

# LIBERTY

PROTECTING CIVIL LIBERTIES  
PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS

## **Rules of Elections, Postal Ballots and the Annual General Meeting**

As amended by the AGM 24 April 2004

### **1. THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

- 1.1 The Executive Committee shall give notice of an Annual General Meeting at the time provided for in paragraph 5 of the Council's Constitution and Rules.
- 1.2 Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall include the date and venue of the Annual General Meeting and an invitation to those entitled to receive notice to submit motions or constitutional amendments for inclusion in the preliminary Agenda. The form of submissions and the closing date shall be specified in the notice.
- 1.3 An individual member, local group or affiliated organisation may only propose or second a total of four motions (including constitutional amendments) for consideration at one Annual General Meeting.
- 1.4 At its first meeting after the specified dates provided for in Rule 1.2 the Executive Committee shall consider whether the motions submitted are in order and shall prepare a preliminary Agenda containing all those items of business which are in order. The Preliminary Agenda shall then be circulated to all those entitled to notice of the Annual General Meeting together with an invitation to submit amendments to the motions or composite motions circulated under Rule 1.4.
- 1.5 Identical motions shall be tabled as joint motions of those submitting them. The Executive Committee may draft composite motions and any such composite motions shall be circulated as part of the Preliminary Agenda.
- 1.6 The Executive Committee shall, where appropriate, group motions under appropriate headings within the preliminary Agenda.
- 1.7 The Executive Committee may, by giving notice to all those entitled to receive notice of the Annual General Meeting, invite them to submit Emergency Motions by 72 hours before the start of the AGM. Such Emergency Motions must relate to some matter on which it would not have been possible to have submitted a motion by the specified date.
- 1.8 The Executive Committee may, when it is necessary, include in the proposed final Agenda and Timetable only some of those matters of business of which notice has been given and which have been found to be in order. Before excluding any item of business under this Rule, the Executive Committee will consider any representations made by the person or organisation submitting the item. If the item is then rejected by the Executive Committee, the individual has the right to make representations to the Conference and Appeals Committee.

- 1.9 The Executive Committee shall produce a final Agenda and Timetable including the proposed order of business. The proposed final agenda and timetable shall be circulated at least seven days before the day appointed for the first session of the Annual General Meeting. Amendments to the proposed final Agenda and Timetable shall be moved and debated only at the first session of the Annual General Meeting. The final Agenda and Timetable shall not thereafter be challenged. The Executive Committee may, from time to time, suggest to the Annual General Meeting an alteration to the final Agenda and Timetable.
- 1.10 The following items shall be included in the agenda of the Annual General Meeting:
- (a) Any report of the Conference and Appeals Committee;
  - (b) The report of the Executive Committee
  - (c) The election of Tellers;
  - (d) The Annual Report on the work of Liberty during the preceding year;
  - (e) The audited accounts of Liberty for the previous year;
  - (f) A report from the Chair setting out the detail of every policy agreed by the Council since the report provided to the previous Annual General Meeting;
  - (g) Results of election to the Council;
  - (h) Business of which proper notice has been given according to these rules;
  - (i) Emergency business of which notice has been given.
- 1.11 Staffing and membership matters of a personal nature are the responsibility of the Executive Committee and are not competent business for the Annual General Meeting.
- 1.12 The Executive Committee will appoint a member of staff to perform the functions of the Credentials Committee of the Annual General Meeting.

## **2. ELECTIONS**

- 2.1 The Executive Committee is obliged to inform the Conference and Appeals Committee about the procedures for running the elections. The Conference and Appeals Committee is entitled to make any enquiries or investigations they consider necessary, and following consultation with the Executive Committee, may make changes to the election process.
- 2.2 The Executive Committee shall issue an invitation to all those entitled to receive notice to make nominations for those vacant places on the Council to be filled by postal ballot in accordance with clause 7.4(a) of the Constitution. The invitation shall specify a closing date which shall be not less than six weeks after the issue of the invitation.
- 2.3 The format of nomination forms shall be specified by the Executive Committee. Nomination and seconding shall be submitted on the nomination form or in the set format.

- 2.4 Candidates for election may submit a biography/manifesto in support of their nomination. This document must be received no later than the closing date for nominations and must not exceed 200 words in length. Any extra words after the 200th will be deleted.
- 2.5 Nominations in the set format, which may be separately completed by nominees, proposers and seconders, must be submitted to the Returning Officer by the date specified.
- 2.6 Once the validity of nomination has been confirmed or otherwise the Returning Officer shall arrange through the Director for the ballot paper and manifestos to be distributed to members and affiliates.
- 2.7 The format of the ballot paper and the order of listing of candidates shall be decided by the Returning Officer.
- 2.8 In the event of a dispute the Returning Officer shall make a ruling. If an individual or affiliate member does not accept this ruling they shall have the right of appeal to the Conference and Appeals Committee whose decision in matters of elections shall be final. Any appeal against a decision of the Returning Officer must be notified to the Returning Officer within ten working days of the written notification being received by the individual or affiliate.
- 2.9 It is the responsibility of candidates to ensure that they are available to receive communications in the month following the closing date for nominations.

### **3. ELIGIBILITY**

- 3.1 Candidates, and those nominating, proposing or seconding candidates or motions or amendments, must be Liberty members or affiliates at the appropriate closing date.
- 3.2 Nominations will be declared invalid if the papers are not properly completed or the time limits or membership requirements are not adhered to.
- 3.3 After the close of nominations the Returning Officer will submit to the Director a list of names and addresses of candidates and their nominators and seconders and request confirmation that, at the closing date, all the persons and organisations listed were members or affiliates in good standing as determined by rule 10.3 of the Constitution.
- 3.4 If in respect of any person or organisation the Director is unable to provide the relevant confirmation, the Returning Officer shall write within ten working days of the close of nominations to those whose membership validity is under question. Those persons or organisations will have ten working days from the dispatch of the letter to clarify any ambiguity. Clarification shall not permit the use of rule 10.3(b) to allow reinstatement of a membership which has lapsed by virtue of rule 10.3(a). Members and affiliates are responsible for ensuring that their membership subscriptions are up to date.

### **4. POSTAL BALLOTS**

- 4.1 The Director, or their deputy shall normally undertake the role of the Returning Officer.

- 4.2 Council elections, Constitutional amendments and any other matter which the Annual general Meeting so decides shall be determined by a membership ballot.
- 4.3 The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the conduct of any such ballots.
- 4.4 The format of the ballot papers shall be decided by the Executive Committee.
- 4.5 The Executive Committee may conduct the ballots themselves or appoint some other organisation such as the Electoral Reform Society to perform the task as they see fit.