

# Party Support Handbook

## The Rule Book - Section J

### Rules for the Nomination of Parliamentary Candidates

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### Official Nominations

1. The first step that must be taken in connection with the nomination of a Co-operative Party candidate to a Labour Party Parliamentary Selection is to obtain NEC approval for the submission of an official nomination.
2. If the NEC agrees to make an official nomination it will appoint a person to be its Representative throughout the procedure. This is likely to be a Co-operative Party National Official. He/she will act with the full authority vested in him/her.
3. Upon receipt of this approval the local Society Co-operative Party Secretary ("The Secretary") must arrange for the NEC Representative to attend a special meeting of the Party's Executive Committee to assist it in drawing up a timetable relative to the nomination. That same meeting shall verify those Co-operative Party members eligible to participate in the nomination procedure. All those eligible to participate in the procedure must be fully paid up members of the Co-operative Party at the "freeze" date for membership.
4. The "freeze" date shall be either that date agreed by the Labour Party for Labour Party members or the date of the Co-operative Party verification meeting, whichever is earlier.
5. Where there are four or fewer members of the Co-operative Party Parliamentary panel who have declared an interest to the Labour Party procedures secretary by the due date, all will be invited to the Selection meeting. All Co-operative Party members eligible to participate in the short-listing and selections meetings should be informed that this is the case and that a short-listing meeting will not be required. In this case, the allocation of time for speeches and questions should be decided at the beginning of the selection meeting, subject to an overall time limit of 20 minutes per candidate, and all candidates must then be notified of this immediately after the decision has been taken.

### Those qualified to attend the short listing and selection meetings

6. Those qualified to attend the shortlist and selection meetings shall be only those Co-operative Party members resident or registered in the Constituency as verified under these rules, together with the Executive Committee (EC) of the Party Council or Party Council in the absence of an EC. Where no members are resident or registered in the Constituency the EC/Party Council will make the nomination. No person with an interest in the nomination may take part in setting the timetable, the membership verification procedure, the short listing or nomination meeting.

### The Shortlist

7. The Society Party Secretary must notify those entitled to attend as defined by Rule 5, together with the Branch Chair and Secretary (for information) of the date, time and place of the meeting at which a short list of candidates for interview will be compiled. Except in special circumstances such notice must be in writing and must be issued so as to be received by all persons entitled to receive these not less than seven clear days prior to the meeting. Notices must point out that those attending must be currently in membership of the



Co-operative Party and of a recognised co-operative and that they will be required to provide proof of membership of both.

8. The meeting to compile a short list for interview shall be chaired by the Branch Chair if qualified under Rule 5 (above). If not present then members must elect a Chair from those eligible members present. The Branch Chair and Secretary may attend this meeting “ex officio” but may not participate or vote unless qualified under Rule 5 (above).
9. The NEC Representative will be in attendance at this meeting to compile the short list of candidates for interview and will bring an up to date copy of the Co-operative Party’s Parliament Panel. Only candidates who are on the Co-operative Party’s Parliamentary Panel are eligible for inclusion on the short list for interview. The meeting should fix the allocation of time for candidates at the selection to speak and answer questions, subject to an overall time limit of 20 minutes per candidate.
10. In compiling a short list members should be informed of any restrictions on eligibility of candidates laid down by the Labour Party, but are not bound by them.
11. At least 50% of the candidates short listed must be women.
12. Immediately after this meeting the Secretary must send a letter to each person included on the short list inviting them to attend a Co-operative Party selection conference and advising them of the time available for speaking and answering questions. Copies of the letter should be sent to the NEC Representative.

### The Selection Meeting

13. No later than the day after the closing date for receipt of replies from the short listed candidates the Secretary should:
  - Prepare printed notices regarding the Co-operative Party Selection Conference for issue to all members eligible to attend in accordance with rule 5 (above).
  - Prepare ballot papers for use at the Co-operative Party Selection Conference.
14. The printed notices of the meeting should wherever possible include biographical details of the candidates to be interviewed. The notices should remind those invited to attend that, at the meeting, they will be required to furnish proof of current membership of the Co-operative Party and of a recognised Co-operative Society.
15. The Secretary must notify in writing all fully paid up individual members of the Co-operative Party resident within the Parliamentary Constituency concerned, together with those members of the Executive Committee or Party Council entitled to attend. Except in special circumstances, these notices must be posted or otherwise dispatched so as to be received by all those persons entitled to receive them by not later than seven days before the date of the Selection Conference.
16. The procedure which must be adopted at the Selection Conference, with the NEC Representative present throughout, is as follows:
  - All the candidates must remain in a room apart from the meeting, except during the time when they are being interviewed by the members. Note: A candidate cannot take part in the meeting even if he/she is qualified to do so.



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- The candidates must be asked to ballot amongst themselves to decide their order of appearance.
- Arrangements must be made to ascertain, at the meeting, that all those in attendance are current members of the Co-operative Party and of a recognised Society.
- Any member who arrives after the first candidate has started speaking will not be eligible to vote in the Selection, and the Chair should stress this fact at the commencement of the meeting.
- Each candidate may be allowed up to a total of 20 minutes to both address the Conference and answer questions, as determined in accordance with Rule 8
- After all the candidates have been interviewed the Chair must then ask for a motion to be moved from the floor “That this Co-operative Party Selection Conference resolves to proceed to ballot”.
- If this motion is not carried it means that the members feel that none of the candidates are in their opinion suitable for submission to the Labour Party Selection Conference.
- In this event the Chair should recall the candidates and advise them accordingly. He/she should then ascertain whether the members desire to arrange a further Co-operative Party Selection Conference to interview a new short list of candidates, and if the decision is in favour of this and the Labour Party selection timetable allows, the NEC Representative will then make suitable arrangements for a further Selection Conference.
- Should the meeting carry the motion “That this Co-operative Party Selection Conference resolves to ballot” the Chair must call on the tellers. These tellers, who will act under the jurisdiction of the NEC Representative, must issue to and collect from every member entitled to vote a ballot paper. The tellers and the NEC Representative must count the votes cast and the result should be handed to the Chair to convey to the meeting.
- Unless there is an overall majority for one of the candidates, the candidate or candidates receiving the lowest number of votes should be declared not selected and the tellers must then issue further ballot papers so that the members can vote upon the remaining candidates on the list. Advice regarding second and subsequent ballots will be given by the NEC Representative and these must continue until one of the candidates has received an overall majority of votes. In the event of there being a tie between the two last remaining candidates, a further vote shall be taken and if this also results in a tie the decision shall be by lot.
- When the meeting has selected one of the candidates by means of these exhaustive ballots the Chair must then ask for a motion from the floor in the following terms: Resolved – “That this Co-operative Party Selection Conference nominates (name of successful candidate) to the Labour Party Selection Conference”. This motion must be voted upon by a show of hands, the figures being recorded in the minutes.
- After this has been done the Chair must call all the candidates into the Conference Room and without disclosing the actual voting figures should advise them which candidate has been selected by the Co-operative Party Selection Conference. An opportunity should be given for the successful candidate and representatives to then address the meeting for a few minutes each.



- Before the meeting terminates the Chair must call upon the NEC Representative to address the members present in connection with the steps which they should now undertake in support of their nominee.
17. It is accepted that it may not be possible for all the short list to attend and this may dilute the 50% quota. So long as every effort has been made to maintain a 50% quota by operating a reserve list of candidates, the Selection Conference may proceed.

### Parliamentary By-Election

18. In the event of a Parliamentary by-election, the NEC shall determine whether to make an official nomination.
19. The NEC, as far as practicable, shall co-operate with the appropriate Society Party Council and members resident in the relevant constituency in drawing up a timetable for selection of an official Co-operative Party nominee. This shall be in line with procedures above, modified as necessary to meet the circumstances of the particular by-election.

### The Nomination

20. After the Co-operative Party Selection Conference has concluded the Secretary and the selected nominee must complete the Labour Party's nomination form in the presence of the NEC Representative. He/she will also arrange for the letter of endorsement, which is required in the case of official candidates, to be sent direct to the CLP from Co-operative Party Head Office.
21. The nomination form together with the biographical details of the candidate must then be forwarded without delay to the Secretary of the Constituency Labour Party.
22. In the event of the Co-operative nominee being successful at the Labour Party Selection Conference, full details concerning the additional responsibilities of the Co-operative Party in respect of that constituency will be forwarded to the Secretary of the Constituency Labour Party.

### Unofficial Nominations

23. If a Branch or Borough Party wishes to make an unofficial nomination it must first obtain the permission of the Society Party to make the nomination. The procedure to be adopted in making the nomination is laid down below. It shall be overseen by the Party Council who shall be guided by the appropriate Co-operative Party National Official.
24. No nomination may be made against a sitting MP who is seeking re-selection in a Constituency in which they have a substantial territorial interest.
25. Unofficial nominations to Labour Party Parliamentary selections may be made by those members of a Branch or Borough Party resident or registered in the Parliamentary Constituency concerned.
26. The Secretary of the Branch or Borough Party shall give written notice at least seven clear days before the date at which the nomination is to be considered. Voting shall be by secret ballot. The National Official and Party Council Secretary should receive a copy of the notice.



- 27. In the event of a Co-operative Party being affiliated to a Constituency where there are fewer than five members resident or registered, then that nomination be exercised by the Branch, Borough or Society Party Executive jointly with those members and in accordance with procedures laid down above.
- 28. The quorum for a nomination meeting shall be five. In the event of a quorum not being present the Party Council shall be informed and they shall if they so wish make a nomination in accordance with these Rules.

**Sitting Official Co-operative MPs**

- 29. A meeting shall be convened by the NEC’s Representative.
- 30. The procedures to be used and those qualified to vote as defined above except that:
- 31. The meeting will be asked to consider a motion in the following terms:

The meeting of the Co-operative Party members affirm its support for .....MP, its Official Co-operative Member in ..... Constituency and resolves that the .....Branch Co-operative Party nominate him/her as the official Co-operative Candidate to the .....Labour Party when the selection process commences.

- 32. After the motion has been formally moved and seconded the sitting MP will be invited to address the meeting for no longer than 10 minutes.
- 33. The meeting may ask questions of the sitting MP for a further 10 minutes.
- 34. The meeting will proceed to vote on the motion by secret ballot.