D2 Standing Orders

Organization: Democracy and Accountability Committee
Resolution date: 10/29/2020
Agenda item: D Amendments to Constitution/Standing Orders

Young Greens Standing Orders 2020/2021

Section A: Young Greens Convention

A1.1 The Young Greens Convention shall be held once per year in Spring.

A1.2 The Young Greens Convention will take place for two days during a weekend.

A1.3 The Young Greens Convention shall not be held twice in the same Region Block, defined in A1.4, consecutively.

A1.4 Within each five-year period, as determined by DAC, the Young Greens Convention must take place within the bounds of at least three of these four Region Blocks:

A1.4.1 The South East, and the South West

A1.4.2 The North East, the North West, and Yorkshire and the Humber

A1.4.3 The Midlands, and Wales

A1.4.4 The East, and London

A1.5 Liberation groups will be allocated a session at convention where they will provide a report to its membership on activities undertaken since last convention and for any other purpose the group sees fit.

Section B: Annual General Meetings

Part 1: Competency of the Annual General Meeting

B1.1 The Young Greens Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held at Young Greens Annual Convention.

B1.2 The Annual General Meeting is the highest decision-making body within the Young Greens.

B1.3 There must be at least 25 members of the Young Greens at any General Meeting for decisions to be binding.

B1.4 The AGM accepts/rejects/amends reports, motions, resolutions and changes to the Constitution or Standing Orders, collectively referred to as 'papers'.

B1.5 The AGM ratifies decisions about joining or leaving partnerships and membership within other organisations/networks.

B1.7 A General Meeting will be held at a bi-national autumn event.

Part 2: Organisation of the Annual General Meeting

B2.1 The Annual General Meeting agenda must be structured, organised and agreed by the Executive Committee (EC) and Democracy and Accountability Committee (DAC).

B2.2 DAC must appoint a chair and deputy chair for the Annual General Meeting. The chair and deputy chair must not be proposers of any papers or amendments to the Annual General Meeting.

B2.3 DAC must ensure that all members respect the Constitution and Standing Orders.

B2.4 DAC must take Annual General Meeting minutes of all official business including recording any votes, important discussions, and decisions.

B2.5 DAC must keep a record of newly adopted/amended documents and email the Young Greens' Co-Chairs a copy of newly adopted/amended documents as well as the minutes of the Annual General Meeting.

B2.6 DAC must inform EC to take note of any newly adopted papers.

B2.7 A prioritisation ballot will occur, conducted by DAC, on the first day of Convention for attendees at the Annual General Meeting in order to decide the order of papers taken.

Part 3: Motions and Reports

B3.1 It shall be the role of DAC to compile submitted papers, which consist of

B3.1.1 Changes to the Constitution or Standing Orders

B3.1.2 Resolutions, which note the priorities of the Executive Committee for the upcoming term

B3.1.3 Motions, which insert entries into the Record of Policy Statements or Record of Organisational Statements

B3.1.4 Reports, as outlined in B3.2

B3.1.5 Emergency Motions, as outlined in B3.10

B3.2 The Annual General Meeting must take note of mandatory annual reports by the:

B3.2.1 Executive Committee Co-Chairs.

B3.2.2 Treasurer.

B3.2.3 Executive Committee Non-Portfolio Officers.

B3.2.4 Democracy and Accountability Committee.

B3.2.5 Green Students Committee Co-Convenors.

B3.3 Annual reports detailed in B3.2 must be submitted to DAC at least 1 week before the AGM.

B3.4 Individual members, EC and Affiliated Young Greens Groups have the right to submit papers and amendments.

B3.5 For all submissions, there must be a named proposer and at least 3 other co-proposers or at least one other co-proposer if submitting on behalf of an Affiliated YG Group or recognised committee.

B3.6 Paper copies of the Constitution, Standing Orders, Record of Policy Statements and Record of Organisational Statements must be made available for members attending the General Meeting.

B3.7 The timescale for the submission of papers and amendments shall be as follows:

B3.7.1 At least 8 weeks before the Annual General Meeting, EC must send out a call including guidelines for submission of papers, all relevant dates and where to find papers once they are posted on the members' website.

B3.7.2 Submission for papers shall close exactly 4 weeks before the AGM.

B3.7.3 Following this, DAC must post all submissions at the earliest possible moment.

B3.7.4 Exactly 1 week before the AGM, submission of amendments to papers will close.

B3.7.5 Amendments may not substantially change the intention of the paper and nor may they require changes to another section of the Constitution or Standing Orders.

B3.8 Exactly 5 days before the Annual General Meeting, DAC must ensure that all members are emailed (regardless of Annual General Meeting registration status) copies of all papers and amendments to both as well as the reports detailed in B3.2.

B3.9 The only amendments which shall be accepted from the floor during the AGM are minor textual amendments (e.g. grammatical corrections) and friendly verbal amendments (i.e. where both the proposer of the original paper and the proposer of the verbal amendment agree to an amendment).

B3.10 Emergency motions, defined as being brought due to an event occurring past the original motion deadline, will be accepted up until 17.00 on the day before the AGM.

B3.11 The text of Emergency Motions should be submitted electronically or by paper copy and the list of proposers by email and/or paper copy, both to the Chair of DAC .

B3.12 Emergency Motions shall be prioritised at the AGM by DAC on the basis of the number of co-proposers to each Emergency Motion.

Part 4: Motion Voting Procedures

B4.1 When debating a paper or amendment at the Annual General Meeting, the proposer will be asked by the chair to propose the motion or amendment by

explaining what the paper or amendment is for and then giving a brief speech in favour of the paper.

B4.2 Following this the chair will open debate on the paper or amendment by asking for a limited number of brief alternating speeches in favour and against the paper, firstly against and then in favour of the paper or amendment until either no one wishes to make a speech or there has been sufficient debate on the paper or amendment.

B4.3 If it is unclear if there has been sufficient debate a straw poll will be taken by raising hands with the options either for more debate or move to a vote.

B4.4 At any point before the vote is taken, any member can ask for clarification, raise points of information or propose procedural motions (e.g. minor textural amendments, taking by parts).

B4.5 If a paper or amendment has received lengthy debate the proposer may request a brief right of reply before the vote is taken.

B4.6 When voting on paper proposals the possibilities are 'yes', 'no' or 'abstention'.

B4.7 Depending on the nature of the proposal, the following types of majority may be required for a motion to be passed.

B4.7.1 Simple majority: majority of the votes cast in person.

B4.7.2 Two-thirds majority: two-thirds of the votes cast in person.

B4.7.3 Absolute two-thirds majority: two-thirds majority of the votes cast by the entire membership of the body.

B4.8 Amendments to the Constitution including accompanying Byelaws or Standing Orders will be accepted with a two-thirds majority.

B4.9 Unless otherwise stated in the Constitution or Standing Orders, everything else will be accepted with a simple majority.

B4.10 DAC shall be responsible for counting the votes.

B4.11 Results of votes must be announced during the meeting.

Section C: Emergency General Meetings

C1.1 An Emergency General Meeting (EGM) may be called at any time by an absolute two-thirds majority of EC, or by a minimum of 5% of the Young Greens membership petitioning the EC for an EGM.

C1.2 The same procedure as for AGM paper submission, organisation and voting shall apply to an EGM following Section B Parts 2,3,4, however the timescale will be halved.

Section D: Autumn General Meeting

D.1 There will be a Young Greens General Meeting held in autumn.

D.2 The Autumn General Meeting consists solely of accountability sessions for the following representatives elected in the annual ballot:

D.2.1 Executive Committee Co-chairs

D.2.2 Treasurer

D.2.3 Executive Committee Non-portfolio members

D.2.4 Green Students Committee Co-convenors

D.3 The Autumn General Meeting must take note of mandatory six-month progress reports from those representatives.

D.4 The accountability session will take the form of a face-to-face Q&A with the membership.

D.5 There must be at least 25 members of the Young Greens excluding employees at any General Meeting for decisions to be binding.

D.6 Motions of no confidence may be put forward during the accountability session and will pass with a two-thirds majority.

D.7 Motions of no confidence may be put forward during the accountability session Censure and Commendations and will pass with a simple majority.

D.8 Every Young Green is eligible to vote at the Autumn General Meeting.

Section E: Internal Elections

Part 1: Candidacy

E1.1 All members of the Young Greens are eligible to be candidates for roles within the Executive Committee, Democracy and Accountability Committee members and the Green Students Committee Co-Convenors providing they abide by the rules such as gender quotas.

E1.2 Only those Young Greens who self-define as belonging to a specific Liberation group may be candidates for election within that respective Liberation group.

E1.3 Members who hold a position on the Democracy and Accountability Committee may not be candidates for any position other than Member of DAC, except for Affiliated Group roles, until they no longer hold a position on DAC. Members of DAC with an active role in an affiliated group must recuse themselves from business involving that affiliated group.

E1.4 Candidates must have two nominees, who are members of the Young Greens in accordance with Article 1 of the constitution, and may provide a candidate statement, campaign video, and social media links if they wish.

E1.5 Members of the Young Greens may not: be a nominee for more than one of the following positions at any one time; nor hold more than one of the following posts at any one time in the Young Greens:

E1.5.1 Any EC role

E1.5.2 Democracy and Accountability Committee

E1.5.3 Green Students Committee Co-Convenor

E1.6 Members of the Young Greens may put themselves forward as a job share for any of the following posts within the Young Greens annual ballot:

E1.6.1 Treasurer

E1.6.2 Executive Committee Non-Portfolio Officer

E1.6.3 Member of the Democracy and Accountability Committee

E1.7 Should one part of the job share resign or be removed from their position for whatever reason, their counterpart(s) will be able to either:

E1.7.1 advertise to co-opt a replacement for the exiting part of the job share

E1.7.2 continue to carry out their role without the exiting part of the job share, without replacing them

E1.7.3 resign from their role

Part 2: Term of Office and Accountability

E2.1 All roles shall be elected for a term of office of 1 year, which should be completed should the officer no longer fit the requirements described in Constitution Clause 1.5.1 or 1.5.2 during their term, accepting variations as described below.

E2.2 For all roles elected at the AGM in the annual ballot, the term of office shall run until the following year's AGM except in the cases of resignation or removal by a vote of no confidence.

E2.3 A vote of no confidence shall occur for an individual role if the Democracy and Accountability Committee are petitioned by 25% of the committee or other body which the role is part of.

E2.4 A vote of no confidence may also be called for any individual role if the Democracy and Accountability Committee are petitioned by 5% of the Young Greens membership.

E2.5 If the role which a vote of no confidence is being petitioned for falls within the Democracy and Accountability Committee, then it shall instead be EC that is petitioned by the members of the relevant committee, body, or general membership.

E2.6 Complete anonymity shall be maintained throughout by the committee which is petitioned, both relating to the petitioners and the vote.

E2.7 No member may sit on the same body for more than 5 terms consecutively, irrespective of election or co-option.

E2.8 No member may hold the same post for more than 3 terms, irrespective of election or co-option.

E2.9 EC voting members have a responsibility to attend EC meetings and to stay accountable:

E2.9.1 Failure to attend four regularly scheduled meetings consecutively shall either: initiate an automatic immediate committee-internal vote of no confidence held via secret ballot by DAC, repeatable during a term; or result in the civil resignation of the member at their discretion, prior to the vote of no confidence.

E2.9.2 Failure to attend ten regularly scheduled meetings in total over the course of one term shall either: initiate an immediate automatic committee-internal vote of no confidence held via secret ballot by DAC, repeatable during a term; or result in the civil resignation of the member at their discretion, prior to the vote of no confidence.

E2.9.3 Failure to complete two individual quarterly reports in total over the course of one term shall either: initiate an automatic immediate committee-internal vote of no confidence held via secret ballot by DAC, repeatable during a term; or result in the civil resignation of the member at their discretion, prior to the vote of no confidence.

E2.9.4 Failure to complete a mandatory individual six-month progress report shall either: initiate an automatic immediate committee-internal vote of no confidence held via secret ballot by DAC; or result in the civil resignation of the member at their discretion, prior to the vote of no confidence.

E2.9.5 Failure to complete a mandatory individual annual report shall result in the ERO reporting this information at the final Convention Hustings if the Candidate is standing for election again.

E2.10 If an individual EC voting member invokes three of the actions noted in E2.9.1 through E2.9.4, but remains on EC, then DAC shall have the following options available:

E2.10.1 Initiate immediate informal mediation to find the causes of the issues at hand and offer support and guidance on various options available.

E2.10.2 Initiate another immediate committee-internal vote of no confidence within EC.

E2.10.3 Initiate an online ballot, to be held within one month of the DAC decision, open to all Young Greens members where a majority of voting members may vote to remove the EC voting member.

Part 3: Election Timescale

E3.1 All processes and the election timescale described between Clauses E3.4 and E3.11 (inclusive) apply only to positions elected in the "Annual Ballot" at convention, namely Executive Committee, Democracy and Accountability Committee members, and Co-Convenors of the Green Students Committee.

E3.2 Co-Chairs,Committees, or other positions in Young Greens Affiliated Groups shall be elected with a separate timescale to be decided by those respective groups.

E3.3 The Elected International Delegate shall be elected in line with the procedure below, with the process beginning three months prior to the event they will be attending.

E3.4 At least 8 weeks before the AGM the Executive Committee must send out a call for applications to all Executive Committee positions, all Democracy and Accountability Committee positions, and Green Students Committee Co-Convenor positions. This callout must set out the rest of the timescale and how to apply.

E3.5 Exactly 4 weeks before the AGM applications will close for all roles elected at Convention except for roles that received no applications during the initial period.

E3.6 As close as possible to 2 weeks before the start of the AGM a live online video hustings will take place for all roles elected at Convention, which all candidates for these roles are invited to take part in.

E3.7 Exactly 2 weeks before the start of the AGM voting will open in accordance with Standing Order E4.3.

E3.8 At 17.00 the day before the AGM applications will close for roles covered by E3.1 which gained no applications as of E3.5.

E3.9 A further in-person hustings shall be held at Convention; each candidate has the right to participate in these as well as to submit a statement in advance.

E3.10 Voting shall close during Convention between the in-person hustings detailed in E3.9 and the announcement of results (the exact time to be at the discretion of DAC). The time of this should be clearly identified on the Convention Timetable and voting platform.

E3.11 The election of successful candidates shall be announced during Convention.

Part 4: Electoral System and Gender Balance

E4.1 Every Young Green is eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting and associated elections where they have 1 vote.

E4.2 All positions shall all be elected using the Single Transferable Vote (STV) system with a provision for negative voting (re-open nominations, acronym RON).

E4.2.1 Single Transferable Vote quota for election is calculated as follows: total valid vote divided by one more than the number of seats up for election plus one (or rounded up) to avoid ties: (TVV/(seats+1)) +1.

E4.3 Voting will take place via secret, secure online ballot arranged by an Electoral Returning Officer (ERO), appointed by the Democracy and Accountability Committee (DAC).

E4.4 DAC, or the ERO if authorised to do so by DAC, is responsible for counting the votes.

E4.5 The counting of votes and electing of successful candidates for the positions of Executive Committee Co-Chair and Treasurer will take place before the counting for EC Non-Portfolio positions so that the gender balance criteria described in E4.6, E4.7, E4.8, E4.9, and E4.10 can be applied.

E4.6 The following rules will apply exclusively to the election of Co-chairs in compliance with Clause 1.1.1 of Constitution Byelaw 1.

E4.6.1 The candidate with the highest number of first preference votes will be elected in the first round in which a candidate passes the quota required by the STV method.

E4.6.2 If the successful candidate is not a self-defining man, the second candidate elected by the STV method will be elected to the second Co-Chair position, regardless of gender identity.

E4.6.3 If the first successful candidate is a self-defining man, all other self-defining men will be excluded from the vote and their further preferences allocated to the remaining candidates from whom the second Co-Chair will be elected.

E4.7 Following the election of the aforementioned roles a number of Non-Portfolio positions will be reserved for candidates who are not self-defining men to ensure that EC shall comprise of no more than 50% of members who self-define as men. The number of roles reserved will be calculated based on the number of self-defining men elected to the Co-Chair and treasurer positions.

E4.8 The election of Green Students Committee Co-Convenors will take place following the same rules as laid out for EC Co-Chairs in D4.6.

E4.9 The selection of the International Delegate will ensure that no more than one delegate self-defines as a man.

E4.10 The election of members to the Democracy and Accountability Committee will be carried out such that no more than 3 of the places are taken by self-defining men with places reserved, as necessary, to ensure this.

Part 5: Campaigning Rules

E5.1 Candidates for any role in Young Greens elections, and proposers of papers, are entitled to campaign and must all follow the same rules except for E5.2 which shall only apply to roles explicitly mentioned.

E5.2 The amount spent on a campaign by a candidate in the Young Greens annual ballot (EC, Democracy and Accountability Committee, Green Students Committee Co-Convenors) must not exceed £30. This includes leaflets, online campaigning and similar expenditures the candidate has incurred as a result of being a candidate for this position within the Young Greens. It also includes expenditure incurred by the supporters of the candidate. At least 50% of all spending will be reimbursed by the Young Greens provided that receipts are given to the Young Greens Treasurer within 30 days of the close of elections. The same amount of money will be reimbursed for every candidate running for any one role.

E5.3 Candidates and proposers may use the contact details of people they know personally to directly canvass for support, via their own networks, in the run up to the election but must not use details of members they only know via official Young Greens channels – for example those they have gleaned through previously holding an elected position within the Young Greens or those they have gained from mailing lists.

E5.4 Candidates and proposers may campaign online and use social media to canvass for support but only strictly in a personal capacity.

E5.5 Candidates and proposers may not use official Young Greens or Green Party communication channels such as administrative email and Facebook privileges.

E5.6 Each candidate is entitled to their submitted nomination statement being circulated amongst the membership via email and posting on the Young Greens website.

E5.7 Campaigns must focus on the benefits of the candidate they are supporting, not the flaws of the candidates opposing them. Negative campaigning is not permitted.

E5.8 Bribery, coercion and mistreating of members is strictly forbidden.

E5.9 Any member, regardless of candidate status, can report a suspected breach of these rules to the Electoral Returning Officer in the case of electoral breaches, Democracy and Accountability Committee in the case of motions, or, where they feel that is inappropriate, to Young Greens Staff.

E5.10 Any suspected electoral breach of these rules shall be investigated by the Electoral Returning Officer and the Democracy and Accountability Committee who have the following options open to them:

E5.10.1 Suspension of a candidate from the current election, who is suspected to have breached these rules, pending investigation by the Electoral Returning Officer and the Democracy and Accountability Committee. If the investigation cannot be completed by the AGM, the election will be re-run.

E5.10.2 Expulsion from the current election of a candidate found to have broken these rules, by the Electoral Returning Officer and the Democracy and Accountability Committee - the election shall otherwise continue as normal.

E5.10.3 Expulsion from the current election of a candidate where it has been found that person(s) acting on their behalf have breached these rules.

E5.10.4 Additionally, Candidates removed from the current election due to the actions of themselves or others will still be eligible to be a candidate for future elections to any position within the Young Greens.

E5.11 Any suspected non-electoral breaches, during an election and by a candidate, of the Young Greens Constitution, Young Greens Standing Orders, Green Party Constitution, Green Party Standing Orders, Green Party Code of Conduct or any other organisational policies of the Green Party of England and Wales and Young Greens, including anti-harassment and Safe Space policies, shall be investigated by the Democracy and Accountability Committee who shall have the following options open to them:

E5.11.1 Suspension of a candidate from the current election, who is suspected to have breached these rules, pending investigation by the Democracy and Accountability Committee. If the investigation cannot be completed by the AGM, the election will be re- run.

E5.11.2 Expulsion from the current election of a candidate found to have breached these rules with the election otherwise continuing as normal.

E5.12 Following any action as described in E5.11.1 or E5.11.2, the Democracy and Accountability Committee shall refer the case to the Complaints and Disputes Subcommittee for full investigation as described in Article 5 of the Constitution, from 5.6 onwards.

E5.13 Any suspected breach of these rules in relation to the proposal of papers will be investigated by the Democracy and Accountability Committee who will have the following options open to them:

E5.13.1 Suspension of a proposer suspected of breaking these rules may be suspended from proposing the paper pending investigation by the Democracy and Accountability Committee and an alternative proposer must be found by the remaining co-proposers.

E5.13.2 For serious breaches of these rules, the Democracy and Accountability Committee may rule the paper or amendment Out of Order and remove it from the General Meeting agenda.

E5.14 A person is accountable to these rules from the opening of the nominations period, however, may only announce their candidacy and begin publicly campaigning after the close of nominations.

Part 6: Co-Ooptions

E6.1 Any vacant EC role may be co-opted by a majority vote of EC plus the agreement of the Chair of the Democracy and Accountability Committee, after a call out and a hustings has taken place.

E6.2 When advertising vacant EC Non-Portfolio positions, the Executive Committee are able to advertise specific available portfolio(s), as decided by a majority vote of EC plus the agreement of the Chair of the Democracy and Accountability Committee.

E6.3 Any vacant DAC role may be co-opted by a majority vote of DAC, after a call out has taken place.

E6.4 If it is not possible to co-opt for DAC roles in accordance with E6.3, these roles may be co-opted by a majority vote of EC, after a call out has taken place.

E6.5 Vacant Green Students Committee Co-Convenor roles may be co-opted by a majority vote of the Green Students Committee after a call out by the Green Students Committee has taken place.

E6.6 If it is not possible to co-opt for Green Students Committee Co-Convenor roles in accordance with E6.5, these roles may be co-opted by a majority vote of EC plus the agreement of the Chair of the Democracy and Accountability Committee, after a call out and a hustings has taken place.

E6.7 Gender balance criteria as defined under section E4.5 through to E4.10 should also apply to any co-options.

Section F: Exceptional Democratic Accountability Measures

F1 The General Meetings defined in Sections B, C, and D shall all be held in-person, with in-person democratic functions.

F2 In exceptional circumstances in-person functions may not be possible and when this is the case these protocols shall be followed in order:

F2.1 No less than three voting members of the Executive Committee shall bring forward a motion to a meeting of the Executive Committee, expressing intent and reasoning to invoke Exceptional Democratic Accountability Measures (hereafter referred to as "Exceptional Measures" or colloquially as "EDAM").

F2.2 The Executive Committee shall vote on whether or not to invoke Exceptional Measures, invocation shall require a two-thirds majority.

F2.3 If Exceptional Measures are invoked, then the Co-Chairs of the Executive Committee shall inform the Chair or Co-Chairs of the Democracy and Accountability Committee of the decision, alongside documents which shall provide all reasoning and minutes of debate.

F2.4 The Democracy and Accountability Committee shall thoroughly review the declaration of Exceptional Measures and shall vote on whether or not to ratify the decision, ratification shall require a simple majority of the whole Committee.

F2.5 If Exceptional Measures are ratified, then the Executive Committee and the Democracy and Accountability Committee shall move to F3.

F3 After ratification of Exceptional Measures, the Executive Committee and the Democracy and Accountability Committee shall explore solutions of all nature and produce official planning documents, all solutions must be permitted under the conditions listed in F4. After a maximum of two weeks or after mutual agreement, F4 shall be implemented.

F4 Following thorough exploration, investigation, and planning, the Executive Committee shall inform the Democracy and Accountability Committee of any decision taken immediately after a vote to:

F4.1 Postpone a General Meeting by up to 6 weeks after the normal period.

F4.2 Hold a General Meeting and all associated functions online in accordance with regular timescales.

F4.3 Postpone a General Meeting by up to 6 weeks after the normal period and hold the event and all associated functions online.

F4.4 Waive Exceptional Measures and carry out a General Meeting in the normal fashion.

F5 Once the Democracy and Accountability Committee has been informed, it shall vote to ratify or reject the decision that has been made.

F5.1 Should the decision be ratified by a majority, the agreed actions come into effect immediately.

F5.2 Should the decision be rejected by a majority, the process shall return to either F3 or F4, at the discretion of the Democracy and Accountability Committee.

F6.1 The membership of the Young Greens of England and Wales must be informed regularly of progress at the end of each set of processes outlined in F2, F3, F4, and F5.