

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS 2023

GUIDANCE FOR CANDIDATES

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Introduction

Elections to the Co-operative Party National Executive Committee take place every three years. Members elected in 2023 (and at subsequent by-elections) will serve from June until the next NEC is elected in 2026.

If you are considering seeking election to the NEC, please read these guidelines carefully, together with the NEC Handbook and Code of Conduct, to ensure that you meet the criteria and know what is expected of a member of the NEC. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Karen Wilkie, Board Secretary at board@party.coop.

See below for the membership of the NEC. For this election to the NEC for 2023-26, we are inviting members to self-nominate for the national, regional, BAME, (dis)Ability, LGBTQ+, Youth and elected representative places.

Self-nominations will open **12 December 2022**. The closing date is **12 noon on 5 February 2022**. Nominations must be submitted via the Civica website.

After the closing date, there will be hustings meetings on zoom (one per election, organised centrally) and valid nominations for the eleven national and regional places will be forwarded to party councils and branches to enable them to submit supporting nominations.

Each party council and branch may make up to two supporting nominations, at least one of which must be for a woman.

Summary of Key Dates

9 September 2022	Deadline for candidates to have applied to join the Party
26 November 2022	Deadline for members to have applied to join the Party and participate in the ballot
12 December 2022	Self-nominations open
5 February 2023	Closing date for self-nominations
15-22 February 2023	National/Regional zoom hustings
23 February – 11 March 2023	Branch & party council supporting nomination meetings
12 March 2023	Closing date for receipt of branch and party council supporting nominations
13-16 March 2023	Networks Hustings
21 March 2023	Elected Members' Hustings
3 April 2023	Ballot opens
5 May 2023	Ballots close
10/11 June 2023	Induction & AGM for new NEC

Membership of the NEC

Following the rule change agreed at the Society AGM in 2022, the NEC will have 24 voting members from June 2023. These are set out below:

Fifteen individual members:

One each from Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales

Elected by and from individual members by one member, one vote. Candidates must live in nation for which they are seeking election.

For these seats, the election in 2023 will be open to any member who meets the criteria. For future elections, if a seat was held by a man, at the election following his retirement or ineligibility to seek re-election, that election will only be open to women.

Eight from England

Elected by and from individual members in four sections, two per section.

The sections are:

- England East and London: members in the East and London regions
- England Midlands: members in the East Midlands and West Midlands regions
- England North: members in the North East & Cumbria, North West and Yorkshire & Humber regions
- England South: members in the South East and South West regions.

Candidates must live in the section for which they are seeking election.

Individual members in each section will each have two votes. The woman with the highest number of votes will be elected, and the second seat will go to candidate with the highest votes who is from a different region. If there are no candidates from another region, the candidate with the next highest number of votes from the same region will be elected.

If none of the candidates in a section are women, one seat will remain vacant pending a by-election open only to female candidates.

One member from each of the BAME, (dis)Ability and LGBTQ+ networks

These are elected by and from individual members of each network. Candidates must be a member of the relevant Co-operative Party network to seek election to these seats.

For these seats, the election in 2023 will be open to any member who meets the criteria. For future elections, if a seat was held by a man, at the election following his retirement or ineligibility to seek re-election, that election will only be open to women.

One youth representative

Elected by individual members aged 30 and under. Candidates must be under 27 at the date of nomination.

As this is not a new seat, the NEC has determined that for 2023, the existing rules will continue for the Youth representative i.e., if the 2020-23 NEC member retires or is not eligible to seek re-election in 2023, the election for this seat will be open to women only.

The current NEC member has confirmed that he will not be seeking re-election, therefore the election in 2023 will only be open to women candidates.

Two members appointed by the Co-operative Group

At least one to be a woman.

Two members elected by retail Societies other than the Co-operative Group

At least one to be a woman. Each organisation may nominate one candidate. Ballot papers will be issued to affiliated retail Societies to elect two members and the woman with the highest number of votes will be elected. The second seat will go to the candidate with the next highest number of votes who is from a different Society. If none of the candidates are women, one seat will remain vacant pending a by-election open only to female candidates.

Candidates must be nominated by a retail Society that is a current member of the Co-operative Party.

One member elected by other non-retail Societies and affiliates.

Candidates must be nominated by a non-retail Society or other affiliate that is a current member of the Co-operative Party.

For this seat, the election in 2023 will be open to any member who meets the criteria. For future elections, if a seat was held by a man, at the election following his retirement or ineligibility to seek re-election, that election will only be open to women.

Two members of the Westminster Parliamentary Group

At least one to be a woman. These are appointed by the Westminster Co-operative Parliamentary Group.

Two members elected by and from official Co-operative Party elected representatives other than the Westminster Parliamentary Group

This election is open to all current Labour and Co-operative Members of the Scottish Parliament, Senedd, London Assembly, Police & Crime Commissioners, Elected Mayors or Councillors who stood as 'Labour and Co-operative' at their most recent election or were endorsed by their local Co-operative Party as co-operative candidates.

NEC candidates whose term of office as an MSP, MS, AM, PCC, Elected Mayor or councillor ends on 4 May 2023 and are not re-elected will be withdrawn from the NEC election and their votes reallocated.

Labour and Co-operative MSP, MS, AM, PCC, elected mayors and councillors will have two votes. The woman with the highest number of votes will be elected. The second seat will go to the candidate with the next highest votes.

If none of the candidates in a section are women, one seat will remain vacant pending a by-election open only to female candidates.

Eligibility

All NEC candidates must:

- Have been a full member of the Co-operative Party for six months by 10 June 2023. This means have made a valid application to join by 9 September 2022, and not be in arrears.
- Meet the legal requirements for a Board member of a registered Society. For example, they must be over the age of 16.
- Complete the online nomination form and declaration

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

- is not a member of a local Party, which is itself a member of the Party
- refuses to sign a statement accepting the code of conduct for members of the National Executive Committee
- has been declared bankrupt or compounded with their creditors and not been discharged
- is subject to a disqualification order made under the Company Directors Disqualification Act
- has been convicted of an offence where the conviction is not treated as spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- fails to abide by any rules for the conduct of elections made by the National Executive Committee

Nominations

National, Regional, BAME, (dis)Ability, LGBTQ+, Youth, Elected Representative

For this election, we are inviting members to self-nominate for the national, regional, BAME, (dis)Ability, LGBTQ+, Youth and elected representative places.

Self-nominations will open 12 December 2022 for elections to the NEC for 2023-26. The closing date is 12 noon on 5 February 2022.

Nominations must be submitted via the Civica website.

Co-operative Group, other Retail Societies, other affiliates

Information and forms will be sent to Societies and other affiliates in December. To seek election to the NEC as one of the representatives of the Co-operative Group, other retail Societies or affiliates, members should contact the Secretary of the relevant organisation to request a nomination.

The closing date for nominations for these seats is 12 March 2023.

Hustings

Following close of self-nominations, there will be an on-line hustings, open to all members eligible to vote in that section. These will be organised centrally.

Date		Who can attend
7pm, Monday 15 February	Wales	All members in Wales
6pm, Monday 20 February	Scotland	All members in Scotland
7.30pm, Monday 20 February	England North	All members in the NE & Cumbria, North West and Yorkshire & Humber Regions
6pm, Tuesday 21 February	Northern Ireland	All members in Northern Ireland
7.30pm, Tuesday 21 February	England Midlands	All members in the East Midlands and West Midlands Regions
6pm, Wednesday 22 February	England East and London	All members in the East and London Regions
7.30pm, Wednesday 22 February	England South	All members in the East and London Regions
7pm, Monday 13 March	BAME	All members of the BAME network
7pm, Tuesday 14 March	(dis)Ability	All members of the (dis)Ability network
7pm, Wednesday 15 March	Youth	All members aged 30 and under

7pm, Thursday 16 March	LGBTQ+	All members of the LGBTQ+ network
7pm, Tuesday 21 March	Elected members	Members of the Scottish Parliament, Senedd, London Assembly, Police & Crime Commissioners, Elected Mayors or Councillors who stood as 'Labour and Co-operative' at their most recent election or were endorsed by their local Co-operative Party as co-operative candidates

Supporting nominations from Party Councils and Branches

After the closing date, valid nominations will be forwarded to party councils and branches in the relevant nations or sections to enable them to submit supporting nominations.

Each party council and branch may make up to two supporting nominations, at least one of which must be for a woman. If there are no female candidates, the branch or party may nominate one man only.

Valid supporting nominations must be made at a quorate meeting to which all eligible members have been invited. Information on the candidates, as submitted with their nomination, will be available on the Party's website and no other materials should be circulated.

Candidates should not attend supporting nomination meetings. The exception to this is a candidates' own branch, where they may speak and vote.

Ideally, party councils and branches will schedule these meetings to take place after the hustings for their nation or region, when members will have had a chance to hear the candidates speak and submit questions.

Key dates: the closing date for party councils and branches to submit supporting nominations is 12 March.

Other rules and guidance

Candidates may not seek election for more than one place.

A brief candidate statement (not exceeding 250 words) and photo, submitted with the on-line candidate application form will be circulated with the ballot papers, together with a list of nominating branches.

The candidate information and statement provided with their on-line nomination, including a photo and short video, if submitted, will be available on the Party's website.

Candidates may include in the candidate statement links to social media pages and/or a personal website. Candidates may also use social media, but this must not be paid for (either by or on behalf of the candidate or in-kind).

No printed materials may be circulated other than the candidates' information and statement, which will be made available to branch officers and on-line to members.

Ballot

The election for the fifteen places elected by individual members is being conducted by Civica. Links to vote will be emailed to members and the ballot will take place on line. Members who do not have an email address will be sent a postal vote but will be encouraged to vote on line if they can.

To be eligible to vote, members must be current, not lapsed, and have applied to join the Party on or before 26 November 2022.

Although candidates may only seek election to one seat, members may vote in as many sections as they are qualified to e.g., a councillor aged 30 or under will receive a link to vote for their regional section, the elected members' section, the youth member and for any networks they are a member of.

The ballot will open on 3 April 2023 and close on 5 May 2023.

For more information:

Contact Karen Wilkie, Board Secretary & Returning Officer, board@party.coop.