

Labour Business Group Constitution and Rules



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1. NAME

The name of the Group shall be **Labour Business** (hereinafter "the Group").

2. OBJECTS

2.1 The Objects of the Group are to promote the interests of the Labour Party in furtherance of the cause of socialism, particularly in the fields of economics, finance, industry and commerce.

2.2 In pursuance of these objects, the Group shall:

(a) Give advice and assistance, particularly in regard to economic, financial, industrial, commercial and cognate matters, to the PLP and to other national, regional and local organisations of the Labour Party, Trade Unions, Co-operative Societies and Parties.

(b) Engage in any other activity appropriate to achieve the objects of the Group.

3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Membership of the Group is open to:

(a) Any person who is an individual member of the Labour Party, who supports the objects of the Group and is engaged professionally or occupationally in the fields of economics, finance, industry or commerce.

(b) Any other person, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, provided always that such a person shall be an individual member of the Labour Party.

3.2 Any person who is not a member of the Labour Party, but is otherwise qualified for membership, may be accepted by the Executive Committee as an associate member of the Group. No person shall be an associate who is not (or, if ordinarily resident, would not be) eligible for individual membership of the Labour Party.

3.3 Associate members shall not hold office or be entitled to vote at any general meeting, or in any election of officers or of members of the Executive Committee, but in other respects shall be deemed to be full members of the Group.

3.4 Any person seeking to become a member of the Group shall send to the Secretary an application in a form approved by the Executive Committee, and all applications for membership shall be dealt with in such manner as the Executive Committee may direct.

3.5 It shall be in the absolute discretion of the Executive Committee (EC), without giving grounds for their decision, to decline to accept an application for membership or to decline to accept the renewal of a subscription of any member. The EC may expel members of the Group for conduct which, in its opinion, is detrimental to the interests of the Group or the Labour Party. Such expulsion shall be subject to appeal to the President within 7 days. If the President disagrees with the decision of the EC, the expulsion shall become a suspension and the President shall express his view to the Annual General Meeting (if it is to be held within 90 days – otherwise the EC shall

call a Special General Meeting to discuss the expulsion within 90 days). Any expulsions, even if the President agrees with them or there is no appeal, shall be reported to the subsequent General Meeting of the Group.

- 3.6 If the subscription to the Group of any member is unpaid at the expiration of three months from the date when it becomes due, the Executive Committee shall, notwithstanding any forbearance given to such member, have power to declare the person concerned to be no longer a member of the Group and, upon such declaration being made, such person shall forthwith for all purposes cease to be a member of the Group, without prejudice to the power of the Executive Committee upon application being made accompanied by arrears of subscription, to declare that person or body to be reinstated as a member of the Group.
- 3.7 If a member resigns or ceases to be eligible for membership, the Group shall be entitled to retain as a donation any subscription or other monies which he may thereafter pay to the Group.

4. POLICIES

Views expressed at meetings or in publications sponsored, organised or published by the Group shall be clearly identified as representing the views of the individual(s) concerned and not necessarily of the Group, unless expressly authorised by the Executive Committee.

5. OFFICERS

- 5.1 The Officers of the Group shall consist of the Chairman of the Executive Committee, one Secretary, four Vice Chairmen and one Treasurer, elected or appointed as hereinafter provided.
- 5.2 The Executive Committee may appoint a person to fill a vacancy among the Officers of the Group and any person so appointed shall hold office until the conclusion of the annual general meeting next following his appointment.
- 5.3 The Executive Committee may appoint additional officers to assist in the management of the Group but persons so appointed shall not, by virtue of such appointment, be members of the Executive Committee.
- 5.4 The Executive Committee may appoint such honorary officers as it may deem appropriate, including an honorary President and honorary Vice Presidents, but persons so appointed shall not, by virtue of such appointment, be members of the Executive Committee.

6. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 6.1 The sole executive authority within the Group, except during General Meetings, shall rest with an Executive Committee consisting of the officers of the Group and, until the first annual general meeting, of 10 other members co-opted as hereinafter provided. Thereafter the Executive Committee shall include 7 elected members and not more than 3 co-opted members.
- 6.2 The Executive Committee may co-opt a number of members of the Group (not exceeding the number permitted under paragraph 6.1 of this clause) to serve as members of the Executive Committee, and may in addition appoint members of the Group to fill vacancies arising during the

course of the year among the elected or co-opted members of the Executive Committee. Any person so co-opted or appointed shall hold office until the conclusion of the annual general meeting following his co-option or appointment.

- 6.3 The quorum of the Executive Committee shall be five members thereof. The proceedings of the Executive Committee shall not be invalidated by reason of any vacancy among its members.
- 6.4 The Executive Committee shall have power to appoint sub-committees consisting of members of the Group to assist in carrying out any of the objects of the Group, provided that wherever practicable at least one member of each sub-committee shall be a member of the Executive Committee.
- 6.5 The members of the Executive Committee shall be indemnified out of the funds of the Group against all liabilities and expenses which they may incur in the management of the Group.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 7.1 The officers of the Group and the elected members of the Executive Committee shall be elected at each annual general meeting and shall hold office from the conclusion of the meeting at which they are elected until the conclusion of the next ensuing annual general meeting.
- 7.2 Written nomination for election as an officer of the Group or as an elected member of the Executive Committee shall be signed by not fewer than two members of the Group other than the person nominated and countersigned by the nominee. Nomination forms shall reach the Secretary not less than 21 days before the date fixed for the annual general meeting.
- 7.3 Where the number of persons nominated for any office exceeds the number of persons to be elected, the Secretary shall send ballot papers for the election to the office to all members of the Group with the agenda for the annual general meeting at which the election is to be held. Ballot papers shall be returnable to the Secretary not later than a time which is not later than 24 hours before the time fixed for the commencement of the annual general meeting. All valid papers received by the Secretary in accordance with this clause shall be counted in accordance with the arrangements made by the Executive Committee and the result shall be declared at the annual general meeting.
- 7.4 Any election shall be carried out as follows:

A. Nominations – Faxes and Email

In the notice of the AGM, nominations shall be sought in accordance with Rule 7(2). The Secretary will accept nominations by fax or email, provided the same message as has been faxed is later received by post – even if the posted confirmation is after the deadline.

B. Documents Supporting Nominations

The Secretary shall circulate for all candidates their own supporting statements. These must reach him in time for the close of nominations. They shall be circulated with the ballot papers.

Statements will be accepted as follows:

- Candidates for the Chair, President or Secretary: 500 words and a photo.
- Candidates for Vice President or Vice Chair x2: 200 words.
- Candidates for Treasurer or the Executive x7: 100 words.

These shall constitute the maximum entry and shall include anything the candidate would wish to say about his/her candidacy or the candidacy/ies of others. The Secretary shall read the statements before circulating them for the following reasons only:

- To count the number of words; if the number is exceeded, no part of the statement shall be distributed.
- To check for any scurrilous statement about other candidates or other remark which could either embarrass the Group or the Party; in these cases, after consulting with the Chair, the Secretary shall ask the candidate to edit the statement; if he or she refuses to do so, then the statement shall be distributed with the scurrilous part omitted if the candidate states that this shall be acceptable or not part of the statement shall be distributed.

C. Ballot Papers

Ballot papers shall be numbered. Each shall have a different number. Also on the ballot paper shall be the closing date and the full postal address for it to be sent to or delivered. Everyone eligible to vote shall receive an addressed envelope marked "LFIG Ballot"; ballot papers returned in these envelopes shall be the only ones counted – this shall also be made clear on the ballot paper. The envelopes shall not be opened before the count.

D. The Count

The count shall take place on the same day as, but before, the AGM. All candidates shall be notified of the time and place and shall be invited to attend. The actual counting shall be supervised by the Secretary, except in the case of a contest for his post, in which case it shall be supervised by the Chair or his appointee. There shall be two tellers selected by the Secretary from amongst the members who are not candidates.

8. GENERAL MEETINGS

- 8.1 A general meeting of the Group shall be held in the first half of every calendar year, and in this constitution is referred to as the annual general meeting.
- 8.2 At least six weeks' advance notice shall be given to members of the Group of the date of the annual general meeting.
- 8.3 A special general meeting may be convened at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

- 8.4 A special general meeting shall be convened by the Secretary at the written request of not fewer than 15% of all the members of the Group specifying the purpose for which the meeting is to be held.
- 8.5 Any member of the Group desiring to move a motion at a special general meeting convened pursuant to paragraph 8.4 of this clause shall ensure that the terms thereof are incorporated in the written request for the meeting to be convened.
- 8.6 A special general meeting pursuant to paragraph 8.4 of this clause shall be convened at not less than 14 days' notice for a date within 28 days of the receipt by the Secretary of the request for the meeting to be convened, provided that it shall not be obligatory to convene a general meeting pursuant to paragraph 8.4 of this clause for a date within six weeks of any other general meeting of the Group.
- 8.7 The quorum for a general meeting shall be 15% of all members of the Group. If no quorum shall be present within 30 minutes of the announced time of an annual general meeting, the meeting shall stand adjourned for 14 days, and at the adjourned annual general meeting the quorum shall consist of the members then present. No notice of the adjourned meeting shall be required except in the case of a change of venue.
- 8.8 At all general meetings, the Chair shall be taken by the Chairman of the Group or, in his absence, by a member of the Executive Committee.
- 8.9 At a general meeting no decision shall be made on any matter which the Chairman of the meeting rules to be contentious unless in his opinion the agenda for that meeting gave to members a fair opportunity of knowing that the matter in question was to be considered at the meeting.
- 8.10 Notice of any meeting shall be deemed to have been effectively given to each member on the date on which the notice is posted to him at the address last notified to him by the Secretary inadvertent failure to post any notice or to address it correctly shall not invalidate the proceedings at the meeting.

9. MOTIONS AND AGENDA

- 9.1 Any member of the Group desiring to move a motion at an annual general meeting shall give written notice thereof, incorporating the terms of the motion, to the Secretary not less than 28 days before the date fixed for the annual general meeting.
- 9.2 The Executive Committee may include any motion, or an amendment to any motion, in the agenda for any general meeting.
- 9.3 The agenda for every annual general meeting shall include:
- (a) The presentation of an annual report on behalf of the Executive Committee.
 - (b) The presentation of a report by the Treasurer with audited accounts of the Group.
 - (c) The declaration of the election of officers and other members of the Executive Committee.
 - (d) And the appointment of professional auditors for the ensuing year.

- 9.4 The agenda for any general meeting shall be posted to all members of the Group not less than 14 days before the date fixed for the meeting.

10. SUBSCRIPTIONS

10.1 The annual meeting shall determine the annual subscription payable by members other than existing life members of either the 1972 Industry Group or LEFTA. In the first instance, the subscription shall be a minimum of £15 due and payable on the first day of each calendar month after 1983.

10.2 The Executive Committee may take what measures it deems necessary to secure financial support for the Group by way of contributions, donations or grants in aid.

11. ACCOUNTS

11.1 The Treasurer shall cause proper books of account to be kept to the extent necessary to show a true and fair view of the Group's affairs and to explain its transactions.

11.2 The auditors of the Group shall be appointed by the members in annual general meeting. Casual vacancies in the office of Auditor shall be filled by the Executive Committee.

11.3 At each annual general meeting the audited accounts of the Group in respect of the preceding year shall be presented by the Treasurer or by some person acting on his behalf. Such accounts will consist of an Income and Expenditure Account for the year and Balance Sheet as at the end of the year.

11.4 The Executive Committee shall make appropriate banking arrangements for the Group and shall determine signatories for such accounts.

12. RESIGNATIONS, ETC

12.1 An officer of the group or a member of the Executive Committee may resign from office at any time on giving notice to the Secretary to that effect.

12.2 If a member of the Executive Committee shall be absent from three consecutive quorate meetings, the Executive Committee, except for a reason accepted by the Executive Committee, he shall, on a resolution of the Executive Committee being passed to that effect, be deemed to have resigned from office as a member of the Executive Committee, and as an officer of the Group if he was holding such an office.

13. DISSOLUTION

13.1 The Group shall only be dissolved at an annual or special general meeting by a two thirds majority of those present and voting.

13.2 In the event of dissolution, the Executive Committee shall recommend to the said meeting the manner in which the assets of the Group, if any, shall be used. The assets shall then be applied in such manner as the meeting shall determine after providing for all liabilities of the Group.

14. INTERPRETATION OF CONSTITUTION

Any question as to the meaning or application of this Constitution arising during the course of a general meeting shall be determined by the Chairman of the meeting, and any such question arising at any other time shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

15. ALTERATION OF CONSTITUTION

This Constitution may be altered at any duly convened annual or special general meeting by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.

16. BRANCHES

16.1 Any Branch which has been duly constituted in accordance with the Model Branch Constitution adopted by the Executive Committee from time to time ("the Model Branch Constitution") may apply to the Executive Committee for affiliation to the Group.

16.2 The Executive Committee may in its sole discretion approve or disapprove such application for affiliation.

16.3 Every affiliated Branch must comply with the following conditions of affiliation:

16.3.1 Pay such percentage of its subscription income to the Group as may be determined from time to time by the Executive Committee;

16.3.2 Adhere to its Model Branch Constitution and to the letter and spirit of this Constitution;

16.3.3 Clearly identify any views expressed at meetings or in publications sponsored, organised or published by the Branch as representing the views of the individual(s) concerned and not necessarily of the Branch or of the Group, unless expressly authorised by the Executive Committee or by the Chair on behalf of the Executive Committee;

16.3.4 Do nothing to bring into disrepute the Branch, the Group, or the Labour Party, or any member thereof.

16.4 Subject to compliance with Clause 16.3, an affiliated Branch may:

16.4.1 Use the Labour Business name and logo;

16.4.2 Appoint a delegate who shall be entitled to attend the meetings of the Executive Committee as an honorary officer, but such persons shall not, by virtue of such appointment, be members of the Executive Committee.

16.5 The Executive Committee may at any time suspend or revoke the affiliation of any Branch which has not (in the reasonable opinion of the Executive Committee) complied with Clause 16.3, in

which case the relevant Branch shall immediately cease to use the Labour Business name and logo.

16.6 The Executive Committee may in its sole discretion renew or revoke the affiliation of any Branch on an annual basis.