



# Disability Labour



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**PROPOSED CONSTITUTION**

<b>PROPOSED CONSTITUTION</b> .....	2
<b>A. Name</b> .....	2
<b>B. Administration</b> .....	2
<b>C. Aims and Objectives</b> .....	2
<b>D. Membership</b> .....	3
<b>E. Officers</b> .....	4
<b>F. Executive Committee</b> .....	5
<b>G. Election of the Executive Committee</b> .....	6
<b>H. Meetings and Proceedings of the Executive Committee</b> .....	7
<b>I. Receipts and Expenditure</b> .....	8
<b>J. Accounts</b> .....	8
<b>K. Annual General Meeting</b> .....	9
<b>L. Special General Meetings</b> .....	10
<b>M. Procedure at General Meetings</b> .....	10
<b>N. Notices</b> .....	10
<b>O. Alterations to the Constitution</b> .....	11
<b>P. Dissolution</b> .....	11

## **PROPOSED CONSTITUTION**

### **A. Name**

1. The name of the organisation is Disability Labour, referred to below as 'the group'.

### **B. Administration**

1. The group is a non-incorporated association affiliated to the Labour party.
2. The group shall be administered and managed in accordance with this constitution by members of the Executive Committee.

### **C. Aims and Objectives**

1. The group recognises that disability is a socially constructed experience resulting from environmental, economic and social barriers faced by disabled people and aims to remove those barriers and eliminate marginalising attitudes.
2. To that end the group's objectives are:
  - a. To influencing the Labour Party internally to improve the rights of disabled people and their carers both inside and outside of the Labour party and to advocate for changes in wider policy which impact the lives of disabled people and carers.
  - b. To produce robust evidence about the experience of disabled people and their carers to shape public policy.
  - c. To campaign publicly about the rights of disabled people and their carers to achieve full civil rights including comprehensive and enforceable legislation.

- d. To provide an independent platform for disabled people and their carers in the Labour Party
- e. To monitor and encourage the best possible practice by The Labour Party within party operations and in public office at all levels to meet the needs, rights and interests of disabled people and their carers.
- f. To encourage disabled people to join the Labour Party and encourage their fullest involvement at all levels and secure the removal of all barriers to their participation.
- g. To advise Labour how best to campaign for and win the votes of disabled people, which will include accessible processes.
- h. To co-operate with other disabled people's organisations.
- i. To be a socialist society as a means of securing the right of disabled people to be represented and heard at all levels of the Party.

#### **D. Membership**

1. Membership of the group shall be open to:
  - a) Any individual eligible for membership of the Labour Party who:
    - consider themselves to be a disabled person, and,
    - are interested in furthering the work of the group and who have paid any annual subscription laid down from time to time by the Executive Committee (any such person being called in this constitution an "Individual member")
  - b) Any individual eligible for membership of the Labour Party to whom sub-clause (1a) does not apply who are interested in

furthering the work of the group and who have paid any annual subscription laid down from time to time by the Executive Committee (any such person being called in this constitution an “Individual Supporter”).

- c) Any Labour Party body or Labour Party affiliated organisation or part thereof which is interested in furthering the group’s work and has paid any annual subscription laid down from time to time by the Executive Committee (any such body being called in this constitution a “Member Organisation”)
2. The Executive Committee shall establish a disciplinary process for members. The disciplinary process shall include the ability to suspend or terminate the membership of any Individual Member or Member Organisation or Individual Supporter. This process must include the right to a hearing and an appeals process.

## **E. Officers**

1. At the first meeting of the Executive Committee after the Annual General Meeting of the group, the members of the Executive Committee shall elect from amongst themselves the following officers:
  - a) chair
  - b) vice-chair
  - c) deputy vice chair
  - d) secretary
  - e) membership officer
  - f) treasurer
2. The executive committee should aim for a gender balance in the election of officers.
3. Officers shall be eligible for re-election.

4. The Executive Committee may create functional positions to carry out specific duties and for a specific period. Any such position shall fall vacant at the first meeting of the Executive Committee after each Annual General Meeting.

#### **F. Executive Committee**

1. The Executive Committee shall consist of fifteen Individual Members elected at the group's AGM.
2. Any executive member vacancy shall be filled by holding of a by-election. Should no candidates be forthcoming for the by-election, the Executive Committee may fill the vacancy by co-opting an Individual Member. Any co-option shall be made by majority vote of the Executive Committee.
3. In addition to those members provided for above, the executive committee may co-opt not more than four non-voting members. Each appointment as a co-opted member shall be made by majority vote of the members of the Executive Committee. Co-opted members shall be Individual Members or Individual Supporters.
4. All members of the Executive Committee shall retire from office at the end of the Annual General Meeting following the next executive committee election unless re-elected.
5. The proceedings of the Executive Committee shall not be invalidated by any vacancy among their number subject to the quorum being met.
6. The executive committee shall incorporate within its standing orders rules for managing absence by members of the executive committee.
7. These must include the following provisions:

- a) Any member that is absent without the permission of the Executive Committee from all their meetings held within a period of six months shall cease to be a member of the committee
  - b) Any member that is absent for three consecutive meetings where the Executive Committee resolve that their office be vacated shall cease to be a member of the committee
8. Any executive member that notifies the Executive Committee of their wish to resign shall cease to be a member of the executive committee upon receipt of the notification.

### **G. Election of the Executive Committee**

1. Elections for the executive committee shall coincide with every alternate AGM.
2. All positions on the executive committee shall be elected at the same time.
3. Any paid-up full member of the group at the commencement of nominations shall be eligible for nomination.
4. Invitations for nominations will be issued with the preliminary notice of the AGM.
5. Nominations will close at 19 days before the AGM at 6pm.
6. If at close of nominations, the number of candidates nominated is less than or equal to the number of positions available, then all candidates will be deemed to have been elected unopposed.
7. If the number of candidates exceeds the number of spaces available, the order in which candidates appear in the candidate information pack will be determined by a draw to take place the day after nominations close.
8. Voting shall open 16 days prior to the AGM and close 2 days prior to the AGM at 6pm.
9. Voting shall be carried out using a secure online voting system to be agreed beforehand by the executive committee. Any system used must ensure the anonymity of the vote and must not be able

to display any results or tallies of any candidates prior to the close of the ballot.

10. The result of the ballot can be released to all candidates in confidence after the close of the ballot.
11. All results shall remain embargoed until formally announced at the AGM.

#### **H. Meetings and Proceedings of the Executive Committee**

1. The Executive Committee may make standing orders for the conduct of their business, the summoning and conduct of their meeting and the custody of documents. No rules may be made which are inconsistent with this constitution. These standing orders must include the requirement to hold at least 8 ordinary executive committee meetings a year.
2. Seven days' notice must be given of all meetings of the executive committee. This notice must include the date, time, location of the meeting and the business to be conducted. For online meetings, location shall be interpreted as meaning a link to the online meeting.
3. A special executive meeting may be called by any executive officer or by any five (5) members of the Executive Committee. Special meetings shall be subject to the same notice requirements as normal executive committee meetings.
4. The Chair shall normally act as the chair at meetings of the Executive Committee.
5. If the Chair is absent from any meeting or part thereof, the Vice Chair shall act as chair. In the absence of the Vice-Chair, the Deputy Vice Chair shall officiate.
6. In the absence of the Chair, Vice Chair and Deputy Vice Chair, the members of Executive Committee present shall elect one of their number to act as the chair of the meeting before any other business is transacted.
7. There shall be a quorum when at least four (4) members of the Executive Committee are present at the meeting, of which one member must be an Officer of the group.



8. Every matter shall be determined by a majority of votes of the members on the Executive Committee present and voting on the question but in the case of an equality of votes the chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
9. The Executive Committee shall keep minutes of proceedings at meetings of the Executive Committee and any advisory committees, sub-committees and working parties.
10. The Executive Committee may from time to time appoint leading Labour Party members who are disabled, carers of disabled people or who are disability activists to be Honorary Patrons.
11. The Executive Committee may appoint advisory committees, sub-committees and working parties, provided that all acts and proceedings of any such advisory committees, sub-committees and working parties are subject to the scrutiny and control of the executive committee.
12. A member of the Executive Committee shall cease to hold office if they cease to be eligible for Membership of Disability Labour.

### **I. Receipts and Expenditure**

1. The funds of the group, including all donations contributions and bequests, shall be paid into an account or accounts opened by the Executive Committee in the name of the group at such bank as the Executive Committee shall decide. All cheques and mandates drawn on these accounts should have two (2) signatures, at least one (1) of which should be the Treasurer.
2. The funds belonging to the group shall be applied only in furthering its objects.

### **J. Accounts**

1. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for:
  - a) The keeping of accounting records for the group.
  - b) The preparation of annual statement of accounts for the group.
  - c) Arranging the auditing or independent examination of the statements of accounts of the group.

## **K. Annual General Meeting**

1. There shall be an Annual General Meeting of the group not less than nine 9 months and not more than 18 months after the preceding Annual General Meeting.
2. Annual General Meetings may be held using one of the following methods at the discretion of the Executive Committee:
  - a) online
  - b) in person
  - c) a hybrid of option a) and b)
3. Every Annual General Meeting shall be called by the Executive Committee.
4. The Group Secretary shall give at least 40 days' notice of the date, method and where applicable, the place of the Annual General Meeting to all members of the group. This notice shall be called the 'preliminary notice'.
5. The Group Secretary shall give at least 14 days' notice of the business of the Annual General Meeting to all members of the group. This notice shall be called the 'final notice'.
6. Individual Members and Individual Supporters shall be entitled to attend the meeting and have speaking rights. Affiliated organisations may only be represented at the meeting by individual members of the group.
7. Only full members as of the date of issue of the preliminary notice and having paid any subscription in full shall be entitled to a vote at the AGM.
8. The Annual General Meeting shall be chaired by the Chair, in the Chair's absence, by the Vice-Chair or in their absence by the Deputy Vice Chair.
9. At each Annual General Meeting, the Executive Committee shall present the Annual Report and the accounts of the group for the preceding financial year for agreement. The financial year shall run from 1<sup>st</sup> March to the last day of February the following year.
10. The business of the AGM shall also include:
  - Constitutional changes
  - Results of elections for members of the Executive Committee

- Motions
  - And any other legal/statutory business determined by the Executive Committee.
11. Motions to the AGM will need to be submitted to the secretary 19 days before the AGM. All motions will need to be proposed and seconded by a full member of the group.
  12. The full text of motions will be published with the final notice of the AGM.
  13. Amendments to motions will be taken at the AGM. Where possible, amendments to motions should be submitted prior to the commencement of the AGM.

#### **L. Special General Meetings**

1. The Executive Committee may call a special general meeting of the group at any time. If at least sixty percent (60%) of its members request such a meeting in writing stating the business to be considered the Executive Secretary shall call such a meeting. At least 40 days' notice must be given. The notice must state the date, place and the business to be discussed. Only business included in the notice may be transacted. This notice is both the preliminary and final notice of such a meeting.

#### **M. Procedure at General Meetings**

1. The Secretary or other person specially appointed by the Executive Committee shall keep a full record at every General Meeting of the group.

#### **N. Notices**

1. Where this Constitution requires a notice to be sent to a member, it shall be sent to them in writing or such other format media as the member shall specify. It shall ordinarily be sent by electronic mail. It may be sent by letter post, facsimile transmission, or some other means if the member agrees.

2. In the case of post it shall be deemed received three days after the date of posting. In all other cases the date of transmission shall be treated as the date of receipt.

### **O. Alterations to the Constitution**

1. The Constitution may be altered by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting at a general meeting. The final notice of the general meeting must include notice of any changes to the said constitution.

### **P. Dissolution**

1. If the Executive Committee decides that it is necessary or desirable to dissolve the group it shall call a General Meeting of the group or place such a proposal on the agenda of the Annual General Meeting.
2. The proposal shall require the support of two-thirds (2/3rd) of those present and voting at the General Meeting.
3. The Executive Committee shall then give or transfer any or all remaining assets to such other organisation(s) having objects similar to the objects of the group as decided by the General Meeting.