditor shall be the Society's Auditor.

### **Meetings**

25. The Party Council shall hold at least four meetings a year including an annual meeting, at such times as may be decided by the respective members.
26. Party meetings and events shall be conducted in a friendly and orderly manner and organised in such a way as to maximise participation for members and so that no member shall be precluded from attendance because they cannot gain access to the meeting place for any reason.

### **Funds**

27. The funds of the Local Party shall be provided by:
  - a) Such sums as are provided by the Society under the rules of the Society
  - b) Affiliation fees from other bodies
  - c) Money raising efforts approved by the Society Council
  - d) Proportion of individual membership subscriptions as determined by the NEC



### **Contracts**

28. The Party shall not enter into any contract with a value in excess of £1,000 without the express permission of the NEC

### **National Organisation**

29. The Party shall register with the national Co-operative Party and accept the policy as agreed upon and as amended from time to time by the Annual Co-operative Party Conference and by the NEC and shall operate such regulations as may be approved or issued by the NEC of the Party, provided that any regulation issued as a general instruction to Parties shall be subject to confirmation by the Annual Conference of the Party. No Party shall be considered registered until it has its constitution endorsed by the NEC.
30. An audited financial statement shall be submitted to the National Party not later than 31 March.

### **Candidatures**

31. The Party Council shall seek affiliation and representation on all such bodies and organisations as come within the objects of the Co-operative Party.
32. The Party Council shall actively seek elected and other administrative representation on public and other administrative bodies. The Party Council shall receive nominations and, where desirable, make nominations for representatives as indicated in this rule.
33. For official Parliamentary or mayoral candidatures, approval must be obtained from the NEC of the Co-operative Party before selection of the candidate.
34. All nominated persons must have been members for six months of a recognised Co-operative Society as determined by the National Executive Committee of the Co-operative Party.

### **Alteration to Rules**

35. No Rule shall be altered, or new Rule adopted, unless written notice is given to the Secretary at least 28 days prior to the meeting of the Party Council at which it is to be discussed and circulated at least seven days prior to this date. The proposal must be supported by two-thirds of the members voting. No such Rule shall become operative until it is approved and registered by the NEC of the Party.

### **Incorporation of the National Rules into this Constitution**

36. The National Rules of the Co-operative Party are deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution.
37. If the National Rules are altered or amended in the future, then such altered or amended National Rules shall be deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution as at the date of the alteration or amendment to the National Rules. The incorporation of the National Rules and any future alteration or amendment to

them will be automatic and will not require a meeting or vote by members of this local Party.

## **Voluntary Parties**

### **Introduction**

1. These Rules do not replace the registered Rules of Co-operative Party Ltd and shall at all times be consistent with the registered Rules. In the event of any inconsistency, the registered Rules of the Co-operative Party Ltd. shall apply.

### **Name**

2. The ..... Voluntary Co-operative Party.<sup>6</sup>

### **Remit**

3. To support and promote Co-operative Values and Principles<sup>7</sup>
4. To support, promote and develop the Co-operative movement through the following:
  - a) Supporting the selection and election of Labour and Co-operative elected representatives in Westminster and all levels of government to implement co-operative policy
  - b) Promoting the Party's nationally agreed policies and campaigns
  - c) Contributing to the Party's policy and campaign development
  - d) Working with the Party's subscribing societies
  - e) Working with other Co-operatives and Mutuels and representing the Co-operative Party to them as a positive vehicle for change

### **Boundary**

5. The Party shall operate within the .... NEC Region and shall consist of all Co-operative Party members resident within the local authority boundaries of .....<sup>8</sup>

### **Affiliated Organisations**

6. Auxiliary bodies (as defined by the NEC) may affiliate to the Voluntary Party and pay an affiliation fee.

### **Officers, Representatives and Candidates**

7. The Officers of the Party shall (except in the case of full-time Officials) be elected by ballot vote at the annual meeting. They shall remain in office for one year and be eligible for re-election.

---

<sup>6</sup> Local Parties may propose an alternative name, subject to the approval of the NEC.

<sup>7</sup> Link to ICA Values and Principles

<sup>8</sup> The boundaries for local Parties are set by the NEC and must match local authority boundaries.



8. **The officers shall be:**
  - a) **The Chair**
  - b) **The Vice-Chair,**
  - c) **The Secretary/Convenor**
  - d) **The Treasurer**
  - e) **Other officers as needed, such as Campaigns Officer, Education Officer, Co-operative Liaison Officer, Youth Officer and Equality Officer.**
9. **The Officers must include a Treasurer and ‘Second Officer’ (normally the Secretary/Convenor) who will be registered with the Electoral Commission. Head Office must be notified as soon as possible when these officers change.**
10. **Officers shall be individual members of the Co-operative Party for not less than six months at the date of election except in the case of a newly formed Party where the NEC shall have the power temporarily to waive this restriction. This Rule shall also apply in respect of nominees for public bodies and representatives of the Co-operative Party on other bodies to which this Party is affiliated.**
11. **Where finances allow, reasonable expenses may be reimbursed.**
12. **In exceptional circumstances, Honoria may be paid to officers, subject to approval of the NEC.**
13. **Any officer or delegate shall be deemed to have vacated their position if they fail to attend three consecutive meetings of the Party or of the body they have been delegated to. This shall not preclude them from standing for re-election to the position.**

### **Executive Committee**

14. **The Party shall elect an Executive Committee consisting of the officers and three other members.**

### **Auditor**

15. **An auditor shall be appointed by the Party to audit its accounts.**

### **Annual Meeting**

16. **The Annual Meeting of the Party shall be held in the month of .....**
17. **It shall receive annual reports from the Secretary, Treasurer and Auditor of the Party.**
18. **It shall also elect its Officers and the Executive Committee of the Party from written nominations prior to the commencement of the Annual Meeting.**

### **Meetings**

19. **The Party shall hold regular meetings at such times as may be decided by the members.**



## **Finance**

20. The funds of the Party shall be provided by:
- a) Subscriptions or grants from the National Party, individuals and Co-operative organisations;
  - b) Other money raising efforts approved by the Voluntary Party.
21. **An Annual Report and audited financial statement shall be submitted to the National Party not later than 31 March.**

## **Candidatures**

22. The Voluntary Party shall seek affiliation and representation on all such bodies and organisations as come within the objects of the Co-operative Party.
23. The Voluntary Party shall actively engage in securing representation on public and other administrative bodies and such organisations as shall be approved by the Voluntary Party, and shall render aid, physical and financial, as may be decided from time to time in the pursuit of its objectives.
24. The Voluntary Party shall receive nominations and where desirable, make nominations for representatives as indicated in this Rule.
25. For Parliamentary, Scottish and Welsh Parliaments or mayoral candidatures, approval must be obtained from the NEC of the Co-operative Party, before selection of the candidate by the Voluntary Party.
26. **For local bodies, the voluntary Party shall approve, or otherwise, all candidatures and shall only accept financial responsibility after known costs have been considered and approved in connection with each candidature approved.**

## **Incorporation of the National Rules into this Constitution**

27. **The National Rules of the Co-operative Party are deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution.**
28. **If the National Rules are altered or amended in the future, then such altered or amended National Rules shall be deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution as at the date of the alteration or amendment to the National Rules. The incorporation of the National Rules and any future alteration or amendment to them will be automatic and will not require a meeting or vote by members of this Voluntary Party.**

## **Model Rules for a Branch Co-operative Party**

### **Introduction**

1. These Rules do not replace the registered Rules of Co-operative Party Ltd and shall at all times be consistent with the registered Rules. In the event of any inconsistency, the registered Rules of the Co-operative Party Ltd. shall apply.

### **Name**

2. The ..... Branch Party.

### **Remit**

3. To support and promote *Co-operative Values and Principles*<sup>9</sup>
4. To support, promote and develop the Co-operative movement through the following:
  - a) Supporting the selection and election of Labour and Co-operative elected representatives in Westminster and all levels of government to implement co-operative policy
  - b) Promoting the Party's nationally agreed policies and campaigns
  - c) Contributing to the Party's policy and campaign development
  - d) Working with the Party's subscribing societies
  - e) Working with other Co-operatives and Mutuals and representing the Co-operative Party to them as a positive vehicle for change
5. Branch Parties shall be established comprising individual members of the Co-operative Party to carry on the political work of the Society Party and also general promotional activity in furtherance of the policy and principles of the Party in each Constituency or area as defined by the Party Council.
6. The Branch Party shall operate and be financed under regulations laid down by the Society Party Council and as approved by the NEC.

### **Executive Committee**

7. The Branch Party may elect an Executive Committee or Campaign Team, comprising such numbers as the Branch Party shall determine.
8. The Executive Committee/Campaign Team shall meet as and when decided by the Party. It shall be the function of the Executive Committee to discuss Party business prior to the Party meeting and make recommendations therein and to plan and discuss and direct Party activities.

---

<sup>9</sup> Link to ICA Values and Principles



### **Officers, Representatives and Candidates**

9. **The Officers of the Party shall (except in the case of full-time Officials) be elected by ballot vote at the annual meeting. They shall remain in office for one year and be eligible for re-election.**
10. **The officers shall be:**
  - a) Chair
  - b) Vice-Chair,
  - c) Secretary/Convenor
  - d) Treasurer
  - e) Other officers as needed, such as Campaigns Officer, Education Officer, Co-operative Liaison Officer, Youth Officer and Equality Officer.
11. **Officers shall have been individual members of the Co-operative Party for not less than six months at the date of election, except in the case of a newly formed Branch where the NEC shall have the power to waive temporarily this restriction. This Rule shall also apply in respect of nominees for public bodies and representatives of the Co-operative Party on other bodies to which this Party is affiliated.**
12. **Any officer or delegate shall be deemed to have vacated their position if they fail to attend three consecutive meetings of the Party Council or the body they have been delegated to. This shall not preclude them from standing for re-election to the position.**
13. **There shall also be elected an auditor, who shall not be an officer of the Party.**

### **Meetings, Reports and Accounts**

14. **Branch Party meetings and event will take place regularly and be open to all members.**
15. **The Annual Meeting shall be held not later than ..... in each year, at which all officers shall be elected and the Annual Report and audited financial statement considered and adopted. The Annual Report and audited financial statement shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Party Council not later than .....**
16. **The Funds of the Branch Party shall be provided by:**
  - a) **Such sums as may be allocated by the Society Party**
  - b) **Other money raising efforts made by the Party with the approval of the Society Party.**
17. **In the event of the Branch Party being closed or suspended the funds shall be transferred to the Society Party. The Party shall not enter into any contract with a value in excess of £1,000 without the express permission of the NEC.**



## **Resolutions**

18. **No resolution shall be discussed or passed at any meeting except a properly constituted meeting, and no resolution may be sent to any organisation outside the Society Party without the consent of the Society Party Council or Executive.**
19. **No donation or affiliation fee shall be paid to any organisation without prior consent of the Society Party Council or Executive Committee.**

## **Amending the Rules**

20. **These Rules shall not be altered, or a new Rule made, except at a meeting of the Society Party Council, unless written notice is given to the Society Party Council Secretary at least 28 days prior to the meeting at which it is to be discussed and circulated at least seven days prior to this date. The proposal must be supported by two thirds of the members voting. No such Rule shall come operative until it is approved by the NEC of the Party.**

## **Incorporation of the National Rules into this Constitution**

21. **The National Rules of the Co-operative Party are deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution. If the National Rules are altered or amended in the future, then such altered or amended National Rules shall be deemed to be incorporated into this Constitution as at the date of the alteration or amendment to the National Rules.**
22. **The incorporation of the National Rules and any future alteration or amendment to them will be automatic and will not require a meeting or vote by members of the Society Party or Branch.**

## **Procedures for Party & Branch AGMs**

1. **At least seven days' notice (either by post or email) should be given to all individual members of a branch, or to all delegates in the case of a Party Council or Regional Party.**
2. **Meetings of a Party Council, Regional Council or other committee may be held by telephone or online.**
3. **Any officer or delegate shall be deemed to have vacated their position if they fail to attend three consecutive meetings. This shall not preclude them from standing for re-election to the position.**
4. **A register of attendance and minutes of each meeting shall be kept.**
5. **For Party Council meetings all motions must be submitted to the Secretary in writing at least 14 days before the meeting. Any amendment must be submitted to the Secretary in writing before commencement of the meeting.**
6. **For Branch Party meetings all motions must be handed to the Secretary before the commencement of the meeting, in writing. The Chair shall have the power to waive this requirement if, in his/her opinion, special circumstances so warrant.**



7. Amendments must be taken separately and voted upon before the original or substantive motion is put to the meeting. No member shall move more than one amendment to any one motion. In the event of a mover of a motion not being able to attend a meeting another member may move it for him/her. In other circumstances the Chair may formally move it.
8. The mover of a motion shall have ten minutes, and subsequent speakers five minutes. No member shall speak more than once, except the mover, who shall have five minutes to reply. All speakers shall stand to address the Chair.
9. No meeting of the Party Council shall be properly constituted unless at least one third of the members entitled to be present are in fact present.
10. A member who has not spoken under discussion may at any time move: -
  - a) That the question be now put
  - b) That the debate be adjourned
11. If the motion is seconded, it shall immediately be put to the vote, without discussion. Nothing under part (a) of this rule shall debar the mover from his right of reply.
12. No motion shall be considered to be an emergency motion unless the subject matter has arisen after notice of the meeting has been circulated. The decision of the Chair on this shall be final.
13. The ruling of the Chair on any point of order or explanation shall be final unless challenged and approved by at least two-thirds majority of the members present.
14. In all cases, in the event of a tie; the Chair shall have the right of a second and casting vote.
15. All elections shall normally be by the exhaustive ballot vote. In elections where there is more than one vacancy to be filled (e.g. Party Council or CLP delegates) the Single Transferable Vote may be used.
16. No decision shall be challenged unless notice has been given in writing at least 28 days before the meeting at which the challenge is made. A majority of two thirds of this present and voting shall be required to rescind a minute and the rescission shall not be effective until the minutes of the meeting have been confirmed by the following meeting.
17. These Standing Orders can only be amended or added to at a meeting or the Party Council and if notice of the amendment is given to the Secretary 28 days prior to the meeting at which it is to be discussed and if the proposal is supported by at least two thirds of the members present and voting.