



**ANNEXE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE WELSH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS**  
**MEMBERSHIP RULES**  
**October 2021**



## MEMBERSHIP RULES

### A. Recruitment, Registration and Acceptance

1. All members of the Party are encouraged to recruit new members. Upon receipt of an individual's subscription of not less than the minimum, for which a receipt shall be issued, the individual's application can be sent by the enrolling body without delay to Membership Services for registration.
2. New membership applications shall be advised that their application is subject to acceptance by their Local Party. All applicants shall be registered and lists of new members shall be sent to Local Parties as regularly as possible, and not less than every two months.
3.
  - a. New membership applicants shall be given an address ("Registered Membership Address") which shall be the address where the applicant lives, works or studies. For this purpose:
    - "Lives" means the address at which the applicant ordinarily resides;
    - "Works" shall be defined in the same terms as for qualification for nomination as a candidate for a principal local authority election;
    - "Studies" means either the Student's term time residential address as defined in Rule A.3.a or the address of the institution where the student studies.
  - b. Subject to registration and approval the applicant shall become a member of the Local Party covering the Registered Membership Address.
4. Local Parties may initiate refusal of membership in accordance with section C.7 of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats within 6 weeks of receipt of notification of registration. After that period, if membership is not refused the applicant shall be deemed to have been accepted and shall be deemed to have been accepted and shall be a member of that Local Party.
5. Until membership has been registered the applicant shall not be a member of the Party and able to participate in the functions of membership, including voting in internal Federal and State elections. In internal Local Party elections all registered members must be accepted before they may participate.
6.
  - a. The Finance and Management Committee shall have the power to initiate an investigation into any irregularities in membership recruitment or payments in Local Parties under Section H.17 of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats.
  - b. This can be done on one or more of the following grounds:
    - i. failure to pay the correct subscription amounts;
    - ii. failure to pass on the correct subscription amounts to other parts of the Party;
    - iii. fraudulent membership applications; or



iv. the Board believes that under Section H.11 of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats, events may have taken place which are or may be seriously detrimental to the Local Party or the Party as a whole.

Members subject to such an investigation may be suspended pending the result of the enquiry. The results of any investigation may be subject to appeal to the Welsh Appeals Panel.

## **B. Re-Registration of Membership**

1. A member may re-register their membership from one Local Party to another in accordance with Section C.5 of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats and shall inform Membership Services.

2. A member who changes their Registered Membership Address shall automatically be re-registered as a member of the Local Party covering the new Registered Membership Address, unless the member requests in writing to retain membership of their old Local Party. In which case Rule B.3, below, shall apply.

3. A member who wishes to be a member of a Local Party other than that covering the Registered Membership Address may do so with the consent of the Local Party of which they want to be a member. If that Local Party wishes not to grant consent, the process of refusal must be initiated within 6 weeks of the notification of registration and must be completed within that period, and the procedure set out in Rules F.3.ii to F.3.viii, below, shall be followed. If the process is not initiated or completed within these periods, the Local Party shall be deemed to have consented and the member shall be a member of that Local Party.

## **C. Issue of Membership Cards**

1. Members shall receive a Party Membership Card from Membership Services within 5 weeks of when the appropriate part of their subscription is received by Membership Services and their membership registered.

2. a. Members who are recruited by the Youth and Student SAO shall receive a Party Membership Card and also become members of that SAO. Their names shall also be included as members of the Local Party in whose area they live or study.  
b. Such members shall not vote in internal Local Party elections for Federal and Welsh Conference Representatives if they vote for these representatives through their SAO.

3. The Youth and Student SAO shall receive a service fee of a percentage of the subscription paid as agreed with the Party on the recruitment and / or renewal of these members. The minimum subscription of the Party shall be the minimum subscription of the SAO.



#### **D. Start Date for Membership and Dates for Renewal**

1. Membership shall commence for new members on the date of receipt of the subscription and application by the enrolling body or Membership Services, whichever is earlier, subject to acceptance by their Local Party.
2. Membership will be due for renewal:
  - a. For new members on the quarter day (March 31, June 30, September 30 or December 31) one year after the quarter day immediately following the date of their first joining;
  - b. For renewing members of the Party, annually on their quarter day.
3. Membership for lapsed members who rejoin shall commence on the date of receipt of their subscription and application by the enrolling body or Membership Services, whichever is the earlier.

#### **E. Renewals and Lapsing of Membership**

1. Members shall be sent renewal reminders by Membership Services not later than the end of the month before their subscriptions fall due. At least two reminders shall be sent and the Local Party shall be notified of non-renewers.
2. Resignations shall not be acted upon unless received in writing by Membership Services from the member resigning.
3. Members who do not renew their subscriptions shall retain their rights as members for three months beyond their renewal date, after which time, if no subscription has been received, their membership rights shall be deemed to have lapsed.

#### **F. The Refusal of Membership and the Disciplinary Process for Members**

1. The grounds for refusal of membership and the grounds for disciplinary action being taken against a member of the Party are set out in the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats (Section C.6 & Section C.7 respectively). Refusal of membership is just as serious and exceptional a course of action as the initiation of any disciplinary process.
2. Refusal of membership or the undertaking of disciplinary action can be initiated by the Local Party the State Party or the Specified Associated Organisation representing Youth and/or Students (where the individual is a member of the Party through that organisation).
3. The following procedure shall be followed by Local Parties and shall be completed, unless referred to the Appeals Panel, within six weeks from its initiation by the Local Party. The reasons for refusal of membership or any disciplinary action that is to be taken including any



sanction that is to be decided upon must be considered appropriate and must only be from those given in the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats (Sections C.6, C.7 and C.8 respectively).

For new members only:

i. When the Membership Secretary receives a list of applicants registered for membership, the Local Party shall operate a system approved by the Executive Committee within the timeframe for the approval of membership as set out in Section A of these Membership Rules. If the Local Party, through this procedure, determines to initiate refusal of membership that person shall be informed by in writing by the Secretary. No formal action shall be taken until a meeting of the Executive Committee which shall be held not more than 5 weeks from the date when this process has been initiated. At that Executive Committee meeting this item of business shall appear formally on the Agenda. The timetable and right of appeal shall be the same as outlined for disciplinary action, below.

In all other circumstances:

ii. Disciplinary action can only be discussed formally at an Executive Committee meeting of the Local Party which must be held not more than 5 weeks from the meeting at which the matter was first raised. No decision can take place at the meeting where the matter is first raised. This is to allow the Executive Committee and the person concerned to be able to make the necessary preparations to put their cases to the meeting. A separate meeting of the Executive Committee must therefore be called within 5 weeks of the matter first being raised, under the same time frames of notification for a meeting of the Executive Committee as specified in the Local Party Constitution or the Model Local Party Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats. At that Executive Committee, meeting this item of business shall appear formally on the agenda.

iii. Any member who is facing disciplinary action shall be given, at the same time and under the same notice period as for members of the Executive Committee, the motion which includes the reasons for action being taken, the potential sanction that may be imposed, along with the date, time and place of the Executive Committee meeting at which it is to be discussed, information regarding their right to speak or be represented and details of how any appeal against refusal or the sanction determined as a result of the Executive Committee Meeting can be made. The motion shall not include the sanction that may be imposed under Clause C.8 to allow the Executive Committee to come to a decision as to the appropriate sanction following receipt of all relevant information and debate. Amendments to the motion shall not be allowed.

iv. The motion may be still be taken at the Executive Committee meeting notwithstanding the absence of the person concerned provided the procedures outlined above have been followed.

v. The Executive Committee shall debate the motion but there shall be no comment which is not relevant to the reasons given in the motion. The person whose membership is being refused or revoked or their representative shall be allowed to speak.



- vi. When the discussion is completed a vote shall be taken at the meeting on the motion as published in the agenda by secret ballot of those present and have been party to the full discussion and are eligible to vote.
- vii. The outcome of the motion must be communicated to the person concerned in writing within seven days of the Executive Committee meeting at which the motion was voted on. This communication shall also be copied to Membership Services and the Welsh Party, supported by all relevant documents.
- viii. The above procedure should be completed within six weeks of initiation (including the time required to notify the member of the outcome) unless the Executive Committee has agreed an extension to any suspension under Section F.5, below, If the procedure remains incomplete after this time, the individual concerned shall become or remain a member of the Party automatically and the Executive Committee shall take restorative action to ensure that any suspension is lifted.
- ix. Nothing in this procedure shall override or take precedence over the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats or the rights of any members to the Welsh Appeals Panel including Rule F.4, below.

4. Any person who is refused membership or is subject to sanction following disciplinary action has the right of appeal to the Welsh Appeals Panel. If no such appeal is received in writing by the Clerk to the Welsh Appeals Panel within one calendar month from the date of the Executive Committee meeting when the refusal of membership was agreed or the disciplinary hearing took place, the decision of that Executive Committee meeting shall stand.

5. A member may be suspended by the body undertaking disciplinary action for not more than the full period set out under these rules whilst the process is in progress, and subject to person concerned being notified in writing along with the Chief Executive of the Welsh Party and Membership Services. The date of the decision to suspend shall constitute the initiation of the process of disciplinary action and the Executive Committee shall meet to consider the sanction to be taken within five weeks of the date of suspension. If no such disciplinary hearing occurs or the process is not completed within the timetable, suspension is automatically ended and the Executive Committee shall take the necessary restorative action to ensure that this happens.

6. A meeting of the Executive Committee may, in exceptional circumstances, extend this suspension where the disciplinary action relates to legal trial or tribunal where such action could be seen as prejudicial or subjudice without a verdict. Where this has happened, the Executive Committee shall specify the length of extension in writing to the member concerned as well as to the Chief Executive of the Welsh Party and Membership Services. A disciplinary hearing must take place not more than three weeks (allowing for due notice to be given) following a verdict being delivered or charges being dropped otherwise the suspension shall be automatically lifted and the Executive Committee shall take the necessary restorative action to ensure that this happens.



7. In matters of urgency the Chair of the Executive Committee may take the decision to suspend a member pending a disciplinary hearing. In such cases the members of the Executive Committee shall be notified immediately and the member concerned shall be notified in writing within seven days. A meeting of the Executive Committee shall take place within 21 days of the decision being taken to determine whether or not the full disciplinary process should be invoked. If the Executive Committee determine that there are grounds for a disciplinary hearing the process shall be deemed to have been initiated and the timetable outlined in Section F.3, above, shall apply. The suspension shall automatically lapse after 21 days if the Executive Committee fails to take any further action.

8. Where a member's suspension has been lifted by virtue of the fact that the process has timed out, the Executive Committee shall not be entitled to initiate a second suspension on the same matter but shall refer the matter to the Board for its consideration.

9. In cases where the above procedure is followed by the Board or the Executive Committee of the Specified Associated Organisation representing Youth and/or Students, the procedure set out above shall be followed with appropriate changes being made to the organisational bodies concerned.

10. Any person whose membership has either been refused or revoked under these rules or by the Federal or other State Party Constitutions shall not be admitted or readmitted to membership in Wales without the joint consent of the Board and the Local Party which that person would become a member of.

### **G. Rights of Members to Participate in Elections**

1.
  - a. For all Local Party elections, including local authority candidate selections and Annual General Meetings, the Executive Committee shall determine and agree the date for the closure of nominations before which members not both registered by the Local Party and accepted shall not be eligible to participate in the elections.
  - b. Local Parties are requested to co-ordinate with Membership Services in advance of the agreed date to ensure that lists and labels of registered members can be provided to meet this election timetable

2. For Candidate selections to the Senedd, the Westminster Parliament, Directly Elected Mayors and Police & Crime Commissioners, the cut-off date shall be no later than the closing date for submission of applications as laid down in the Party's Rules for these selections (Annexe IV of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats).

3. Any members subject to an investigation under Section 1.6 of these rules may be excluded from the selection concerned by the Board, subject to appeal to the Welsh Appeals Panel.

### **H. Changes to these Rules**



1. These Rules have been agreed by Conference under Section C.9 of the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats. The Conference may amend these rules by a simple majority of those present and voting at the Conference.
2. The operation of the Membership system on an ongoing basis will be subject to the direction of the Finance and Management Committee and the Party's Chief Executive.