

## Procedural Guidelines for Westminster Parliamentary selections where there is a vacancy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### A. Towards the next General Election

Choosing a candidate for the Westminster Parliament is one of the most important tasks a CLP will undertake. It is important for the constituency in question, the Labour Party, and ultimately the country that CLPs pick the highest quality candidates possible. Westminster candidates must be passionate advocates for their communities; be capable of taking Labour's message to the electorate; and ultimately be competent to serve in the next Labour Government.

The NEC recognises the frustration party members feel following two General Elections at which candidates were imposed on local parties. In particular, the situation in the run up to the 2019 General Election – where local parties were prevented from selecting candidates, in some cases despite the vacancies being apparent for many months and only to have an NEC imposed shortlist or candidate at the last minute – was unacceptable. The procedures below have therefore been agreed by the NEC, in order to begin the process of selecting candidates ahead of the next General Election, whenever it may come.

Note that the procedures below apply only to England. Procedures for the selection of candidates in Scotland and Wales will be published in due course by the Scottish and Welsh Executive Committees respectively.

CLPs with questions on the implementation of these procedures should speak to their regional offices in the first instance. Contact details can be found here: [labour.org.uk/contact](https://labour.org.uk/contact)

### B. Equal Opportunities

The Labour Party is proud of the strides made over recent years to ensure the diversity of the Parliamentary Labour Party. The Party is committed to ensuring that our candidates are diverse and representative of the communities in which they will campaign and represent, and, in particular, is committed to using positive action procedures to the fullest extent permitted by the Equality Act 2010. Any candidate from any under-represented group may be the best candidate for any constituency.

To assist in monitoring of all aspects of our selection procedure there is a simple form which must be completed and returned to the Governance and Legal Unit at the completion of the process.

**The NEC will review the procedures after the first and subsequent tranches of selections to assess their success and propose any further amendments.**

In particular, should it become apparent that the Party's objectives in relation to ensuring diverse candidates are not being met, the NEC will not hesitate to amend these procedures accordingly.

In order to make selection as a Labour Party Parliamentary candidate as accessible as possible, the NEC has made the following changes to the selection procedures:

- Reduced the overall timetable from nine weeks to a maximum of six weeks; and
- Introduced a spending cap of £1.50 per member subject to a maximum spending cap of £3,500. Where a CLP has fewer than 666 members, candidates may spend up to £1,000.

The NEC also recognises the impact on the wellbeing, finances, personal lives and other commitments such as caring responsibilities of candidates, and, in particular, disabled candidates, when they have been selected many years ahead of previous General Elections. The NEC will take steps to balance this impact against the need to be prepared for a possible 2023 General Election, and in particular to allow time for CLPs to be fully involved in selecting candidates through democratic processes.

Those involved in the implementation of these procedures will comply with their duties to make reasonable adjustments for disabled members and candidates under the Equality Act 2010, including, where relevant, those required to ensure access to Party meetings and events which form part of this process.

These guidelines provide advice on procedures to follow, and pitfalls to avoid, in order to ensure that there is equality of opportunity in each constituency and that Labour's candidates are drawn from the widest possible pool of talent. They should be used in addition to the specific measures laid out in the detailed procedures which follow in this document.

- Make use of the Person Specification (Appendix 4) which represents the standard requirements for Parliamentary candidates.
- Make sure that Selections Panels – and particularly those undertaking interviews – take advantage of any training offered by the Party and comply with any mandatory training as instructed by the NEC.
- Make sure that the same criteria are applied to everyone who applies and that reasons for rejecting any candidate are clearly stated and evidenced.
- Make sure that the completion or enrolment on any of any of the Party's training programmes as well as programmes operated by TULO, trade unions, the Co-operative Party, and affiliated organisations is properly taken account of (e.g. Jo Cox Women in Leadership Programme, Bernie Grant Leadership Programme, the Future Candidates Programme).

- Questions must not be asked on financial means or support or relating to any of the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.
- At shortlisting interviews the standard set of questions must be used and asked of each candidate. Supplementary questions may vary according to the answers given.
- Avoid making assumptions based on physical characteristics, dress, body language or voice. If there are any concerns, questions should be asked rather than assumptions made.
- Any meetings should be as relaxed and friendly as possible, candidates should be put at their ease and allowed to stand or sit down as they wish when addressing a meeting.
- Members should be encouraged to not make a decision about a candidate before they have heard all she/he has to say. A quick decision may well be based on assumptions and the candidate's physical appearance.
- Ensure that in-person or remote interviews are accessible to any candidates. Candidates' access needs should be asked ahead of interviewing and arrangements made to meet them.

### **C. The Boundary Review**

Although the Party cannot be sure when the next General Election will come, at the moment it believes it is prudent to plan on the assumption of a May 2023 General Election. This means the Party will need to begin selecting candidates on the current boundaries. Should there not be a General Election by July 2023, then the General Election will take place on new boundaries. At that stage, the NEC would publish procedures to resolve claims on successor seats. Unlike the 2016 boundary review, there will be no overall reduction in seats, so in most cases, there will be clear successor seats.

### **D. Lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic**

The NEC is committed to learning lessons from the way the Party operated during the Covid-19 pandemic, and in particular, making remote participation a permanent feature of the way the Party organises going forward. In that spirit:

- The format of meetings in these procedures can be online, in person, or hybrid (on a pilot basis) with the permission of the NEC Representative. Throughout the period in which these procedures are in operation, the Governance and Legal Unit will consult with the NEC Disabled Members representative to ensure proper consideration is given to the accessibility of

meetings, and that any problems which arise are dealt with promptly and effectively;

- Where a hustings meeting is to take place online this must be clearly advertised to members with the notification of the processes, unless the decision to move online is an emergency step in response to changing public health guidance; and
- The Governance and Legal Unit will identify CLPs to pilot hybrid hustings meetings using appropriate online voting platforms.

The NEC will keep the situation under review and reserves the right to amend these procedures to make hybrid hustings meetings a permanent part of the process, or to encourage more CLPs to use hybrid hustings meetings.

## **2. THE SELECTION COMMITTEE AND FIRST STEPS**

### **A. NEC Supervision**

1. The NEC shall agree tranches of seats in which selections shall take place. The NEC shall receive regular updates on processes and outcomes and may consider recommendations to amend these procedures based on feedback.
2. There shall be an NEC Representative to supervise each selection, who will usually be a member of the relevant Regional Executive Committee appointed by the Regional Director. The NEC Representative will be a member of the CLP Selection Committee, without voting rights.
3. The NEC Representative will be responsible for approving each stage of the selection process, including the election of the selection committee, timetable, and shortlist, and including applications to be included on the lists of eligible members and applications for postal votes.
4. The NEC Representative will ensure that the parliamentary selection process is carried out in accordance with the principles of the Equality Act, that there will be no discrimination on the grounds of protected personal characteristics; age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.
5. The Regional Director shall also appoint a staff member for each selection to advise on rules and procedures and to support the selection process. The staff member shall be invited to all meetings of the Selection Committee.
6. The NEC Representative will consult the Governance and Legal Unit as and where necessary, and any matters that cannot be resolved shall be referred to the Chair of Organisation committee for resolution. Such decisions shall be reported back to the NEC and where necessary amendments agreed to clarify these procedures.

## **B. Advertising the Vacancy, the Selection Committee & setting the Timetable**

1. The Regional Director will inform the CLP Secretary and Chair that the NEC has authorised a selection to take place, and consult with them on the broad timeline to be followed.
2. The Chair of the Organisation Sub-Committee, on the advice of the Regional Director, shall agree an opening and closing date for applications.
3. The Governance and Legal Unit will arrange for the vacancy to be advertised on the national Labour Party website. The Governance and Legal Unit shall also arrange for the vacancy to be advertised to graduates/participants of relevant training programmes, such as the Future Candidates, Jo Cox Women in Leadership, and Bernie Grant Leadership Programmes and to notify TULO, the Co-operative Party and affiliated organisations so that the vacancy can be advertised to graduates/participants of their training programmes; and so that any nominations can be submitted as detailed in section 5 below.
4. Such applications shall include candidate declarations to ensure prospective candidates meet the highest standards of probity.
5. Applications shall only be accepted via the Labour Party's electronic application form. Any applications received prior to the vacancy being advertised or after the closing date for applications shall not be considered.
6. Prospective candidates shall be provided with the Code of Conduct for Westminster Parliamentary selections at the earliest opportunity. The Code of Conduct shall apply to all prospective candidates from the point the vacancy is advertised.
7. The CLP Secretary shall notify all eligible members within the CLP of the vacancy, including details on how to apply.
8. Meanwhile, a Selection Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the CLP in consultation with the NEC Representative.
9. The Selection Committee shall be at least 50% women and comprised of not less than six and not more than 9 members (not including the NEC Representative). The CLP Secretary and Treasurer shall be *ex officio* members of the Selection Committee except where they are standing as a candidate or are otherwise conflicted. As far as possible it should reflect the demography of the constituency and in particular must include at least one Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic member where possible. Where there is no Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic member of the CLP Executive Committee a member may be co-opted from the CLP or from another CLP.
10. At least two members representing affiliated organisations shall be part of the Selection Committee. At least one affiliated organisation representative shall be a woman and both shall be members of the CLP. Trade union representatives shall be appointed by the regional TULO Group. An additional representative of other affiliates or the Co-operative Party may be appointed by

the Regional Director in consultation with representatives of the Socialist Societies & the Co-operative Party.

11. The Executive Committee may, at its own discretion and with approval of the NEC Representative, appoint party members from other constituencies if they possess appropriate interviewing skills.
12. No member of the selection committee should campaign for or in opposition to any candidate until after short-listing has been completed.
13. The Executive Committee shall also appoint one member of the Selection Committee to act as Procedure Secretary for the Selection.
14. Following notification of the date of confirmation of the longlist, the Selection Committee shall agree with the NEC Representative the outline timetable and discuss how to carry out the various administrative tasks.
15. The Selection Committee should agree with the CLP Treasurer a budget for the process, to include stationery, photocopying, postage, room bookings and other expenses.
16. The Procedures Secretary should obtain a list of all members, including details of their current eligibility or otherwise.
17. The Procedures Secretary shall notify eligible members of the timetable at the earliest opportunity, including details of how to apply for a postal vote.
18. The Procedures Secretary shall notify all Labour Party branch secretaries and affiliated organisations of the procedure and timetable.

### **3. THE CANDIDATE**

#### **C. Eligibility**

1. Eligibility of candidates is set out in Chapter 5 of the Labour Party Rule Book. In brief, in addition to fulfilling any statutory requirements for the relevant public office, persons wishing to stand as a Labour candidate must have continuous membership of the party of at least 12 months at the freeze date. They should also be a member of a trade union affiliated to the TUC, or considered by the NEC as a bona fide trade union, and contribute to the political fund of that union. Any exceptions to these conditions must be approved by the NEC.

### **4. THE ELECTORATE**

#### **A. Eligible participating members**

1. In order to participate in the selection process, a member must:
  - a. Be a current member of the constituency in question at the freeze date and at each stage of the procedure (i.e. a member who transfers to another constituency prior to the ballot will lose their right to vote);



- b. Have at least six months continuous membership of the Labour Party (any constituency) at the freeze date; and
- c. Be up to date with their membership subscription and otherwise in proper compliance with their membership. Members may be offered the opportunity to bring their subscription up to date if they are in arrears.

## **B. Freeze date**

1. The freeze date for determining eligible members shall be the date on which the vacancy is advertised.
2. The NEC Representative or the NEC may require an alternative freeze date if there are special circumstances.

## **5. NOMINATING ORGANISATIONS**

### **A. Labour Party branches**

1. The Labour Party branches entitled to make nominations shall be geographical branches in existence on the date at which the timetable is set by the Procedures Committee.

### **B. Trade unions and other affiliated organisations**

1. Trade Unions and other affiliated organisations making nominations shall be those with at least one branch affiliated to the CLP for the year ending 31 December prior to the year in which the selection process commences. Any applicant officially nominated by an affiliated organisation prior to longlisting shall be automatically longlisted, subject to the provisions of 6.5 below. Where an affiliated organisation has not made an official nomination prior to longlisting it will be entitled to make nominations in line with the provisions detailed in section 7 below. In order to aid the smooth administration of the process, affiliated organisations shall seek to submit any nominations by the close of applications, or as soon as possible thereafter.

### **C. The Co-operative Party**

1. Any applicant officially nominated as the Co-operative Party candidate prior to longlisting shall be automatically longlisted, subject to the provisions of 6.5 below. Where the Co-operative Party has not nominated an official candidate, it will be entitled to make nominations in line with the provisions detailed in section 7 below. In order to aid the smooth administration of the process, the Co-operative Party shall seek to submit any nominations by the close of applications, or as soon as possible thereafter.

## 6. LONGLISTING

### A. Longlisting

1. The NEC has a responsibility under Labour Party rules to both ensure high quality candidates and to ensure there is no discrimination on the basis of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation at any level of the Party.
2. The Party is committed to taking action to promote representation of under-represented groups, including working class people and those who are low-paid.
3. The longlisting process will give regard to the Person Specification in Appendix 4, the due diligence checks, and the Party's commitment to diversity.
4. Applications from those not automatically longlisted under the provisions of section 5 above, shall be considered by a panel of NEC and REC members ("the panel"). Such a panel shall be made up of not less than three members and not more than five members; must include at least one NEC member (who shall act as Chair); must be at least 50% women and include at least one Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic member; and must as far as practicable reflect the various sections of the NEC/REC. All NEC members shall be invited to sit on such panels, subject to fulfilling any training requirements. The makeup of each panel will be agreed by the Chair of the Organisation Sub-Committee.
5. From applications received, the panel shall agree whom to invite to interview. The eventual longlist should usually consist of not less than four prospective candidates, where such candidates meet the criteria. The eventual longlist must be representative of the communities the Party seeks to represent, and in particular be at least 50% women and include at least one Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic member.
6. Those nominated by trade unions, other affiliated organisations or the Co-operative Party will not be required to attend an interview prior to longlisting, unless concerns arise from due diligence checks, in such cases any interviews will cover only matters which arise from those checks.
7. Due diligence checks will be carried out on applicants invited to interview with reports provided to the panel where necessary.
8. Following longlisting interviews, the panel will notify each applicant of one of three outcomes
  - a. That they have been longlisted for the vacancy in question;
  - b. That they have not been longlisted for the vacancy in question, but they do meet the criteria for being a high quality candidate and a future longlisting panel for subsequent vacancies may choose to longlist them without conducting a further interview; or

- c. That they do not meet the criteria for being a high quality candidate and therefore they will not be longlisted for the current vacancy.

Applicants notified of outcome c above will remain eligible to apply for subsequent vacancies, though longlisting panels for those vacancies may take into account the outcomes of any previous interviews when deciding whether to invite them to interview.

9. Longlisted candidates will be expected to undertake any mandatory equality and diversity training as instructed by the NEC which the party must take reasonable steps to provide in as accessible a format as possible, and online where possible. If a candidate fails to undertake such training without reasonable excuse, the panel may declare them ineligible to compete in the selection without further notice.

## **7. NOMINATIONS PERIOD**

### **A. Receiving nominations**

1. Labour Party branches within the CLP may make a nomination for one or more candidates known in writing to the Procedures Secretary. The Co-operative Party, Trade Unions and other affiliated organisations may make nominations at this stage, providing they have not already made a nomination under the provisions of section 5 above. Only nominations received from the correct designated member of the affiliated organisation will be accepted. The correctly designated member will be confirmed to the Governance and Legal Unit by the organisation's national nominating officer(s) at the onset of the process.
2. Whether under these provisions, or those outlined in section 5 above, affiliated organisations may make nominations according to their own procedures.
3. The nominations period should be a minimum of one week and a maximum of three weeks, and in the interests of keeping the process accessible to prospective candidates from all backgrounds the NEC recommends that wherever practicable the nomination period should be no more than two weeks.
4. Labour Party branches may make nominations at any ordinary meeting or may convene a special meeting once the longlist has been published. In either case all eligible members must be notified of the agenda item and of candidates who have expressed an interest. Meetings should be conducted in line with branch's Standing Orders. Candidates shall not be eligible to attend branch meetings where nominations are to be discussed.
5. Nominations may be for one or two candidates. If two candidates are nominated, at least one must be a woman.

6. Where neither of the two nominations made is for a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic candidate, a further nomination of a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic candidate may be made by the branch.
7. Nominations may only be made for candidates who have been longlisted.
8. Potential candidates may approach members to seek nominations.
9. Any nominations received shall be notified to the Selection Committee.

## 8. SHORTLISTING

### B. Shortlisting

1. The Selection Committee shall be responsible for agreeing a shortlist of candidates to put before the CLP membership. Such a shortlist will be agreed following interviews with prospective candidates.
2. All prospective candidates with nominations should receive proper consideration and any with at least three nominations must be invited to interview. In addition, any prospective candidate with nominations from the Co-operative Party or an affiliated organisation must be invited to interview.
3. The NEC Representative must ensure that proper consideration is given to any nominated candidates with a disability and to Black Asian Minority Ethnic and LGBTQ+ candidates.
4. Where Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic candidates have submitted applications at least one Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic candidate must be interviewed, regardless of nominations received.
5. At least 50% of those invited to shortlisting interviews must be women.
6. The interviews should be designed to achieve a high degree of consistency of approach by the Selection Committee. They should also be robust enough to ensure candidates make full declarations of any issues of concern, and commitment to the candidate contract. The same initial questions should be asked of each candidate.
7. The shortlist shall consist of a minimum of two individuals and must be at least 50% women and include at least one Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic candidate where available.
8. Any prospective candidate who has received nominations from more than half of eligible Labour Party branches must be shortlisted unless the Panel and the NEC Representative agree there are exceptional circumstances following shortlisting interviews.
9. There is no maximum set for the number shortlisted. However, this should be set with a view to the practicalities of the remainder of the selection campaign including any hustings meetings.

10. The NEC Representative is required to ensure that due consideration is given to applications from Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic candidates, and to disabled and LGBTQ+ candidates.
11. The Selection Committee must give full consideration to any candidate nominated by the Co-operative Party and/or by an affiliated organisation when determining the shortlist.
12. The NEC Representative must be satisfied that the shortlist is of the highest possible quality, as far as possible reflects the priorities of the Labour Party in respect of diversity and provides members with a fair choice.
13. When constructing the shortlist, proper consideration will be given to the Party's commitment to increasing representation of under-represented groups, including working class people and those who are low-paid.
14. The NEC Representative may refer the shortlist to the NEC if he or she is not satisfied that the shortlist meets the requirements specified above. The NEC may choose to add additional candidates to the shortlist should it conclude the Party's objectives in regards diversity are not being met.
15. Once the shortlist is approved, the Procedures Secretary will advise the candidates in question of further details of the selection procedure as appropriate. Shortlisted candidates may receive a membership list on application.
16. All shortlisted candidates shall provide a statement of 250 words for circulation to members in advance of the hustings.

## 9. POSTAL VOTES

### A. Postal votes

1. The Selection Committee may apply to the Chair of the Organisation Sub-Committee to conduct its selection on an "all postal" basis. Such requests will only usually be granted when the geography of the CLP makes it the only practicable way of conducting the selection.
2. For a selection in which the candidate is to be selected at the conclusion of a hustings meeting, members may apply to vote by post. Such applicants must provide a legitimate reason for selecting a postal vote rather than attending in person. All applications to vote by post shall be made available to the NEC Representative.
3. In all cases electronic votes conducted by any platform approved by the Party may be used as an alternative to paper postal votes and a separate note will be provided where such a platform is in place.
4. Postal vote applications must be signed by the applicant – or by an appropriate person acting on their behalf if they are unable to sign the form themselves.

Where there is any doubt that a form was signed by the applicant, advice must be sought from the Governance and Legal Unit.

5. The deadline for receipt of postal vote applications should be as close to the conclusion of the process as practicable (i.e. not more than ten working days prior to the hustings meeting) and the deadline for receipt of postal votes should be as late as practicable (i.e. not more than five working days prior to the hustings meeting).
6. Postal votes should be returned to one address only, which should be a secure office address. If there is any prospect that postal votes could go astray at the address in question, then an alternative return address should be sought – either the Regional Labour Party Office, or a local solicitor, or some other secure location.
7. Postal votes should be returned in a recognisable envelope and immediately upon receipt placed unopened into a locked ballot box. If a ballot box is not available then some other secure lockable box should be used. The box should itself be stored in a locked cupboard or room with restricted key access. Advice on ballot boxes may be obtained from the appropriate Regional Office.
8. Only postal vote application forms and postal votes distributed by the Procedures Secretary (or another properly nominated officer) shall be accepted.
9. Postal votes packs shall only be sent to the address of the member who has applied for a postal vote as registered on the Party's membership system except where specifically agreed by the NEC Representative.
10. The postal ballot pack will consist of:
  - a. A ballot paper;
  - b. A verification slip;
  - c. A ballot envelope; and
  - d. A return envelope
11. For any “all postal” procedure, arrangements must be made for members to deposit their completed postal ballot papers (as though they were posting them) in a ballot box at any hustings meeting taking place after the despatch of postal votes.
12. All postal ballot papers must be returned with a verification slip which confirms the identity of the person who has completed the ballot paper.

## 10. THE HUSTINGS MEETING AND THE COUNT

### A. Hustings meetings and informal gatherings

1. There shall be two types of hustings meeting: formal meetings at which members may cast a vote; and informal meetings where members have the chance to meet and question the candidates but voting takes place elsewhere or by post.
2. There shall usually only be one formal hustings meeting. Multiple hustings meetings will only be permitted where the geography of the constituency makes multiple hustings meeting the only practicable way for members to hear from and question candidates, and with the permission of the NEC Representative.
3. The following provisions apply to both formal and informal meetings:
  - a. The procedure shall be fair to all candidates, and the Chair, in particular, shall ensure that equal time is allowed for candidates for any speeches and questions;
  - b. All candidates must be invited;
  - c. The meeting should only be open to eligible members, the candidates, the NEC Representative and any other persons designated by the Regional Director; and
  - d. Where the selection is to be by an all-postal ballot, any hustings meetings must take place before the issue of postal votes.

### B. Hustings meetings where ballot papers are issued

1. There are two approved types of formal hustings meetings. Whichever type is selected must be used for all hustings meetings organised by the Procedures Secretary as part of the selection process:
  - Type 1 - where each candidate is individually invited to make a short speech and then answer questions.
  - Type 2 - where all candidates form a "Question Time" type panel and listen to each other's speeches and answer the same question in rotation.
2. Either type of meeting may include an informal session where party members may meet and talk to individual candidates.
3. All candidates shall be told the format of the meeting, including the length of speeches and time allocated for questions, at least seven days in advance.
4. For either type many of the principles are the same:

- a. A list of eligible members should be kept at the door and marked as they enter. If there is more than one meeting, the same list must be used for each.
- b. Members must be able to present evidence of membership and/or proof of identification in order to access the meeting. The specific requirements for evidence of membership and/or proof of identification shall be signed off by the NEC Representative and notified to eligible members at least seven days in advance.
- c. At the start of the meeting the door stewards shall announce to the meeting how many eligible members are present.
- d. Once the first candidate has started speaking, the doors shall be closed. Only members who were in attendance as at the closing of the doors, and who remained in attendance throughout all speeches and questions shall be eligible to vote. Selection committees should schedule comfort and/or refreshment breaks during lengthier meetings.
- e. All candidates shall be asked the same questions, which, wherever possible, should be submitted in advance. Should a candidate answer all the set questions within the time allowed for questions then further questions may be taken from the floor.
- f. No questions on financial means of support, or referencing any candidates' protected personal characteristics under the Equality Act: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation, shall be permitted. Neither should there be any questions about a candidate's domestic circumstances, nor any pertaining to the candidate's or the constituency party's financial arrangements or possible support for the constituency from affiliated organisations.
- g. After the final candidate has concluded speaking at least two tellers shall be elected who shall then distribute ballot papers for completion.
- h. The ballot box shall at all times be supervised by the NEC Representative.

### **C. The Count**

1. The Procedures Secretary must make arrangements for the secure storage of postal vote application forms, returned postal votes and any votes cast at any hustings meetings
2. The count of all ballots cast, including postal votes must be made at one location as soon as practicable following the end of the formal procedure.



Often this will be immediately following the final hustings where people have an opportunity to vote (or return their postal vote).

3. All postal ballot papers must be verified before the postal ballots are opened and mixed with any other ballot papers for counting.
4. The count will be by Alternative Vote (preferential voting).
5. Candidates and an agreed number of supporters depending on space may be invited to witness the count.
6. In the event of a close result at any stage of the count, the Procedures Secretary must be satisfied of the accuracy of the count and may ask for a recount of the ballot papers.
7. The candidates, if present, must be advised of the result prior to any formal announcement.
8. The published / announced result will detail the winning candidate only and will not include the order of those not selected, nor voting figures. Once the count has been completed, the candidates have been informed, and the result has been announced, the CLP selection process is completed and the Selection Committee is formally disbanded.

## 11. APPENDIX 1 – ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SHORTLISTING INTERVIEW

The Selection Committee must be confident that it is presenting local members with the best possible choice for this seat.

The interviews must be fair to each candidate.

The Procedures Secretary will advise each candidate of the arrangements for the interviews.

The interviews should comprise:

- An introduction by the person appointed by the Selection Committee to Chair the interview sessions;
- a set question notified to all candidates in advance to allow them to make an opening statement;
- a series of other questions agreed in advance by the Selection Committee;
- supplementary questions to follow up answers that need further explanation;
- a final set question to confirm that the candidate has nothing in their background which might, if known, cause embarrassment to the Party or otherwise disqualify their candidature;
- an opportunity for the applicant to confirm that they believe the procedure to have been conducted fairly; and finally
- to advise the candidate of when the decision will be made and how they will be informed.

The interview should be conducted in the same way for each candidate, so that a consistent approach makes it easier to judge one person against another.

The NEC Representative must approve the shortlist on behalf of the NEC. If the NEC Representative is unable to agree the shortlist it must be referred to the Chair of the Organisational Sub-Committee of the NEC for determination.

## 12. APPENDIX 2 – GUIDANCE ON THE VERIFICATION OF POSTAL VOTES

Postal votes will have been returned in a recognisable return envelope. The objective of the verification stage is to ensure that the ballot paper in the envelope has been returned by the person entitled to cast that vote, and that they have voted only once.

You must have the original application forms with their signatures. These should be sorted into alphabetical order for ease of reference. If you have the time and ability, you may also wish to produce a postal voter list with their scanned signatures alongside their names for immediate reference. You can then refer to the original application forms if the scan is unclear. Lists with scanned signatures mean that each of the tellers can be active in opening, and verifying the process should be a bit quicker.

You should also have a list of any replacement ballot papers issued and a note of how the replacement ballot packs have been marked (e.g. verification slips and ballots may be printed on different coloured paper).

When opening envelopes do not separate the envelope from the contents until the whole verification process is complete.

The first step is to open the outer envelope and check that it contains a ballot paper envelope and a verification slip. If it does, check the verification slip against the original application or scanned signature and confirm that they are by the same person.

Tick that person off the register as having returned their vote. If a person returns more than one vote then all their votes are discounted, unless one of the votes is a verified reissue, in which case the reissue only should be counted

If the signature cannot be verified or the verification slip is missing the envelope and contents must be put to one side and that vote not counted.

Once all the postal votes have been verified and the returns marked on the register of postal voters, the postal vote envelopes may be separated from the return envelopes and mixed. The ballot paper envelopes may then be opened and the ballot papers mixed with the other ballot papers from the hustings meeting. Any envelope containing more than one ballot paper at this stage should be ruled as invalid except in the circumstances shown below.

*What if there is no verification slip in the return envelope?*

Open the ballot paper envelope and see if it has been put in there instead. If it has, carefully extract it and leave the ballot paper in its own envelope and then proceed as above.

*What if there are two or more verification slips in the envelope?*

Carefully open the ballot paper envelope and check that there are two or more ballot papers, and no more than the total number of verification slips. If there are,

complete the verification but put this envelope to one side so that you know it contains more than one ballot paper and can be added to the count.

*What if a person has returned more than one ballot paper?*

All ballot papers are ruled as invalid, unless a person has been issued with a replacement ballot paper. Only the replacement (returned in a special envelope) should be counted.

## 13. APPENDIX 3 – ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR HUSTINGS MEETINGS

### A. General

Hustings meetings for Westminster Parliamentary selections are amongst the most important and best attended Labour Party meetings. It is therefore important that these meetings show the Party at its best; that they are conducted fairly, in a collegiate and comradely manner, and in line with procedures; and that ultimately, they select high quality candidates who will go on to be effective Labour MPs.

The guidance below is intended to help CLP Selection Committees, and Chairs in particular, meet these objectives.

### B. Formal meetings

A separate quiet room shall be kept for the candidates. When they have all arrived, the NEC Representative and Chair of the meeting should meet them to explain how the meeting will be conducted, and draw lots for order of appearance if they are to be interviewed separately.

Candidates should expect water and a PA to be available on the platform if they wish to use them. Where possible, a lectern should be provided. All of the candidates should be taken into the meeting room together for them to see the room layout and where they will speak from.

At the beginning of the meeting, the Chair should briefly outline the procedures and list the candidates in the order in which they will speak.

The selection committee should agree how long will be allocated for speeches and questions. How long that is will depend significantly on the number of candidates on the shortlist, and the time available for the hustings meeting. In general, the time for speeches should be not less than five minutes, and the time for questions not less than 15 minutes.

Where practicable questions should be submitted in advance. The Chair and NEC Representative can then select questions which cover a good spread of policy areas. This avoids the risk of having multiple questions on similar topic if questions are just drawn at random.

The time allocated for speeches and questions should be strictly enforced. Time for questions cannot be used to make up for time not taken up in speeches.

If the meeting is to be in a panel format, then the order of answering questions must rotate among the candidates (the person who answers question 1 first would answer question two second, question three third and so on. The chair will need a checklist to keep track of who has answered when.) Closing statements should be given in reverse order to the opening speeches.

## C. Informal meetings

Where the event consists wholly of an informal gathering:

- All candidates should be kept apart from members until the announced starting time.
- No candidate should be allowed or asked to address the gathering unless all candidates have equal time to address it and all have been notified of this in advance.
- At the start of the event, a party officer should call for order and indicate the candidates present and their names. Where possible, candidates should be given badges bearing their names, so that members can identify them during the gathering.
- CLP officers should circulate during the event and seek to ensure that all candidates have the opportunity to meet as many members as possible.

Where the event consists of a formal session and an informal session:

- The formal session should normally be taken first to facilitate discussion during the informal session.
- The formal session may consist of speeches only on the basis that questions can be asked during the informal session.

## D. The count

A separate document is provided which explains how to count an Alternative Vote (AV) ballot.

As a general principle, the count should not be rushed. It may be helpful to stop after each round and show the candidates the result of that round, who is being eliminated, and what happens next. So far as is possible, everyone should understand what has happened in the previous round of counting before progressing to the next.

The ballot papers, postal ballot papers and verification slips must be retained in a safe place for a period of 12 months or until the statutory close of nominations of the election in question, whichever is shorter. The pack of ballot papers etc. may be given to the Governance and Legal Unit at head office or to the Head of Governance and Local Government in the Regional Hub

## 14. APPENDIX 4 – WESTMINSTER PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE PERSON SPECIFICATION

When assessing applicants, either through the CV, during shortlisting or at the hustings meeting, you should look for the following:

## Eligibility

- Candidates must meet all legal qualifications for a Westminster Parliamentary candidate, as well as the Labour Party's requirements laid out in Chapter 5 Clause I of the Labour Party Rule Book, in particular:
  - Candidates must have 12 months' continuous membership of the Labour Party as of the freeze date; and
  - Candidates must be a member of a trade union affiliated to the TUC or considered by the NEC to be a bona fide trade union and contribute to the political fund of that trade union.

## Personal probity

- Candidates are expected to meet the highest standards of personal probity.

## Labour Party experience

- Practical experience of campaigning and organisation – more than just a list of constituency posts held. If the candidate simply gives a list, ask about what each position entailed.
- Achievements, for example, winning a seat from another party, increasing membership, revitalising a moribund branch, setting up a local policy forum.
- Candidates should be able to demonstrate a commitment to the Labour Party's rules, procedures and values.

## Other experience

- Practical and relevant experiences and achievements outside the party, particularly in areas which are important to your constituency.
- Be flexible with your expectations – candidates with caring responsibilities, for example, may not have work-related or trade union experience, but may be active in the community.

## Commitment to equal opportunities

- Candidates should be able to demonstrate a commitment to equal opportunities (For example, give evidence of any initiatives or campaigns they have been involved in that have promoted equal opportunities), including completing any course of equality and diversity training the NEC may prescribe, either before or after becoming a Labour Party candidate.
- Candidates should be able to provide evidence to demonstrate this commitment, rather than just a statement of their views.

## Knowledge

- An understanding of the role of Parliament.

- Knowledge of other bodies (such as local government, devolved bodies and European parliament) or other organisations which may be relevant to your constituency.
- Knowledge of the local area – don't assume that local candidates have a greater degree of knowledge than those who come from further afield.
- A description of how candidates have or would apply their knowledge.

### **Abilities**

- Evidence of how candidates have demonstrated their abilities, rather than just listing things they claim to be able to do.
- Written communication skills will be evident from the CV which should be clear and easy to read, using plain English. Avoid making judgements based on simple mistakes.
- Interpersonal skills are important but try not to let these dominate your decision; listen to what the candidates say as well as how they say it.
- Creative and strategic skills could possibly be assessed by asking them to describe their vision for the constituency and as your parliamentary candidate – look for innovative ideas which aren't merely lifted from somewhere else!
- Oral communication skills: candidates should speak clearly and authoritatively, avoid using jargon and keep to the point. A good speaker will be aware of the audience and tailor her/his speech accordingly.
- Campaigning ability: look for references to leadership and motivating people, to working as part of a team, to thorough planning, as well as interesting and innovative ideas which are relevant to your constituency.
- Commitment to practical use of members' skills, membership recruitment and building up the party's local profile, as well as practical commitment to leading your party to develop/improve members' involvement in policy development.



## 15. APPENDIX 5 – MODEL TIMETABLE

Week	Event
Week 0	Vacancy advertised on national Labour Party website  Freeze date for eligibility  Selection Committee meets with NEC Representative
Week 1	Applications close  Longlisting interviews  Timetable agreed by Selection Committee
Week 2	Nominations open  <i>(Nominations period recommended as no more than two week)</i>
Week 4	Nominations close  Shortlisting
Week 6	Hustings meeting

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