

**LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY**  
**PROCEDURE**  
**ELECTING MEMBERS TO THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE**

**Version 1.1**

**Introduction**

This document outlines the procedure for conducting the election of members to the National Executive of the Liberal Democratic Party. It is based on the Party Constitution as adopted on 13 April 2013 as well as party tradition and it is intended to codify good practice. In the event that the Party Constitution contradicts this document then the constitution shall have precedence.

There are nine positions on the National Executive. Members of the National Executive are elected for three year terms. At the end of that term their position becomes vacant. In the event that a position falls vacant prior to the expiry of that three year term then a replacement member may be elected for the remainder of the original term. As such an election will be conducted at each National Conference to fill at least three vacancies. These are for positions that each serve for a period of three years. In addition the election may need to fill additional vacancies for positions that will server for a shorter term.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The Party Secretary is responsible for the smooth conduct of elections to appoint members to the National Executive. This includes preparations prior to the National Conference and the conduct of the election on the day by a Returning Officer. The Returning Officer should be appointed by the Party Secretary. The Returning Officer should be a member of long standing and good repute who is familiar with party procedures and who is not themselves a candidate and has not nominated any of the candidates standing. The Returning Officer should be familiar with this document and the party constitution and as such they should be appointed and briefed as far in advance as is practical.

Each candidate for election may appoint one scrutineer.

In the event that the position of Party Secretary is vacant, potentially because the members' term is expiring, then the Party President shall assume their position for the purposes of this document. If the Party President is also vacating their position then the next highest ranking continuing member of the National Executive shall undertake the roll.

## Nominations

Nomination of candidates must be made to the Party Secretary prior to the National Conference. This includes members of the executive whose term has expired and who wish to serve a further term. The Party Secretary must collate nominations of candidates. Candidates must fit the following criteria:-

1. The candidate must be a current financial member and must also have been a financial member for two previous years.
2. The candidate must be nominated and seconded by financial members.
3. Nomination must be received not less than two weeks prior to the National Conference.

Normally it is assumed that all candidates wish to serve for the longest term available. However a record of actual nomination should be recorded by the Party Secretary for clarity. An example record of nominations is shown below. However some other method that clearly shows the intent of each candidate could be used. If all candidates nominate for all vacancies it may be sufficient to simply record this to be the case.

Vacancies each candidate has nominated for.				
<b>Name of Candidate</b>	Vacancy-1 (3 years)	Vacancy-2 (3 years)	Vacancy-3 (3 years)	Vacancy-4 (1 year)
<i>John Smith Senior</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Mary Williams</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Betty Crocker</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Alex Thompson</i>	x	x	x	✓
<i>John Smith Junior</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Alice Jones</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓

## **The Ballot Paper**

Prior to the National Conference sufficient ballot papers must be printed for use by financial members on the day of the National Conference. Ballot papers should include the names of all correctly nominated candidates. The order of the candidates on the ballot should be determined by lot. No other detail or affiliation should be shown next to the names of candidates except as necessary to clearly identify each individual.

Only financial members present at the National Conference may vote. Proxy votes are not permitted. Each member shall complete one ballot showing their preference for candidates.

An example ballot is shown below. It shows an example of a valid vote where a member has expressed a sequence of preferences. It does not matter that the sequence has numerical gaps or that numbers are expressed as words so long as a clear intent of numerical sequence is shown. Voting is “optional preferential” and as such it does not matter that the voter in this example has not given a preference for every candidate.

Ballot - to elect National Executives	
The following candidates have been nominated for one or more vacancies on the National Executive. Please place a number 1 next to your preferred candidate. You may also number additional candidates in your order of preference.	
John Smith Senior	
Mary Williams	1
Betty Crocker	
Alex Thompson	four
John Smith Junior	2
Alice Jones	

## **Vote Counting Process**

A separate count of all ballots (with appropriate distribution of preferences) shall be used to fill each vacancy in succession. Vacancies with longer terms shall be filled prior to vacancies with shorter terms. If a candidate on the ballot has not nominated for the vacancy being filled, or has already been elected to an earlier vacancy, then the ballot shall be treated as if their name did not appear on the ballot.

To fill a vacancy a candidate needs more than 50% of the vote. Where this is not achieved the candidate with the lowest number of votes must be eliminated for that vacancy and their votes redistributed according to the shown preference sequence. If two candidates are equally lowest then both are eliminated. This process is repeated until one candidate has more than 50% of the vote. Where a vote is to be redistributed but the voter has not shown any further valid preference then the ballot should be eliminated for the purposes of filling that vacancy.

Having filled a vacancy all ballots are then reused to fill the next vacancy using the same process.

## **Conduct of the Election**

What follows is a template for election proceedings to be conducted on the day of the National Conference.

- 1) During Event Registration financial members must be given a copy of the ballot. Each ballot should be initialled before it is handed out to ensure no misuse of blank ballots. Each financial member should also be given a means of identifying their financial status, such as a distinctive coloured card.
- 2) During the conference at the designated time the Conference Chair (usually the Party President) hands proceedings to the Party Secretary to conduct the election:-
  - a) Party Secretary identifies the members of the National Executive whose terms have expired, thanks them for their service to the party, and declares their position vacant.
  - b) Party Secretary ensures all financial members have their ballots and are familiar with the voting procedure. This may entail answering questions.
  - c) Party Secretary testifies verbally to the conference attendees that all candidates shown on the ballot are qualified to stand in accordance with the rules of the Party Constitution and that the ballot is a fair representation of all valid nominations.
  - d) Party Secretary identifies the Returning Officer and explains that they will count the votes in accordance with the party Constitution and Party Procedure (this document).
  - e) Party Secretary ensures that Candidates have appointed Scrutineers if they wish.
  - f) Candidates are invited to give a short presentation in support of their nomination. The Party Secretary may allow questions and answers if time permits.
  - g) Financial Members are directed to cast their votes.
  - h) The Returning Officer collects each vote confirming that the voting member is currently financial and entitled to cast the vote.
  - i) The Returning Officer counts the vote in successive rounds for each vacancy as described earlier. Scrutineers ensure this process is undertaken with integrity.
  - j) The Party Secretary invites the Returning Officer to announce the result.
  - k) The Party Secretary declares the election closed and returns control to the Conference Chair.

## **Other Considerations**

There is no formal dispute resolution process and any dispute will need to be resolved by the Party Secretary. This may involve a recount in the event that the count is disputed or it may involve running the election again. However these activities must be finalised prior to the conclusion of the National Conference and a final result declared.

If a vacancy can't be filled because of a draw then the vote must be retaken with fresh ballots for that and any still outstanding vacancies. However any vacancies already filled shall stand.

A copy of this document should be stored in a public place, such as the party website, which is accessible to all members of the party.

Document History	
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2/4/2015	Version 1.1 - Document amended by Terje Petersen.