

Online meetings guidance

Local government selections

CLP/Branch AGMs

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Version 3 – Internal sign off

Introduction

The NEC recently agreed that CLP and Labour Party branch AGMs along with candidate selection meetings should take place online while physical meetings remain impossible due to government public health advice. The Labour Party's priority at this time is the health of our staff, members, and the wider public. We strongly encourage everyone to follow government advice at all times, which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

This guidance document outlines how to use Microsoft Teams and the Party's certified online voting tools (Choice Voting and anyvoter.com) to allow your CLP to run local government selections as well as conduct AGMs for CLPs, Labour Party Branches, Young Labour Branches and Equalities Branches. It should also be used to elect to any vacancies that arise on the EC or future delegate elections. This document is not intended to be a comprehensive technical and constitutional manual. It should therefore be read alongside the NEC Procedures for the selection of local government candidates (Appendix 4 of the 2020 Labour Party Rule Book), your CLP's standing orders, CLP AGM Guide as well as the Labour Party's 'Microsoft 365 and Teams Guidance for CLPs' (which you can find using the link below). You may also find Choice Voting's own Support Centre a useful resource - <https://www.choicevoting.co.uk/knowledgebase/> or the helpful FAQ page provided by [Anonyvoter](#).

Below you will find guidelines on running an online meeting and ballot in line with Labour Party procedures, in particular how to set up a ballot on Choice Voting or Anonyvoter. You will also find tips for making your meeting run smoothly, as well as a model calling notice.

To avoid duplication we have used as examples running a selection meeting using Choice Voting, and running an AGM using anyvoter.com but you are welcome to use either platform for whatever votes you are running. Labour Groups are also welcome to use either platform to facilitate their online meetings.

All of our guidance is available on the Party's online meetings webpage which is regularly updated with the latest information: - <https://labour.org.uk/online-meeting-guidance/>

If you have any questions or require support, please contact your regional office or helpdesk@labourclp.org.uk in the first instance. Both Choice Voting and anyvoter.com do have their own customer service operations, but they are both independent companies and so will not be able to assist you with Labour Party meetings.

Keeping it constitutional

Convening a meeting online may feel less formal than a traditional physical Labour Party meeting but it is important that meetings are conducted in line with standing orders and the relevant selection procedures as far as possible. This ensures that all members and candidates are treated fairly, that procedures are transparent and robust, and that the scope for challenge to any result is minimised.

Local government selections - The local government selection procedures are available as Appendix 4 of the 2020 Labour Party Rule Book. It is important that CLP officers familiarise themselves with this document prior to scheduling any shortlisting or selection meetings. Timetables for local government selections must be signed off by your regional office in advance. In the next section of this document, we explain how to ensure only eligible members participate and how to set up your ballot. You should find that these are the two major adjustments that will need to be made and that most of the other provisions outlined in the selection procedures are easily transferable to the context of an online meeting.

CLP/Branch AGMs – CLPs and local Labour Party branches are now able to begin conducting AGMs. The 'CLP AGM Guide – Online' that can be found on the Labour Party Website should be used to ensure that procedure is followed as closely as possible.

Setting up your ballot using Choice Voting or Anonyvoter

Whilst you are able to use any virtual meeting software, the NEC has authorised [Choice Voting](#) and [Anonyvoter](#) for conducting ballots. You MUST only use either of these two services as they have been assessed to ensure they meet the Labour Party's rigorous standards for data security and the security and secrecy of online ballots. Any CLP using a different product may have the result of the meeting annulled.

You should set up your ballot well in advance of the meeting so that you have time to address any problems. For a local government selection meeting, you will already know who the shortlisted candidates are. For CLP and branch AGMs, you should ensure that all nominations are received for each position in advance of the meeting, giving you time to set up each ballot.

Choice Voting

The step by step guide is for setting up your ballot for a selection meeting the product Choice Voting, who are a private company that provides an online ballot service. This guide assumes you are setting up a local government selection ballot where you are selecting two candidates, one of whom is required to be a woman.

Where positive action procedures are in place for local government selection meetings the ballot must take place in two stages, with two ballots;

- The first ballot will be a position reserved for a woman
- The second ballot will be open to both men and women

Should the same woman win both ballots, you will be able to exclude her from the second ballot and recalculate the results based on redistributing her preferences.

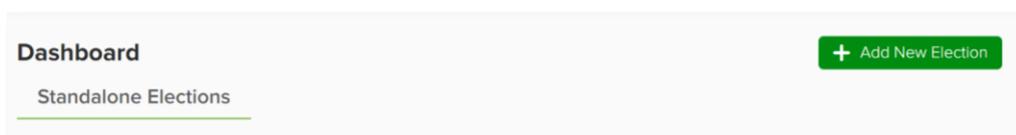
If only one woman has been shortlisted you will not need to ballot for the reserved place. She will be deemed selected unopposed. In such cases you will only need to run one ballot for the second position which will be open to both men and women.

Similarly, if only one woman and one man have been shortlisted, there will be no need for any ballot. They will be deemed selected unopposed.

The example set out below assumes both positions are being contested, with six candidates (three men and three women) having been previously shortlisted.

Step 1 – Setting up your election

From choicevoting.co.uk/dashboard click on “+Add New Election”.



Give your election a name and add a description. It will be helpful to explain the positive action procedures and/or the voting procedure to be followed.

Election **Voter** Dates Messages Result Connect to Remote Login Voter registration Archivation Delete

Voter Settings

Enable Email? ? Enabled
 Enabling this option will allow you to add an email addresses for your each of your voters.

Enable Position Vote Receipt? ? Enabled
 Enabling this option will allow voters to receive an email "receipt" that confirms their vote on a position has been received. Useful for election auditing and vote confirmation.

Enable Edit Option? ? Disabled
 Enabling this option will allow voters to login and change votes.

Display Vote Confirmation ? Enabled
 When this option is enabled, voters will receive an alert when they submit their ballot that allows them to continue or cancel and make additional changes. This can be used as a way to prevent accidental submissions or to require voters to double check their ballot. You may change the message displayed on these messages.

Result

Display results publicly at the end of an election?	Disabled
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Results Settings

Display results publicly at the end of an election? Disabled

Election results are hidden from voters by default, if you wish the results to be made public automatically at the end of an election then set this option to Enabled. If you choose to hide results, you may change this setting at any time to make them public. Results will be displayed on your election login page.

Step 2 – Setting up positions

You will need to set up two ‘positions’ to be elected. One position will be the selection of a woman, the other position will be the selection of a man or a woman.

From the menu on the right click on ‘Positions’ and then fill in the information as per the screenshots below.

Note that the maximum number of votes should be the total number of candidates nominated for that position and the minimum should always be ‘1’. This means that voters will always be able to vote for as few or as many candidates as they wish.

Choice Voting

Metro Mayor nomination Fraser Welsh

Edit Position All Positions

Name

Result / Count Method

Number of seats to Fill (How many will be elected in this position?)

Description

Maximum Character: 5,000

Maximum Character: 5,000

Optional settings

You may restrict number of candidates a voter may select in your election, enter the minimum and maximum candidates that may be selected here, if you have no restrictions then leave blank.

Minimum number of candidates that may be selected for this position

Maximum number of candidates that may be selected for this position

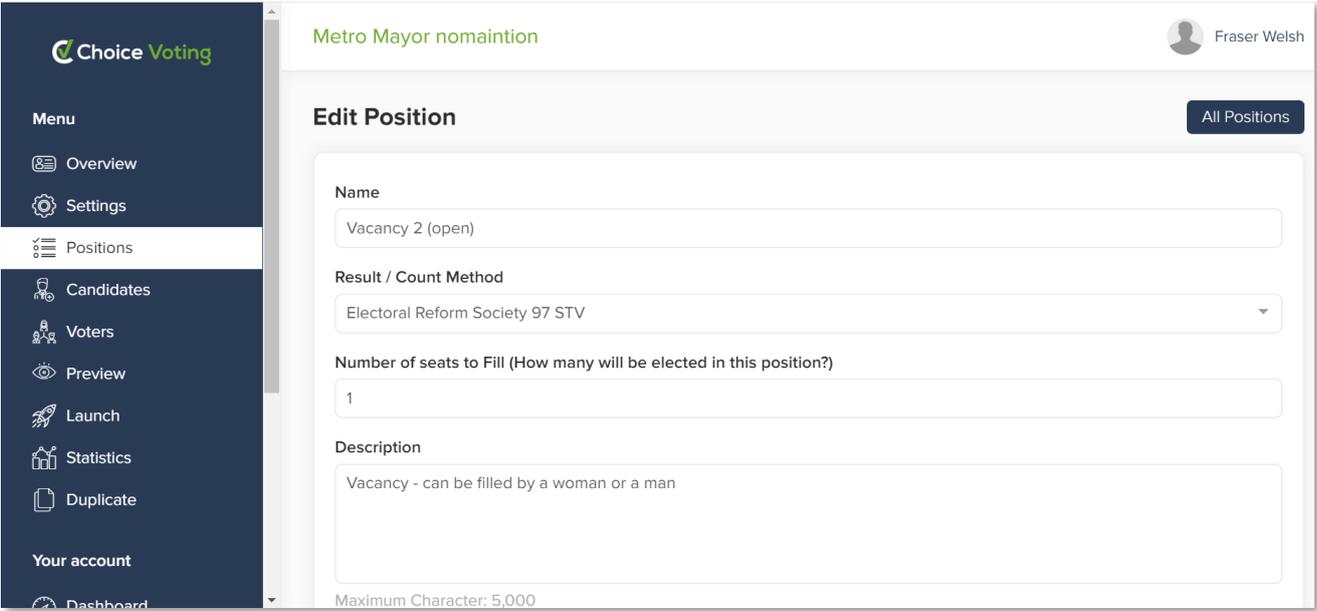
You may display an optional message informing a voter about the selection restrictions for this position ?

Maximum Character: 5,000

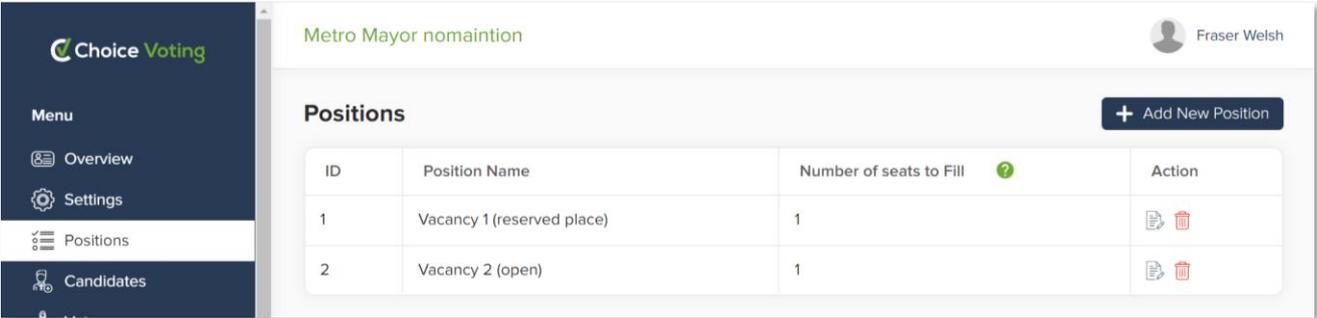
✓ Save Changes

Once you have saved the first position, click on 'All Positions' and then repeat the process to set up your open position.

It is important to set the Result/Count Method to the one that your CLP normally uses. If you use STV to elect multiple positions then you should select the 'Electoral Reform Society 97 STV' from the drop down list. If you normally use a multiple non-transferable voting system (FPTP) then you should select the 'Approval Method'.



With both positions set up, you should have a screen similar to the screenshot below:



You will need to add each woman candidate twice, as they will be eligible to take part in both the reserved and open ballots.

Once you have added all of your candidates, you should have a screen similar to the screenshot below:

Candidates Filter By Position All + Add Candidate

Candidate Picture	Candidate Name	Candidate Position	Action
	Rachel Red	Vacancy (open place)	
	Gregor Green	Vacancy (open place)	
	Oskar Orange	Vacancy (open place)	
	Brian Blue	Vacancy (open place)	
	Yasmine Yellow	Vacancy (open place)	
	Billie Brown	Vacancy (open place)	
	Yasmine Yellow	Vacancy (reserved place)	
	Rachel Red	Vacancy (reserved place)	
	Billie Brown	Vacancy (reserved place)	

Anonyvoter.com

As with Choice Voting, anonyvoter.com are a private company who are an online ballot provider. They have agreed to allow for all Labour Party members to use the service for free provided they add in a unique code. To receive this code please contact your local Regional Office who will be able to assist you further. This section sets out the steps you will need to follow to run an online AGM using anonyvoter.com.

Unique Labour Party code.

If you have not set up an account yet, please follow the below steps so that you can have full access to the Anonyvoter Subscription service.

1. Contact your regional office about receiving a unique code for anonyvoter.com.
2. Register for an account with anonyvoter.com
3. Once you have done this enter the unique code when you are prompted to do so.

Basic User	Anonyvoter Subscription
£0.00 / FREE	£5.99 / MONTH or £59 / YEAR
Trial Polls (up to 10 voters)	All Free Features, PLUS
Up to 10 polls a month	Up to 200 polls a year
All Voting Types Available	Up to 300 voters for any poll
Export Results to PDF	Full Support Available
Export each vote paper to PDF / CSV	Easy Cancellation
Free Version	£59 / Year £5.99 / Month

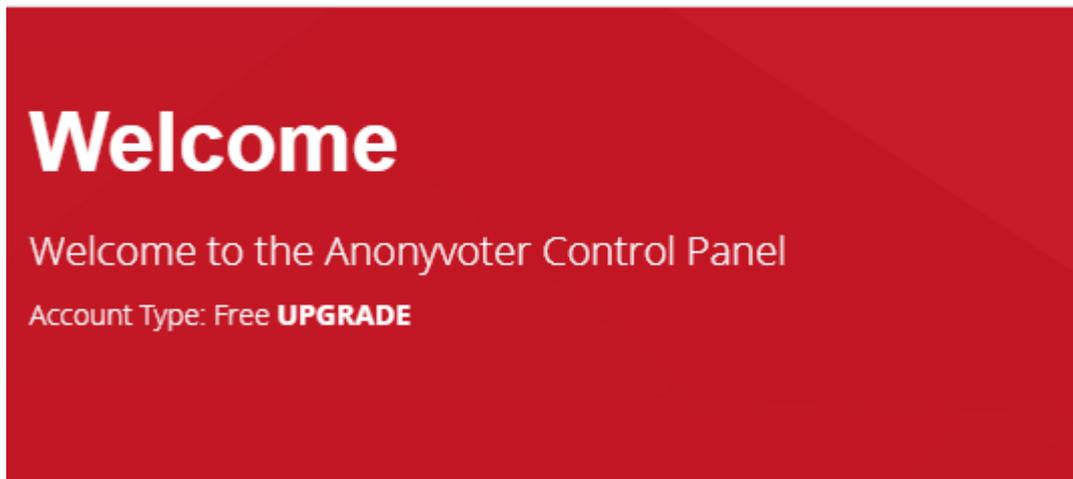
or if you have been given an Anonyvoter Code by your organisation, please enter it here

4. You will now have access to their subscription service.

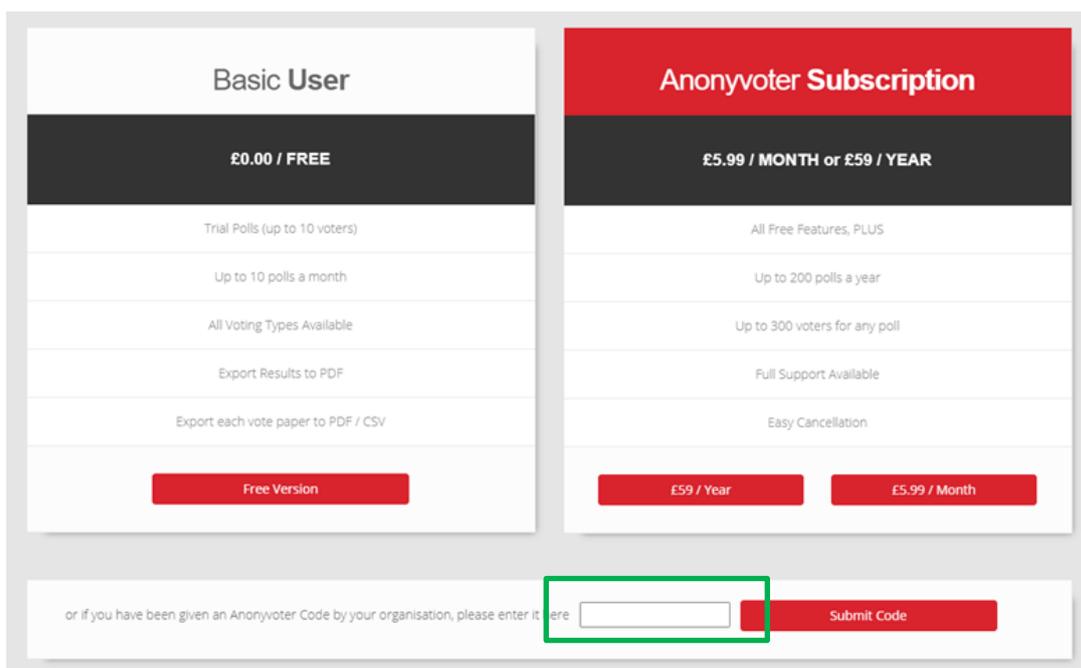
If you have already registered with Anonyvoter, please follow the below steps to ensure that you have free access to their Subscription service:

1. Login to anonyvoter.com.
2. On the main screen, click the link that is labelled 'UPGRADE'.

Anonyvoter



3. Enter the code when prompted to do so



5. You will now have access to their subscription service.

Setting up a Vote Event

An event is the meeting that you want to conduct ballots in. If this is the AGM it might mean there are a number of ballots to conduct, whereas a selection meeting might

only have one. Although amendments to your 'Vote Event' can be made at any time, it's best practice to make sure you set it up well in advance.

1. To set up an event click on 'Vote Events' and 'Add Vote Event'.

Vote Event

A **Vote Event** can be a single poll, a meeting, or an online linked series of polls over a period of time.

Event Description:

Event Description

Event Instructions (to be sent to voters):

Event Instructions for voters

Enter in the details of the event.

2. At this stage you do not know the email addresses of members who are in attendance. Please enter your own email address as you will be able to return to this later.

Distribution Group:

Enter E-mail Addresses Manually

Enter E-mail Addresses, separated by commas, semicolons or one per line:

test@test.com

Enter Name if you want to save these e-mail addresses as a Distribution Group

Distribution Group Name

3. Set the date and time for when you are planning to have your meeting. If the time of the meeting changes for whatever reason, this can be edited accordingly later.

Event Start (DD/MM/YYYY HH:MM):

19/10/2020 19:30

Event End (DD/MM/YYYY HH:MM):

19/10/2020 23:30

4. If you know who your observers for the ballot will be, please enter their email addresses in the distribution group. If you do not know who they will be at this stage, their email addresses can be entered in later

Optionally enter e-mail addresses of observers:

Observers may also be voters. They will receive a separate link to the poll and will be able to see the number of people who have voted and the final results when the poll is finished.

E-mail Address of Observers (optional)

Adding a new 'Poll' to your 'Vote Event'.

1. Add in the name and the description of the poll you wish to conduct.

Poll

Poll Title:

CLP Chair

Instructions for Voters (will appear on e-mail):

Test election for the position of Chair

2. Now select the type of poll this election will be conducted under. The method of election will either be specified in your standing orders or otherwise will be the method you would normally use.

Poll Type:

(Other Poll Types may be added later)

AV - Instant Run-Off Vote

Number of options / candidates that can be elected:

1

3. Input the names of the candidates if you know them. Remember, these can be amended or updated at any time before the poll is launched.

Options or Candidates (one per row)

Yasime Yellow
Barry Blue
Gary Grey

4. Select the box allowing for voters to abstain. It is normal for Labour Party ballots to allow this.

Can voters abstain?:

Tick if voters can abstain

5. If you are planning to run all of your ballots separately, then select 'it will be started manually during the session'. If all the 'Polls' in the 'Vote Event' are to be sent out together then select, 'Along with any other poll in this session'.

When should e-mail be sent out?:

It will be started manually during the session

Add Poll

Edit Vote Events or Polls

1. To edit your 'Vote Event', click on the 'View / Edit Details' button shown below.

Vote Event

TEST CLP AGM

Polls During Event

Add New Poll

Title	Type	Abstain?	Description	Sequence	Max Votes	Options	E-mail	Status	Voted
CLP Chair	AV - Instant Run-Off	Y	Test election for the position of Chair	1	1	Yasime Yellow, Barry Blue, Gary Grey		Not Yet Started	0/0

View / Edit Details

2. To edit your 'Poll', click on the title of the 'Poll'.

Title	Type	Abstain?	Description
CLP Chair	AV - Instant Run-Off	Y	Test election for the position of Chair

Then click on the 'View / Edit Details' button shown below.

Start Poll

Cancel Poll

View / Edit Poll

Poll Title:

Once you are ready to start your 'Poll', click 'Start Poll' and all the email addresses that have been entered for the event will be sent a link to vote in the election.

Re-send ballot to member who hasn't received it.

Whilst the Poll is ongoing you are able to view who has and hasn't voted. Simply click on the button labelled, 'Show who has and hasn't voted'.

0 voted out of 1

Voted or Abstained

No Response

test@test.com [Re-Send E-Mail](#) [Generate Code to Send](#)

If the person hasn't voted and has not received the email either, re-send the email to them by pressing 'Re-Send Email' or alternatively clicking 'Generate Code to Send'. will produce a unique code that can be entered on an Anonyvoter webpage to allow them to register their vote. Clicking the 'Generate code to send' button will give you the following information which can be sent in a direct message to the person who did not receive the original email:

Please use the following link:

Link: <https://anonyvoter.com/Vote>

Vote Number: **417**

Vote Code: **U4HP4D5X**

Uniform

Four

Hotel

Papa

Four

Delta

Five

X-Ray

Results of Poll

1. Once you have received all of the ballots, press 'Finish Poll'.

0 voted out of 1

Voted or Abstained

No Response

test@test.com [Re-Send E-Mail](#) [Generate Code to Send](#)

Finish Poll

Cancel Poll

View / Edit Poll

2. You now will be shown the results of the poll and who has been elected.

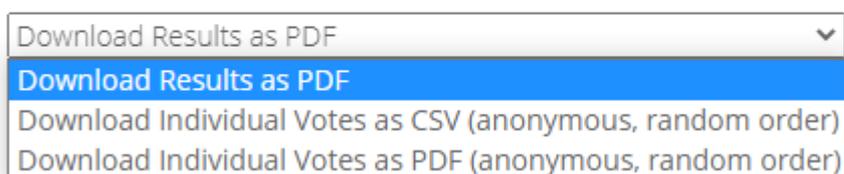
Poll Results

CLP Chair

Option	Round 1
Yasime Yellow	0 ** TIED **
Barry Blue	0 ** TIED **
Gary Grey	0 ** TIED **
Total	0

There are several ways of exporting the result of the election from Anonyvoter. Select the one which you think is appropriate for your CLP.

Export Results



Further information on using Anonyvoter, including full guidance on setting up a ballot can be found on their [FAQs](#) page.

If after consulting the FAQs you are still having trouble, please contact your local Regional Office for further guidance.

Making sure only eligible members can participate

For an important meeting such as a selection meeting or an AGM, we would usually expect the eligibility of members in attendance to be checked on the door, for example by checking names against a membership list and/or asking members to provide their membership cards. It is not possible to replicate this practice exactly at an online meeting, but you should nevertheless be making sure processes are in place to make sure only eligible members are able to attend and vote, so the result of the procedure cannot be challenged subsequently.

When drawing up a plan for checking eligibility you should think about the following factors:

- What is the size of your branch/CLP and what levels of attendance do you usually have?
- If it is a CLP meeting, do you operate on a delegate or all member model?
- What are the eligibility requirements for the process you are going to undertake?
- What platform are you using to conduct your online meeting, and what features does it have which may assist you (e.g. waiting room facilities)?

You should find the process outlined below represents a robust way of checking the eligibility of members which should suit most circumstances. However, variations may be agreed in advance by your regional office.

It is also highly recommended that you allow people to login to the meeting well in advance of the start time. Members who login early can either chat to each other or switch their camera and microphone off until the meeting is due to start.

However you are undertaking eligibility checks, you should identify at least one member who can take responsibility for this task, leaving the Chair or other appropriate officer free to undertake any other required tasks.

Step 1 - Before the meeting

Only eligible members should be invited to attend your meeting. For a local government selection this will be members who have at least six months membership at the freeze date. You should send the notification to eligible members through Organise in the same way you would if the meeting was taking place in person.

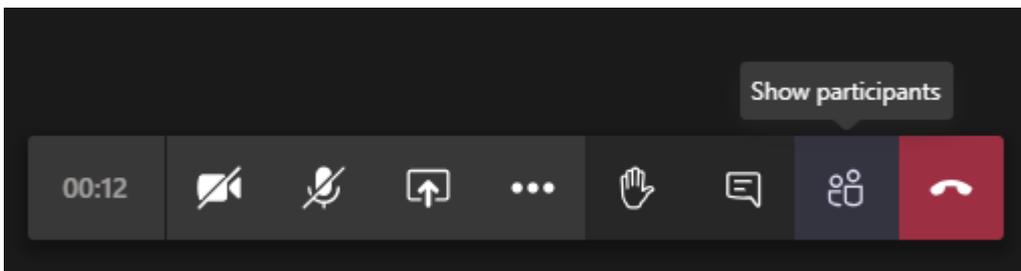
The email should contain a link to join the meeting.

Step 2 - At the start of the meetings

You will need to check each participant is an eligible member prior to admitting them to the meeting. To allow enough time to do this, you may wish to advertise that there will be a period of time (for example 30 minutes, depending on how many members in your branch/CLP) for registration prior to the start of formal business. You should also make clear to members that they should log on early if possible to avoid delays.

Members over the aged 18 or over should be asked to ensure their display names match their names as they appear on MemberCentre as much as possible in order to aid efficient membership checks. Young members should use a nick name or first name only, rather than their full name. At the meeting itself, such members can privately message the appropriate CLP officer to confirm their eligibility.

Once the meeting starts you should press the icon at the bottom of the screen titled "Show participants". (If you are using a different service than Microsoft Teams there should be an equivalent option.)



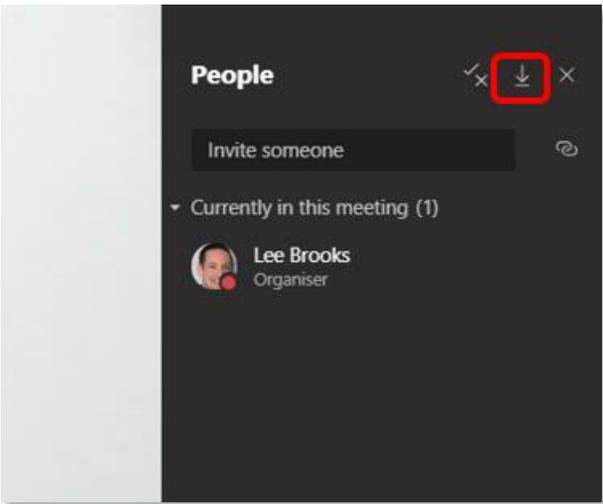
Now you will be able to allow people in to the meeting that are waiting in the lobby. This is where you should check the eligibility of members, and mark them off against a membership list, in exactly the same way as you would at a physical meeting:

	A	B	C	D
1	Membership number	Name	Email	Attended
2	A123456	Gregor Green	Gregor-Green@email.com	NO
3	A123457	Oscar Orange	Oscar-Orange@email.com	NO
4	A123458	Brian Blue	Brian-Blue@email.com	YES
5	A123459	Yasmine Yellow	Yasmine-Yellow@email.com	YES
6	A123460	Billie Brown	Billie-Brown@email.com	
7	A123461	Rebel Red	Rebel-Red@email.com	



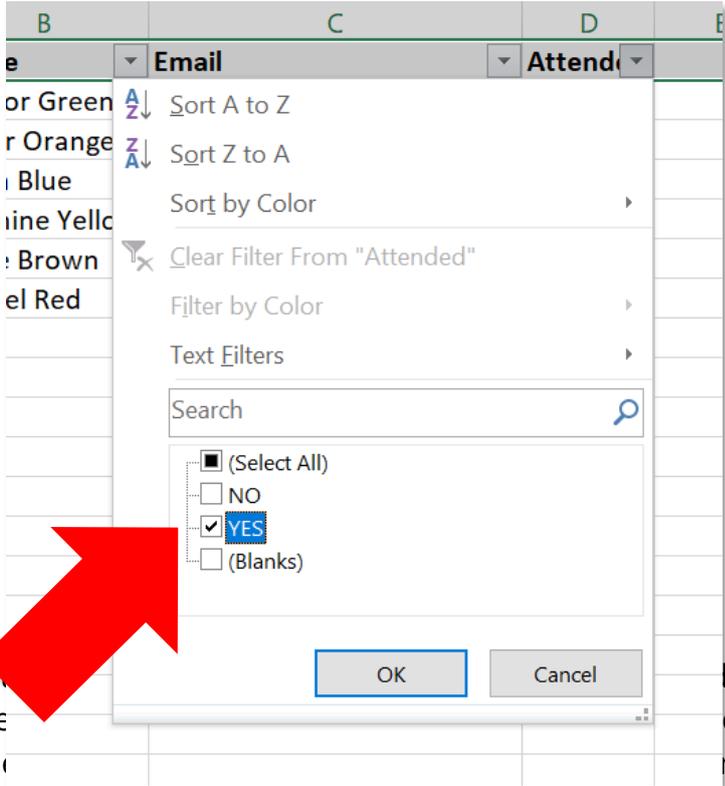
You should now only admit those who meet the eligibility criteria to the meeting.

Once the meeting has "closed the doors" – the point at which no one else will be able to join the meeting - you should download a list of attendees by that point. This will enable you to do a final check of attendees against the membership list.



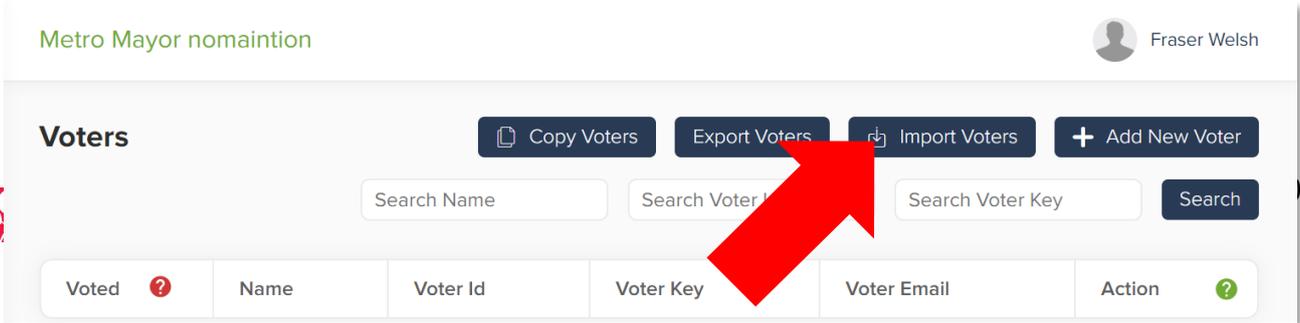
You should no longer accept anyone who is waiting in the lobby after this point.

Once the meeting is underway, you should use the membership list you have been recording attendees against to produce a list of eligible voters. You can do this by using Excel's filter function to select only those marked as 'YES' and copy them into a separate CSV file:



You
the
of

email addresses, and must be in
can then add upload your final list
ers' within your election:



Tips for having an online meeting

Here are some tips to make your online meetings successful:

- **BE SECURE.** Don't share the link to the meeting on social media – send the link to eligible members only, and make it clear in the notification that the link should not be passed on to anyone else.
- **BE PREPARED.** Where eligibility checks are required, make sure there is someone who is solely responsible for this, who has read this guidance and is familiar with the technology. You may also wish to have a designated contact for any members who have technical difficulties.
- **BE SAFE.** If your meeting allows participants to interact with each other, circulate the safeguarding email address in case participants need to flag any concerns or issues: safeguarding@labour.org.uk and make sure you've read the Party's guidance on safeguarding and meeting online: <https://labour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Guidelines-for-Safe-Activities-C-19-Outbreak.pdf>
- **BE ON TIME.** If you're hosting the meeting, log in a little earlier to make sure the technology is working and people can see and hear you.
- **BE CHATTY.** Have one person running the meeting and another person monitoring the chat box. Some people may not like to speak out loud but can use the chat to raise issues or questions. Try to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to speak and that a small number of people don't dominate the conversation.
- **BE CLEAR.** The person chairing the meeting should make it clear from the start exactly how long the meeting will last, what will be discussed and how any official business will be carried out.
- **BE CONSIDERATE.** Anyone who isn't speaking should try to mute their microphone. It's often sensible to set up meetings so that everyone is automatically muted on entry.
- **BE READY.** Get someone to put links and key points into the chat so that if audio quality dips at any point, people can catch up.
- **BE ATTENTIVE.** If your meeting is with more than a couple of people, we recommend using written signals in the chat box to let people know you want to speak. Ask people to use the hands up function, or ask people to put a * symbol or similar in the chat box so you know which order to take questions and contributions in.
- **BE FOCUSED.** Make sure your meeting doesn't go off topic – we know people have lots of video calls at the moment and won't want to stay on much longer than an hour.
- **BE ORGANISED.** Make sure someone (ideally the CLP Secretary) is taking notes so that there's a record of what's discussed.

- **BE ACCESSIBLE.** We're aware that not everyone has access to online video conferencing. Make sure you've set up a process for people to get in touch, that they can receive information another way, and are still able to receive information from your meetings to make sure your organising doesn't exclude anyone.
- **BE EVALUATIVE.** We know this is a different and new way of working for everyone. After your first couple of meetings, take some time to review what worked well and what didn't, to make future meetings even better.

Model calling notice for an online selections meeting

Please read this notice carefully to ensure you do not lose your opportunity to attend and vote at this important meeting.

Due to the ongoing restrictions in place to deal with COVID-19, CLPs are still unable to meet in person. However, the NEC has allowed selection meetings to take place online so that the Labour Party can prepare for next year's important elections.

I am writing to you as an eligible member, to notify you of the date of our selection meeting. I have attached the agenda for the meeting.

The selection meeting is to be held
on [Date]
registration will open from [Time] and will start at [Time].
You can join the meeting by [Joining details]

We will need to check the eligibility of all members prior to admitting them to the meeting, so please make sure you log on early. As previously advised, if you log on after the meeting has started you will not be allowed to take part, so please log on arrive early.

All members over the age of 18 need to use their full name when registering for the meeting. This is so we can check your eligibility in the same we would sign you in at the door at a physical meeting. In line with safeguarding advice, if you are under 18 you must use your first name or a nickname only.

As you may know, the ward short-listed the following nominees for interview at the selection meeting:

- 1 [Name]
- 2 [Name]
- 3 [Name]

Information about these short-listed nominees is included with this email.

The vote will be taken by eliminating ballot. [Where necessary: A vote will first be taken for places reserved for women candidates, followed by a vote open to all for the remaining places.]

Selecting your local Labour representatives is one of the most important responsibilities of members during the year. I therefore hope you are able to attend.

I look forward to seeing you there and to working in our campaign with you.

This notice has only been sent to eligible members – those with at least six months continuous membership – please do not share this notice or any links within it on social media, or forward it on to any other individual. If there is someone you think should have received this notice but has not, please let me know.

Yours sincerely
Branch Secretary