

PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

CONSTITUTION OF THE CITY OF NOTTINGHAM LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

1. Name and Area

- 1.1 The name of the body governed by this Constitution shall be the “City of Nottingham Liberal Democrats”.
- 1.2 The area of the Local Party shall be the Nottingham North, Nottingham South and Nottingham East constituencies.

2. Definitions

In this Constitution:

“the Local Party” means the City of Nottingham Liberal Democrats;

“the Party Constitution” means the Constitutions of the Federal Party, the Liberal Democrats in England and the East Midlands Regional Party;

“the Party” means the Liberal Democrats;

“the Regional Party” means the East Midlands Region Liberal Democrats;

“the Constituencies” means the Parliamentary Constituencies of Nottingham North, Nottingham South and Nottingham East;

“Party’s Youth and Student Organisation” means the Affiliated Organisation representing youth and students;

“Majority” at any meeting means majority of those present and voting;

“Executive Committee” means the Executive Committee of the Local Party;

“In writing” includes communication by email;

“Signed” includes communication by email from an email address registered with the Party to that member and stating that it was sent by that member;

“Large Single Seat” means that of a Police (Fire) and Crime Commissioner or Combined Authority/Metropolitan Mayor

“ALDC” means The Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors.

3. Objects

- 3.1 The objects of the Local Party shall be:
- a) To be the successor within its area to the Nottingham North, Nottingham South and Nottingham East Liberal Association, the South Nottinghamshire SDP Area Party and former Liberal Democrat Local Parties within the Local Party area; and
 - b) To promote and support the values and objects of the Party in its area and in particular through its members and registered supporters:
 - i) to secure the election of Liberal Democrats as Members of Parliament, members of regional, local and other elected public authorities and appointments to other public or community offices;

- ii) to admit and actively recruit new members and registered supporters to the party, encourage existing members to renew their membership and registered supporters to join the party or renew their registration;
- iii) to participate in the formulation of the policy of the Party;
- iv) to be recognised and approved by the Regional Party as a Local Party; to play a full role in the democratic processes of the Party; and to send representatives, in accordance with the constitutions of the bodies concerned, to Party bodies;
- v) to play a full part in the campaigning activities of the party at all levels;
- vi) to campaign and work with local people to achieve the objectives set out in the Preamble to the Party Constitution; and
- vii) to help all local people, without regard to party or any other factor, to secure their rights and to protect them against oppression; and
- viii) to promote diversity within the party and to represent the interests of under-represented groups in the locality.

4. Membership and Registered Support

- 4.1 The Local Party shall administer membership and registered support in accordance with the membership rules of the Liberal Democrats in England.
- 4.2 All persons shall be eligible to join the Local Party if they agree with the fundamental values and objectives of the party; and
- a) They live, work or study within the area of the Local Party; or
 - b) If not eligible under Section 4.2 (a) they acquire membership with the consent of the Regional and Local Party Executive Committees; or
 - c) They are an MP or prospective candidate for a parliamentary, regional, subregional or local election; or a member of a local authority for a seat wholly or partly within the area of the Local Party.
- 4.3 Eligible persons shall, subject to clauses 4.4 and 4.5 of this constitution, become members of the Local Party:
- a) on enrolment through the Local Party; or
 - b) on enrolment through the party's online enrolment system; or
 - c) on enrolment through the party's Youth and Student Organisation or any other enrolling AO, giving an address within the Local Party area; or
 - d) if already a member of the party, on re-registration as a member of the Local Party.
- 4.4 An applicant shall become a member on acceptance by the enrolling body, payment of the requisite subscription and registration on the register kept by the Party in England.

- 4.5 An application shall be deemed accepted if not refused in accordance with the membership rules.
- 4.6 The Executive Committee may refuse membership to any person, on the grounds provided by the Party Constitution, using the procedure defined in the membership rules of the Party in England.
- 4.7 A membership application from a former member, previously expelled by the Party, must be approved by the Regional Party and the Party in England in addition to the Local Party.
- 4.8 Membership of the local party shall be interpreted according to the provisions of the Constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England and its Membership Rules, as recorded in the register kept by the Party in England. Membership will automatically lapse when the renewal subscription is three months in arrears.
- 4.9 A member whose subscription is in arrears shall receive notices of meetings and elections for three months from the date at which their subscription became due.
- 4.10 A member who does not renew their subscription before the end of the three-month period must reapply for membership.
- 4.11 A member of the Local Party who ceases to be eligible under Section 4.2 (a) may retain membership of the Local Party with the consent of the Executive Committee.

5. Officers and Executive Committee

- 5.1 The Officers of the Local Party shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Membership Secretary and Treasurer. Their duties shall include:
- a) The Chair - to chair all General and Executive Committee Meetings; in the event of a tied vote the Chair shall have an additional casting vote; to be jointly responsible with the Treasurer for the Local Party's compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000;
 - b) The Vice-Chair - to chair General and Executive Committee Meetings if the Chair is unable to do so;
 - c) The Secretary - to handle the Local Party's correspondence; to maintain minutes of meetings;
 - d) The Treasurer - to handle the Local Party's financial business and present financial reports to General Meetings; to be jointly responsible with the Chair for the Local Party's compliance with the

Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000;

- e) The Data Officer - to:
 - i) receive all notices of application for membership and refer them to the Executive Committee for acceptance
 - ii) maintain a membership register and provide Local Party Officers with lists of members as necessary under this Constitution; and
 - iii) ensure compliance with data protection legislation.
- 5.2 The Secretary shall not later than 2nd January and within seven days after any subsequent change notify the names and addresses of all Officers to the Regional Party and to the Chief Executive of the Federal Party
- 5.3 There may be an Honorary President to be elected by the Annual General Meeting.
- 5.4 The general and financial business of the Local Party shall be controlled and carried on by the Executive Committee, subject to the decisions of General Meetings and in compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. The Executive Committee shall consist of:
- a) The Officers;
 - b) The Party's Members of Parliament for the Constituencies, and the prospective Parliamentary Candidates;
 - c) 1 representatives of the Party's members from the Nottingham City Council representing wards within the Local Party, elected by and from such members;
 - d) 2 representatives elected by and from each local Branch of the Party's Youth and Student Organisation;
 - e) ten ordinary members elected at the AGM.
 - f) An appointed diversity champion
 - g) up to 4 other elected posts as defined by the Executive Committee, provided they are notified to members with the AGM notification
- 5.5 The Executive Committee may co-opt up to 2 additional members, for a term expiring not later than the next following AGM. The power of co-option shall be used, inter alia, to ensure if possible that no more than two-thirds of the Executive Committee (other than under Sections 5.3 (d) - (h)), are of the same sex, that each parliamentary constituency has at least one member on the executive, and that there is fair representation of under represented communities in the locality, taking into account race, religion, age, disability, gender or sexual orientation and that this would create a composition of the Executive that reflects the community the local Party serves from each local branch of the party's Youth and Student Organisation;
- 5.6 The Honorary President is entitled to attend all meetings of the Executive Committee. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be open to members

of the Local Party as space permits.

- 5.7 The Executive Committee may fill any vacancy occurring among the officers or the ordinary members. Any vacancy in the Chair shall be filled from amongst the existing Executive Committee members.
- 5.8 The Executive Committee may assign special responsibilities to any of its members, including duties which would otherwise pertain to one of the officers. The executive shall designate an officer to deputise for the Chair if the Chair and Vice Chair are both unavailable.
- 5.9 The Officers shall convene a meeting of the Executive Committee within one month after taking office. The Executive Committee shall meet at least quarterly. The Secretary shall give at least 7 days' notice of meetings to all members of the Executive Committee. One-third of its members shall form a quorum. A meeting may continue without a quorum if no member present objects. Any decisions taken at such a meeting or by email between meetings must be ratified at the next quorate meeting of the executive.
- 5.10 The Executive Committee may appoint sub-committees for any specified purpose. No subcommittee or Executive Committee member may take action on behalf of the Executive Committee beyond their terms of appointment. All sub-committees shall report on their activities to the Executive Committee and may include persons who are not members of the Executive Committee and may delegate authority to take actions on their behalf. The Executive Committee may also delegate authority to committees jointly constituted with other Local Parties for particular purposes.
- 5.11 In urgent circumstances the Officers may act on behalf of the Executive Committee. They shall report on such actions to the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

6. Election of Officers and Executive Committee

- 6.1 The officers and ordinary members shall be elected by and from members of the Local Party at the time of the Annual General Meeting (AGM), provided that, with the prior agreement of the Regional Party, a member of the party who is not a member of the Local Party may be elected to the office of Treasurer. If an election is contested, there shall be a ballot.
- 6.2 The term of office of officers and ordinary members shall be from the 1st January following their election until the following 31st December. They shall be eligible for re-election, save that the Chair shall not serve for more than three consecutive one-year terms and shall not be eligible for re-election as Chair for two terms after leaving office.

- 6.3 Nominations for election shall be invited in the notice summoning the AGM, and shall close at the AGM, but not before the reception of the Chair's and Treasurer's reports. They must be proposed and seconded, and except in the case of nominations made at the AGM, shall be in writing signed by the proposer, seconder and candidate.
- 6.4 No person may be elected to hold more than one office or may be elected to be both an officer and an ordinary member. Elections for officers shall be counted in the order listed in Section 5.1 and for ordinary members after officers. Any votes cast for candidates already elected to office shall be transferred according to the voters' subsequent preferences.
- 6.5 All contested elections under this constitution shall be by secret ballot by the Single Transferable Vote method in accordance with election rules made under the party constitutions.
- 6.6 The Executive Committee shall appoint some disinterested person to act as Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall be entirely responsible for running the elections, including the receipt of nominations and for the preparation and distribution of ballots, their receipt and counting on return, and the declaration of the results.
- 6.7 Accidental failure to dispatch notice of the AGM or a ballot in due time or at all to a person entitled to vote shall not invalidate an election or be treated as an irregularity, unless a substantial number of persons entitled to vote have not received notices or ballots at all or have received them too late to make it practicable to attend the meeting or return the ballot in due time.
- 6.8 An unsuccessful candidate who alleges that there has been or may have been an irregularity in the election may within one calendar month after the declaration of the result ask for an investigation by the Regional Party in accordance with the party constitutions. Subject to any order made after such an investigation, no irregularity shall invalidate an election.
- 6.9 The Returning Officer may extend the time for distribution and return of ballots where there are special circumstances making it necessary to do so.

7. General Meetings

- 7.1 The AGM shall be on a day appointed by the Executive Committee, between 1st October and 30th November. The Executive Committee may postpone the AGM if it would conflict with a Parliamentary election in the constituency/local authority area, or for other urgent reason.
- 7.2 The business of the AGM shall include:

- a) to receive a report from the Chair on the activities of the Local Party and the Executive Committee since the previous AGM, including progress with the development plan;
- b) to note the accounts of the Local Party for the previous financial year together with an independent report on those accounts, and to receive a report from the Treasurer including a statement of the current financial position and an outline budget for the following year;
- c) to appoint for the current financial year (i) auditors if required by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 or (ii) a person(s) to produce an independent report on the accounts for a General Meeting;
- d) to receive reports from each Liberal Democrat council group on which Local Party members serve;
- e) to transact any other business specified by the constitutions or directed by the Executive Committee;
- f) to consider any motion which has been submitted by any member of the Local Party to the Secretary, in time for circulation with the notice of the AGM;
- g) to receive nominations for the election of officers, ordinary members of the Executive Committee and any elected sub-committees or joint committees;

- 7.3** The Secretary shall give all members at least 21 days written notice of the time and place of the AGM (or access links and codes for an online AGM or online access to an AGM). Such notice shall specify all business to be conducted at the meeting.
- 7.4** The AGM may (on notification to the Secretary prior to the start of the meeting) by a two-thirds majority agree to consider urgent or important business which has arisen since notice of the AGM was given.
- 7.5** An Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened by the officers, or by the Executive Committee; and shall, on receipt of a requisition signed by at least twenty members of the Local Party (or one-fifth of the membership if less), be convened by the Secretary so as to be held within 28 days from the receipt of such requisition. At least 14 days written notice shall be given to all members. The meeting shall only consider business stated in the notice convening it. Failure to convene a validly requisitioned meeting within 14 days shall permit the meeting to be convened on behalf of (and at the expense of) the Local Party by any of the original requisitioners. In an emergency, the officers may convene a meeting giving such notice as they consider sufficient in the circumstances.
- 7.6** Twenty members (or one-fifth of the membership if fewer), shall form a quorum at any general meeting. A quorum is not required to receive reports

and accounts. A meeting may continue without a quorum if no member present objects except as provided for in Sections 5.8 and 11.1

- 7.7 Notice and minutes of all Annual and Special General Meetings shall be sent to the Secretary of the Regional Party.
- 7.8 Minutes shall be maintained of all proceedings of all general meetings. A hard copy must be made of any electronic Minutes files and retained in a Minutes book/file. The Minutes book must be retained and handed on to successor Officers by the start of each term of office. Minutes shall also be kept of any meetings of the Executive Committee. In the absence of an Executive Committee member charged with the duty, the Meeting shall appoint a member to take minutes. Hard copies shall be made and retained as for general meetings.
- 7.9 Details of any proposed amendment to this constitution shall be sent to all members with the notice of the General Meeting.

8. Candidates for and Elections to Public Office

- 8.1 When it is necessary to select a Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, the procedure shall be as provided by the Party Constitution. The Executive Committee may appoint a sub-committee to carry out its duties under this procedure. The electoral college shall comprise all Local Party members, that is to say members of all three constituencies will be eligible to vote on the PPC of each of the three constituencies.
- 8.2 The Local Party Executive Committee shall seek to ensure that, so far as practicable, all seats within the constituencies and seats in local authority wards and divisions wholly or partly within the local party area are contested by Liberal Democrat candidates, unless the Executive Committee, Regional Party and, in the case of Large Single Seats or Westminster elections, the Liberal Democrats in England, are satisfied that it is in the best interests of the party in any specific case not to do so. If the Local Party wishes not to stand a candidate, the Executive must have the agreement of the Regional and English Parties in the case of Westminster and Large Single Seat elections or the Regional Party in the case of local authority elections.
- 8.3 When it is necessary to select one or more local government candidates for an electoral area, the Local Party shall hold a general meeting at which all members who are resident in the electoral area concerned may vote. The timetable shall be agreed by the Executive Committee.
- 8.4 When it is necessary to select one or more local government candidates for an electoral area, the Local Party shall hold a General Meeting at which all

members of the Local Party may vote, and may select any member from a list of approved candidates maintained by the Executive Committee, or may select any other member conditionally upon subsequent approval by the Executive Committee. The timetable and procedure for selection shall be agreed by the Executive Committee. The selection procedure and timetable will be in a manner which follows the rules of the state party and guidance of the federal party

- 8.5** As a condition of approval, prospective candidates shall be required to agree to make a financial contribution towards Liberal Democrat Party activities in the event of their election to the relevant authority. The level of contribution shall be set at a minimum of 10% of the individual's gross allowances from the relevant local authority. There shall be a mechanism by which cases of hardship/financial distress are identified, and only through this mechanism may a contribution be lowered or exempted. Town and parish council candidates are exempt from this condition.
- 8.6** In any case in which time does not permit the holding of a general meeting the Executive Committee may appoint the candidate.
- 8.7** Where an elected authority covers more than one Local Party area or crosses Local Party boundaries, the Executive Committees of the Local Parties concerned must agree to form appropriate joint arrangements to co-ordinate candidate approval and selection, campaigning, fund-raising and publicity and be responsible for the formulation of policy on that authority. Such arrangements must be minuted by each of the Local Parties involved and shall remain in force, notwithstanding any subsequent change of officers or Executive Committee.
- 8.8** The Local Party will submit to the Federal Party's Nominating Officer the name of three suitable persons to act as a Delegated Nominating Officer (DNO). The DNO shall act in accordance with the Rules made by the Party for DNOs.
- 8.9** If a member of the Local Party stands at any public election as a candidate or agent, in opposition to a properly nominated candidate of the party, an officer of the Local Party shall immediately inform the Standards Officer at Liberal Democrat HQ as their membership may be revoked under the English and Federal Constitutions.
- 8.10** Any candidate for election to public office standing as a representative of the party must be a current member of the party from the point of nomination throughout the campaign.
- 8.11** If at any time the Local Party considers entering into an electoral pact, the Executive Committee must obtain the prior agreement of the Regional Party

before any negotiations take place; the final outcome must meet objectives agreed under protocols established by the Party in England and be approved by the Regional Party.

- 8.12** A Local Party wishing to de-select a candidate for a Westminster or Large Single Seat must contact the Chair of the regional candidates committee and proceed according to their protocols.
- 8.13** A Local Party wishing to de-select a candidate for a local election must contact ALDC and follow their advice.

9. Finance

- 9.1** The Local Party's accounting period shall be annual, starting on 1st January and ending on 31st December each year.
- 9.2** The Treasurer shall keep, maintain for six years and pass to their successor accounting records which shall be available for inspection in accordance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA).
- 9.3** The Treasurer shall ensure that no donation greater than that permitted by PERA is accepted except from a permissible donor and shall keep records and submit donations reports to the Executive Committee and to the Chief Executive of the Federal Party.
- 9.4** The Treasurer shall annually produce accounts for Local Party finances which shall be approved by the Executive Committee and if required by the Political Parties, Elections & Referendums Act 2000 shall be audited.
- 9.5** The Treasurer shall submit the accounts of the Local Party together with an independent report to a meeting of the Local Party executive for approval. When signed, the Treasurer and the Local Party Chair shall submit them to the Federal Party for reporting under PERA rules in the manner designated by the Federal Party no later than 31st March following the end of the financial year. A copy of the accounts shall also be sent to the Regional Party.
- 9.6** (a) The Local Party shall maintain one or more bank or other appropriate accounts in the name of the Local Party for which the mandate for withdrawal shall require the signature of at least two officers who shall not come solely from members of any one family. The Local Party may maintain further accounts for the deposit of money not required for the time being, requiring the same signatures
- 9.7** (b) The Local Party may take advantage of electronic banking facilities if they are provided by its bankers as long as appropriate safeguards are put in place by the Executive Committee to agree expenditure and cash

movements both at Executive meetings and by a minimum of two officers in between meetings in advance of such expenditure or movements taking place. Where such action is taken between meetings it will be reported back to the next Executive meeting.

- 9.8 If the Local Party fails by 15th January to notify the Chief Executive of the Federal Party of the appointment of a Chair and a Treasurer, the Local Party shall automatically be suspended.

10. Constitution and Interpretation

- 10.1 Amendments may only be made by a two-thirds majority at a quorate general meeting. No amendment shall be made which conflicts with the constitutions of the Party or of the Regional Party. Any amendment to this constitution shall not come into force until approved by the Regional Party.
- 10.2 Details of any proposed amendment to this constitution shall be sent to all members with the notice of the general meeting.
- 10.3 If the Model Constitution for Local Parties (England) is amended, any provision of this constitution shall be deemed to be correspondingly amended, unless the Local Party resolves in accordance with 11.1 above at a quorate general meeting held within 6 months of receiving notice of the amendment not to accept it.
- 10.4 One copy of the constitution shall be deposited with the Secretary / Administrator of the Regional Party; and one shall be kept with the minute book of the Local Party. Any member shall be provided with a copy of the constitution on request.
- 10.5 In the event of any question of interpretation arising, or any question on which this constitution is silent, the Executive Committee shall have power to act according to its interpretation of the constitution, subject to decisions of the English Council, Articles 3 and 9 of the constitution of the Liberal Democrats in England and Article 4 of the Constitution of the Federal Party.
- 10.6 No word or construction in this Constitution shall be taken to imply any discrimination whatsoever with regard to a protected characteristic as in the Equality Act (2010), or any other ground other than political belief or practice.
- 10.7 In the event of the dissolution or suspension of the Local Party, the assets of the Local Party shall vest in the Regional Party on trust for the future reconstitution of the Local Party, unless explicitly provided otherwise by a general meeting in the event of dissolution pursuant upon boundary changes and subject to the agreement of the Regional Party.

- 10.8** A Local Party, by agreement at a general meeting, may dissolve itself in order to facilitate the creation of one or more new Local Parties, subject to the approval of its Regional Party and prior notification to the Compliance function at party headquarters; HQ must be notified no later than 30th November in the year preceding the proposed change, in order that appropriate adjustments made be made to data and other systems held by the party.

Change history

Details of change	Regional Approval:	Local Party Approved:	In effect as of:
Originally based on: Model Constitution for Local Parties 2022 v0.1 (Liberal Democrats in England),			
Modifications to model based on local circumstances	[awaiting]	[awaiting]	