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## **1. NAME**

The name of the organisation shall be “Labour Women’s Network” (LWN)

## **2. AIMS**

a) Labour Women’s Network’s aims are to:

i) encourage, assist and support Labour Women who wish to stand for party and public office;

ii) provide training, practical support, advice and information to its members;

iii) campaign for women’s power, agency, safety, voice and representation in the Labour Party and in public office.

iiii) bring diverse Labour women together to make our collective voice heard

b) Labour Women’s Network is mainly an enabling rather than a policy making organisation. The organisation shall not take positions on specific matters of Labour Party policy other than to initiate and support measures in furtherance of its aims as set out in 2.a).

c) Labour Women’s Network shall remain neutral in all internal Labour Party elections, except where the Executive Committee takes a positive decision to participate in those in which LWN is entitled to nominate or vote by virtue of its status as an affiliated organisation of the Labour Party. LWN shall always remain neutral in all forms of candidate selection processes.

d) The Executive Committee is empowered to take any and all steps it thinks necessary to further these aims, and shall report on progress to each Annual General Meeting of the organisation.

## **3. MEMBERSHIP**

a) Individuals who self-define as women who are full members of the Labour Party may become members and support the activities of Labour Women's Network by payment of membership subscription.

b) Only women who are full members of the Labour Party may become members of LWN.

c) The Executive Committee shall establish criteria for subscriptions and shall publicise such criteria from time to time to members.

d) The Membership Subscription shall be such sums as the Executive Committee may from time to time decide.

- e) The Membership Subscription shall be payable monthly or annually via a continuous payment method.
- f) It is a member's responsibility to ensure membership subscriptions are up-to-date.
- g) It is a member's responsibility to ensure her contact details and data permissions are up to date, especially in relation to email addresses, which are the primary method of contact.

### **4. SUPPORTERS AND AFFILIATES**

- a) Men and others who do not self-define as women and who are full members of the Labour Party may become supporters on regular payment of a subscription to be set at a rate and frequency to be determined by the Executive Committee.
- b) Trade Unions and Socialist Societies, who are affiliated to the Labour Party, may become affiliates on payment of an annual subscription, such subscription to be set at a rate as from time to time determined by the Executive Committee. The annual subscription rate may vary depending on the size of the trade union or trade union branch affiliating at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- c) Supporters and affiliates will receive our e-news and invitations to events as appropriate.
- d) Neither supporters nor affiliates may vote in LWN elections, at the AGM, or in any other LWN decision-making process.

### **5. GOVERNANCE**

- a) The day-to-day running of Labour Women's Network shall be vested in the Executive Committee which shall consist of the following members:
  - i) the Officers (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Training Lead), the first three of whom shall be elected by postal or online ballot of eligible members (see 6. ELECTIONS below);
  - ii) up to 3 women members of the Parliamentary Labour Party, as determined at the first Executive Committee meeting after each AGM;
  - iii) 8 members elected by postal or online ballot of eligible members (see 6. ELECTIONS below); two of these places will be reserved for women who self-define as Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic
  - iv) a maximum of 3 co-opted members as may be agreed by the Executive

Committee.

b) Membership of the Executive Committee shall be terminated upon:

i) the resignation of any member submitted via email to [contact@lwn.org.uk](mailto:contact@lwn.org.uk).

Such resignation to take effect immediately or from a date to be stipulated in the letter of resignation; or

ii) the non-attendance by a member at two consecutive meetings of the Executive Committee without apology for absence being given to the Secretary in advance of meetings; or

iii) the passing of a motion to remove a specified member. Such motion shall be submitted via email to [contact@lwn.org.uk](mailto:contact@lwn.org.uk) and voted upon by Executive Committee members as appropriate.

c) Decisions of the Executive Committee shall be effected by a majority vote of those present at meetings.

d) The Executive Committee shall meet at least four times in every twelve months, of which three meetings will usually be virtual.

e) The quorum for Executive Committee meetings shall be 6 elected members.

f) In case of an equality of votes, the Chair shall have a second and casting vote.

g) The Executive Committee shall ensure that LWN carries out activities in support of its aims as laid out in Section 2 above.

h) Between Executive Committee meetings, decisions may be taken by email, phone, WhatsApp or video conference with a simple majority of members of the Executive Committee consenting. LWN shall keep a record of any such decisions and shall report them to the next available meeting of the Executive Committee for inclusion in the Minutes.

i) The Treasurer shall arrange for proper accounting records to be kept and present periodic reports to the Executive Committee, supported by employees where necessary. She shall arrange for the preparation of an annual balance sheet and income and expenditure statement for approval at the AGM.

j) The Treasurer shall arrange for a bank account into which all LWN monies shall be paid. The account shall have four signatories (unless determined otherwise in exceptional circumstances by the Executive Committee) who shall be the Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Training Coordinator. Payments made on behalf of LWN from the account shall require the authorisation of any two of the four named signatories. An employee of LWN may, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, have administrative access to the bank account.

- k) The Secretary shall ensure minutes of meetings are taken and shall be responsible for keeping members informed of Labour Women's Network activities, supported by employees as necessary. Working Parties shall be responsible for keeping their own minutes and records and for reporting to the Executive Committee.
- l) The Executive Committee shall appoint one of its number to act as Training Lead, who shall be responsible for the organisation and delivery of such training for LWN members and shall report to each Executive Committee and to the Annual General Meeting. Due to the importance of training to LWN's goals, the Training Lead shall be deemed to be an Officer of the organisation.
- m) The Training Lead shall establish and maintain a Training Working Party to oversee and ensure delivery of LWN's training and development programme.
- n) Additional trainers may be appointed from outside the Executive Committee as necessary.
- o) The Executive Committee may create and fill from amongst its numbers other such functional posts as it thinks necessary. In exceptional circumstances, to address a skills gap, or to address the underrepresentation of a minority group, it may co-opt an LWN member to fulfill a specific function for a specified term of not more than one year.
- p) The Executive Committee shall appoint 2 members of LWN to act as auditors, and may appoint external auditors if appropriate or required.
- q) The Executive Committee may designate Committees or Working Parties with responsibility for any matter which in its absolute discretion it considers necessary or beneficial to Labour Women's Network and may depute or refer to the Executive Committee or Working Party such powers and duties it may determine.
- r) The Executive Committee may from time to time lay down, amend or abrogate such rules for the composition and conduct of the affairs of any or all such Executive Committee as it shall think fit.
- s) The Executive Committee shall have the power to invite and appoint up to three Patrons who shall be ex-officio members of the Management Executive Committee.
- t) The Executive Committee is empowered to establish national, regional or local structures as it deems necessary, and to oversee their operation.
- u) The Executive Committee shall have power to borrow, raise or invest monies

for the furtherance of the purposes of the Labour Women's Network.

v) The Executive Committee shall have power to appoint, pay and dismiss any employees or advisers as they may deem necessary. No paid employee shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee or hold any office of the Labour Women's Network.

w) Members of the Executive Committee may claim expenses from LWN for attendance at meetings, as well as the refunding of other agreed expenditure incurred on behalf of the organisation.

x) The Executive Committee shall have the power to establish and manage a system of-bursaries to its LWN members, such bursaries to be made in such amounts, for such purposes, by such criteria and by such procedures as the Executive Committee shall from time to time determine.

### **6. ELECTIONS**

a) All members of the Executive Committee shall serve for a term of 2 years, unless they either resign or have their membership terminated as in 5b above.

b) The Executive Committee shall appoint one of its number who is not standing for election in the relevant year to act as Returning Officer.

c) Half of the Officer and Executive Committee will be elected each year on rotation, with the Chair, Secretary and 4 members being elected in Year 1 (2021) and the Treasurer and 4 members being elected in Year 2 (2022) and in both cases at 2 yearly intervals thereafter.

d) Of the 4 members elected at 2-yearly intervals, one place in each set of 4 will be reserved for women who self-define as Black, Asian, and/or Ethnic Minority. Candidates will be asked to declare if they self-define as Black, Asian, and/or Ethnic Minority. The Black, Asian, and/or Ethnic Minority candidate receiving the highest number of votes will be automatically elected. Thereafter, the other places will be filled by the 3 candidates receiving the highest number of votes.

e) Casual vacancies during the year will be filled by the Executive Committee by co-option. Any post or place so filled will automatically fall vacant at the expiry of the term of office for which the original member was elected.

f) Notice of Election shall be given to all eligible members by the Returning Officer at least 28 days before the close of nominations. Notices either posted or emailed shall be considered as having been duly given on the day following the date of posting.

- g) An eligible member shall be any member who is paid up at the point at which nominations open.
- h) Notwithstanding g) above, the Executive Committee shall have the power, in exceptional circumstances, to set a freeze date for elections which is earlier than the opening of nominations. The Executive Committee shall determine what constitute exceptional circumstances, and the Returning Officer shall present a full report to the AGM at which the election results are announced.
- i) Any member may nominate herself for any office up for election using whatever nomination process the Executive Committee shall decide. Any member so doing must have been a member of LWN for a minimum of four (4) months prior to the date on which nominations open.
- j) The Executive Committee will employ an external and independent agency to run the ballot.
- k) Once ballot papers have been issued, the ballot shall remain open for a minimum of 14 days from the day of issue. The Returning Officer shall specify a closing date and time by which ballot papers shall be returned and notify members of this in the Notice of Election.
- l) The results of the ballot shall be announced at the AGM and notified to candidates by email.
- m) Members elected shall take up office on the last day of Labour Party Annual Conference, and shall hold office for 2 years thereafter.
- n) Whilst the Returning Officer shall make every reasonable effort to ensure that all members receive election mailings, it remains the responsibility of individual members to ensure that LWN is in possession of up-to-date contact details, including a current postal and email addresses.

### **7. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

- a) The Annual General Meeting shall be held online in September each year on a date to be determined by the Executive Committee, and shall vote on any constitutional amendments, receive the results of elections and the accounts and reports from the previous year, and debate main objectives and topics for the forthcoming year. Other items may be added as the Executive Committee deems.
- b) Members shall receive at least 28 days' written notice of the AGM. Notices either posted or emailed shall be considered as having been duly given on the

day following the date of posting.

- c) All members attending and voting at the AGM shall be paid up to date with their subscriptions according to the membership list held by the Secretary.
- d) The quorum for the AGM shall be fifteen (15) members.
- e) Members must pre-register to attend the AGM by the deadline issued in the notice.
- f) In the event of fewer than fifteen (15) members pre-registering by the deadline, the AGM will be deemed inquorate and notice of a new date shall be issued as agreed by the Executive Committee.
- g) Late comers to the AGM, may be refused entry or voting rights.

### **8. AFFILIATION TO THE LABOUR PARTY**

- a) LWN may affiliate to the Labour Party, as the Executive Committee shall decide.
- b) When affiliated, the Executive Committee may select one member (who should usually, but not necessarily, be a member of the Executive Committee) to act as its delegate to Labour Party Conferences and Executive Committees. The method by which the delegate is agreed shall be determined by the Executive Committee.
- c) Any such LWN delegate shall consult LWN's officers before speaking or voting at Conferences or Executive Committees, and, in particular, shall not speak or vote on any issue deemed by the Officers to be outwith the remit of LWN as defined in Section 2 above of this Constitution.
- d) LWN may, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, affiliate to the Labour Party's national and regional organisations and bodies, and nominate LWN members resident in the relevant nation or region to represent it.
- e) LWN shall and does not affiliate to individual Constituency Labour Party or Units, unless at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

### **9. AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION**

- a) Amendments to this Constitution shall be considered at the Annual General Meeting. The Secretary must receive notice of such amendment via email 21 days before the meeting and shall circulate it to Members with the Agenda for the Annual General Meeting. Such amendment(s) shall be effective when approved by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the meeting.

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**10. MISCELLANEOUS MOVE TO GOVERNANCE**

- a) No member shall, except for professional services rendered at the request of the Executive Committee, receive any profit, salary or emoluments from the funds or transactions of Labour Women's Network,
- b) Every member of the Executive Committee shall from time to time communicate to the Secretary her postal and email addresses, and all notices posted to such address or emailed shall be considered as having been duly given on the day following the date of posting.

**11. DISSOLUTION**

- a) Labour Women's Network may be dissolved by a resolution passed by the Executive Committee by a two thirds majority of those voting in person, or by proxy. Notice of a proposal to dissolve Labour Women's Network must be circulated to all members of the organisation 14 days before the date of the meeting.
- b) Upon dissolution the Executive Committee shall realise all the assets of Labour Women's Network and after the discharge of all its liabilities shall donate the residue to a suitable organisation with the aim of promoting Labour women, or to the Labour Party, as directed by the dissolving resolution.

Agreed by a unanimous vote at Labour Women's Network AGM held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 via Zoom