

Brighton & Hove Liberal Democrats

ROLES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Updated 23-Sep-2022

For Federal Party supporting resources, please follow,

<https://www.libdems.org.uk/lpo-training>

This document provides details of the different ways members can become more involved in the local party as a member of the Brighton & Hove Lib Dems Executive Committee: as a Constitutional Officer, as an Ordinary Member with a specific role, as an Ordinary Member without a specific role.

Constitutional Officers

- Chair
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Data Officer
- Membership Development Officer
- Vice Chair

Ordinary Member Roles

- Diversity Officer
- Media & Communications Officer
- Social Media Officer
- Ordinary Member

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

1. CHAIR

The Chair's role in their local party is to provide guidance and leadership to the local party executive. It is one of the key roles in any local party.

The Chair ensures the local party is working to an agreed vision and development plan. The Chair is accountable for ensuring the local party meets legal and party requirements and is, along with the Treasurer, one of the two signatories on the local party accounts.

The role of Chair can vary considerably, depending on the size of the local party, level of activity, skill set of officer team and the culture and tradition of your team. In smaller local parties, the Chair may carry out a fair amount of the work themselves; in larger parties, the role may be more of an enabler, facilitator, manager or leader of an officer team.

Nevertheless, there are some common responsibilities.

Key Tasks

- [Chair the Local Party Executive meetings](#).
- Take responsibility, with the [Treasurer](#), to make sure that there is compliance with legal requirements, including [GDPR](#).
- Ensure that the Local Party is run according to the local party and national constitution.
- Ensure that candidate selection takes place and is carried out according to the rules in the Local Party constitution.
- Ensure that the Local Party has an action programme and is working to fulfil it.
- Ensure that all Executive members have the opportunity and are encouraged to be involved in delivering the Local Party's objectives.
- Handle complaints and be involved in any disciplinary matters, should they arise.
- Actively develop other members of your local party, with a view to them becoming officers in future.
- Develop a good working relationship with the Council Group Leader.

Skills & Attributes

Being a Chair can be hard work, it can be fun, and it can be hugely rewarding. The key skills you will need to use are:

- Organisation
- Influencing
- People management
- Mediation
- Public speaking
- Leadership

Help & Support

- You can join the Liberal Democrats [Local Party Officers](#) Facebook Group, to make contact and share best practice with other officers.
- To make contact with Lib Dem campaigners around the country, find out what they are doing and swap ideas, join the [Lib Dem Campaigners](#) group on Facebook.
- To find out how the Liberal Democrats use digital technology for their campaigns, join the [Lib Dem Digital Campaigning Forum](#), also on Facebook.

How to Apply

It is a constitutional requirement for each local party to have a Chair. Chairs are elected each year at your local party's AGM. Any member of your local party can stand to be the Chair. You can hold the post for a maximum of three consecutive years.

2. TREASURER

The Treasurer is one of the key roles of any local party. Along with the Chair, you are one of two signatories on the local party, and have direct responsibility and accountability for its activities.

The Treasurer's role is to have strategic ownership of expenditure and income, such as preparing budgets and financial targets for discussion by others and advising on the implications of spending decisions. The treasurer is also responsible for the practical side of managing the local party's finances, such as paying in bills, managing the payroll (if your local party has staff), and producing financial reports.

Key Tasks

- Prepare a budget for the year.
- Prepare reports for monthly or bi-monthly Executive Meetings, regarding account, income and expenditure.
- [Submit monthly donation reports to the national party in accordance with PPERA rules.](#)
- [Complete end of year accounts](#), and submit them to Party HQ.
- Ahead of elections, work with the campaign team and the [Agent](#) to agree budgets for the Agent to stick to during the campaign. The Agent is responsible for campaign spending during the campaign.
- Be responsible for any banking requirements.
- Processing payroll and pensions for any Local Party employees.

Skills & Attributes

- Capable of handling figures.
- Have experience of handling budgets and controlling finances.
- Strong attention to detail.
- Able to understand regulations.

Help & Support

- Join the Local Party Officers [Facebook Group](#).
- Learn more about the party's preferred accountancy software, [Xero](#).
- For more advice, contact the HQ Compliance Department on 020 7022 0988
- Download a [template budget spreadsheet](#) for managing your local party's finances.
- Access the [latest reporting templates from the Compliance team here](#).
- [You can find fundraising resources here.](#)

How to Apply

It is a constitutional requirement for each local party to have a Treasurer. Treasurers are elected each year at your local party's AGM. Any member of your local party can stand to be the Treasurer.

3. SECRETARY

The Secretary role is important because good administration is key to running the local party and ensuring that the party is ready at election times. Being organised year-round means you'll stay organised when it matters most.

The role of local party Secretary is to ensure that the party functions effectively and in accordance with the local, regional, national and federal party constitutions. The Secretary ensures that the processes and rules laid out in the constitution are enacted, and that the decisions made by the local party's executive committee are constitutional.

Key tasks

- Arrange executive meetings, including circulating [the agenda](#).
- [Minute executive meetings](#) and ensure an accurate record of them is kept, especially the [decisions and agreed actions](#).
- Arrange the local party AGM.
- Ensure decisions are consistent with constitutional requirements.
- Make arrangements for election or selection of local executive officers and party candidates, and ensure that these are done in line with proper procedure.
- Efficient handling of general administration, including correspondence with Lib Dem HQ, and keeping records of local party officers up to date.
- Work with the local party [Chair](#) to produce a work plan, and supporting the Chair to chase actions.

Skills & Attributes

Being a good Secretary would suit somebody with a passion for administration who enjoys being part of a team. Some of the key skills and attributes you will need are:

- IT literacy.
- Administrative skills.
- Written skills
- Patience and persistence.
- Objectivity.

Help & Support

- Join the Local Party Officers [Facebook Group](#).
- Read the [Model Constitution for Local Parties](#), to see in detail what you would be responsible for.

How to Apply

The Secretary is a role on the local party executive. As such it is elected each year at your local party's AGM. Any member of the party can stand to be Secretary.

4. DATA OFFICER

The Data Officer is the person with overall responsibility for the use and maintenance of data at a local party level.

Data Officers typically have logins to at least one of up to three databases which the party uses. In the context of campaigns and elections, the Data Officer supports the local party and candidates to use data effectively and intelligently, to run targeted campaigns.

Key Tasks

- Manage your local party's campaign data, using Connect.
- Manage your local party's membership data, using Lighthouse.
- Manage email lists, using Prater Raines.
- Manipulate and use data for local campaigns, and produce data as required.
- Ensure that data is processed in accordance with the party data protection rules.
- Collect marked registers and oversee the data work involved after each election.

Skills & Attributes

Being a Data Officer gives you great influence, and it can enable you to make a big difference to the success of your local party. A good Data Officer would be somebody who:

- Is a confident user of software.
- Has excellent attention to detail.
- Is analytical and observant.
- Enjoys using data to solve problems.
- Can understand and enforce regulations.

Help & Support

- You can join the [Liberal Democrats Local Party Officers Facebook group](#), to make contact and share best practice with other officers.
- For peer-to-peer help with learning and using Connect, join the [Connect Users Facebook group](#).
- Similarly, for help with Prater Raines, there is [a Users group, also on Facebook](#).
- Connect training resources on Lib Dem Learning.
- Lighthouse training resources on Lib Dem Learning.

How to Apply

The Data Officer is a position on the local party Executive Committee. As such, it is elected each year at the local party AGM. All local party members are eligible to stand.

5. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Managing your local party's membership is a big task but is also a highly rewarding one. It suits well organised people with great personal skills. In Brighton & Hove Lib Dems this role works in close collaboration with the Data Officer.

You are the main point of contact for most members, making sure that they are involved with the Lib Dem community where you live. You will arrange a wide range of events for members and supporters to attend (generally face-to-face but also on-line, especially in accordance with the Coronavirus Pandemic restrictions) and get them involved with campaigning. You've also got the important job of being the local party lead on recruiting new members, which can be in collaboration with the Diversity Officer.

Key tasks

- [Communicate regularly with your members](#) by email and post (and maintain accurate contact details to enable this).
- Aim for all members to be personally contacted on at least an annual basis and record the data on this interaction.
- Encourage local members to get involved in campaigning on both a local and national level.
- Work with Chair to prepare a regular local party newsletter
- Organise a varied programme of events to inspire members to get involved and to have opportunities to meet each other (speaker events, debates, social events, visits to local businesses, fundraisers...)
- Be the local party's lead person for recruiting new members.
- Report to the local party Executive Meetings.
- Work in close collaboration with the **Data Officer** to
 - [Send an initial contact email from your local party to all new members when they join, with details of how to get involved.](#)
 - Ensure personal contact (phone/doorstep) is attempted with all new members and details about them are recorded on Connect.
 - Monitor lapsing members each quarter and [ensure personal contact is made with lapsing members.](#)

Skills & Attributes

Being a great membership secretary means you'll need a few key skills and attributes:

- A good all-round communicator.
- Someone with strong attention to detail and good administrative skills.
- A good event organiser.
- Someone who is friendly and approachable, with good all-round people skills.

Help & Support

- If you are a membership officer and you would access to a shared folder of resources, you can request it by emailing help@libdems.org.uk.
- Join the [Local Party Officers](#) Facebook group.
- For peer-to-peer help with learning and using Connect, join the [Connect Users](#) Facebook group.
- Similarly, for help with Prater Raines, Membership Officers can join the [Prater Raines Users Facebook group](#).
- To find out how the Liberal Democrats use digital technology for their campaigns, join the [Lib Dem Digital Campaigning Forum](#) Facebook group.
- Membership Officers also have access to the [Liberal Democrat Membership Officers and Portal Users](#) group, also on Facebook.

How to Apply

The Membership officer is a role on the local party executive. As such it is elected each year at your local party's AGM. Any member of the party can stand to be Membership officer. In England and Wales it is referred to as Membership Development Officer (or 'MDO'), and in Scotland it is referred to as Membership Secretary.

6. VICE CHAIR (3 POSTS: HOVE, BRIGHTON PAVILION, BRIGHTON KEMPTOWN)

The Vice Chair is a position that has strategic value to any party. It involves you in the heart of your local party and is good experience for those who may want to become Chair in the future.

The Vice Chair can be a kind of 'Minister Without Portfolio', available to take on some tasks not obviously someone else's responsibility. It works equally well as a leadership and an advisory role.

Key tasks

- Chairing the meetings fairly and effectively when the Chair is unavailable.
- Taking the place of the Chair in acting on behalf of the local party, for example in responding to a media enquiry, or in contacting members of the Executive Committee to get a quick decision on an urgent matter.
- Advising the Chair, for example acting as a sounding board.
- Helping the Chair when they have difficulties, for example offering to take on some tasks when the Chair has too many; or advocating the Chair's perspective on matters during meetings; or speaking in support of the Chair when necessary.
- Undertaking specific tasks. This is a matter of local discretion. It will take into account the objectives of the local party, as well as the Vice Chair's particular skills and experience. Some local parties choose to structure themselves in a way that the Vice Chair also sits on various committees, but that is a decision within the gift of each local party and extraneous to the Constitution.

Skills & Attributes

The interpretation of the role of Vice Chair allows more flexibility than some of the office roles, such as Data Officer or Treasurer. As such, rather than a definitive list of key tasks or skills, here are some recommended suitabilities that local parties should look for when electing their Vice Chair.

Members who are interested in being on the Executive Committee of their local party, and who recognise themselves in this list, could consider standing for Vice Chair. That person's strengths should include:

- The ability to work productively in a team.
- Adaptability, and a preparedness to take on unexpected new roles and responsibilities when the Chair is unavailable.
- The ability to identify issues that require actions, and to facilitate decision-making.
- A chairing style which balances the need to be inclusive, and ensuring everyone's views are heard, with the need to avoid significant overruns of time or a descent into excessive detail.
- Sufficient personal influence within the local party to ensure officers are working towards the agreed strategy.
- The soft skills which help meetings emerge from potential conflicts or arguments.
- An understanding of the importance of acting within due process, and an awareness of those processes.
- The ability to speak on behalf of the local party with clarity and judgement.

Help & Support

- You can join the Liberal Democrats [Local Party Officers](#) Facebook Group.
- To make contact with Lib Dem campaigners around the country, find out what they are doing and swap ideas, join the [Lib Dem Campaigners](#) group on Facebook.

How to Apply

The Vice Chair is a position on your Executive Committee. As such, it is elected at your AGM each year. Any member of the local party can stand to be Vice Chair.

ORDINARY MEMBER ROLES

Each local party has people elected to their Executive Committee as Ordinary Members. There are two types of Ordinary Member roles: with and without specific functional roles. For Brighton & Hove Lib Dems these specific roles include Diversity Officer, Media & Communications Officer, and Social Media Officer.

7. DIVERSITY OFFICER

The Diversity Officer needs to be someone in the local party that has a passion for people and keen to bring in diversity to the local party with the aim of making it more relatable to the

community. It needs someone who can reach out to different groups within the community, and who is happy to go to many events to meet new and different people.

This is a very fun role as you get to learn about your local community and the many different groups that give it its diversity. You will be educated about these groups, but also prepared to learn about their concerns, so that you can help the exec group take them into consideration when discussing and deciding the local manifesto or different policies.

This role can also be a great help to your local party's fundraising and campaigning activities, as well as your Membership Officer when it comes to organising events. Be open and diverse in your thoughts, and never make an assumption about any of the groups in your community.

Key tasks

- Make a list of the groups in your community, including charities in your area.
- Make contact with all of these groups, and arrange to go to their events and meet their management team.
- Help these local groups organise their events, and volunteer to help staff them.
- Set up a diversity calendar, containing important cultural events and dates.
- Make a social media message plan, to make sure you are putting the right messages out on the right days.
- Share details of diversity events in your area on your social media pages.
- Invite these groups to attend your local party events, so that they can educate your members.

Skills & Attributes

- Research skills to be able to identify and find information on the local groups and learn about them.
- Interpersonal skills, so you can make a good impression when you meet new people.
- Being outgoing and enjoy talking to people and attending events.
- Organisational skills, as you will open the door for receiving emails from these groups.
- Event planning, so you can help with their events or work with the Membership Development Officer to arrange events for your local party for certain diversity days, such as organising Lib Dem participation in the annual Brighton Pride Parade.
- Social media skills so you can help your social media and campaigning teams with content on "diversity days".

Help & Support

- [Liberal Democrats approach to Diversity](#)
- [Lord Alderdice's report on Race, Ethnic Minorities and the Culture of the Liberal Democrats](#)
- [The Liberal Democrats Campaign for Race Equality](#)
- Find out more about the [Disability Lib Dems](#) group on their website.
- [The Liberal Democrats Diversity team on Twitter](#)
- [Liberal Democrat Women](#) are a group within the party who provide support and training for women, and who work to eliminate inequality based on gender.

- You can visit the Liberal Democrat [Campaign for Gender Balance Facebook page](#) here.
- Visit the LGBT+ Lib Dems [website](#), and follow them on [Twitter](#).

8. MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

The Media & Communications Officer communicates the local party's activities and achievements to the community. This helps develop the party's reputation, but crucially it tells voters what the local Liberal Democrats team is campaigning for. This means that when you canvass your voters, they may already have heard of your activities and achievements.

Channels for communication are the local party website, the social media channels of the local party and any of its prominent members, such as council and parliamentary candidates, and the local and regional press, radio and other broadcast media in your area. The Media & Communications Officer should co-ordinate, control and deliver a strategy for communicating with the public along all of these channels.

The Media & Communications Officer will work closely with the Social Media Officer to ensure that local party's messaging is coordinated.

Key tasks

Communicate any and all achievements as effectively as possible to members of the public in your area, across multiple communication channels.

- Work with the local party to generate ideas and opportunities for media stories.
- Get the work that you're doing published in the local media by writing and issuing press releases.
- Inform the local press, radio and TV of events that they can report about, by writing and sending operational notes.
- Build and maintain good working relationships with local and regional media.

Skills & Attributes

The Media & Communications Officer is becoming an increasingly important role, as so many voters now choose to consume their information digitally. This role would suit somebody who:

- Has a strong understanding of multiple forms of communication: website, Social Media, Local Press, Radio and TV.
- Has excellent written skills.
- Understands how information is consumed by members of the public.
- Understands how the media likes to present information.
- Has an eye for a story.
- Works well under pressure.

Help & Support

- You can join the Liberal Democrats Local Party Officers [Facebook Group](#), to make contact and share best practice with other officers.
- To engage with the party's digital campaigners, join the [Lib Dem Digital Campaigning Forum](#), on Facebook.
- Follow the [Lib Dem Press](#) team on Twitter.

9. SOCIAL MEDIA OFFICER

The Social Media Officer communicates the local party's activities and achievements to the community via social media. This helps develop the party's reputation, but crucially it tells voters what the local Liberal Democrats team is campaigning for. This means that when we canvass our voters, they may already have heard of our activities.

Channels for communication are the local party website, the social media channels of the local party and any of its prominent members such as constituency spokespeople, PPCs and City Council target seat candidates. The Social Media Officer should control and deliver a strategy for communicating with the public via our website, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and emerging social media channels.

The Social Media Officer will work closely with the The Media & Communications Officer to ensure that the local party's messaging is coordinated.

Key Tasks

- Communicate activities / events /achievements as effectively as possible to a broad and diverse spectrum of the public in Brighton & Hove, across multiple social media channels.
- Help Local and General Election candidates develop a strong social media presence – particularly on Facebook and Twitter.
- In conjunction with the Fundraising and Membership Officer use social media to assist with fundraising where appropriate and driving up the number of supporters.
- Work with the local party activists and the Media & Communications Officer to [generate ideas and opportunities for media stories](#).
- Manage a budget for the use of social media and report on activities bi-monthly to the Executive Committee

Skills & Attributes

The Social Media Officer is becoming an increasingly important role, as so many voters now choose to consume their information digitally. This role would suit somebody who:

- Has a strong understanding of multiple forms of digital communication.
- Has excellent written skills .
- Understands how social media is consumed by members of the public.
- Understands how to best present information on social media for maximum impact.

Help & Support

- You can join the Liberal Democrats Local Party Officers [Facebook Group](#), to make contact and share best practice with other officers.
- To engage with the party's digital campaigners, join the [Lib Dem Digital Campaigning Forum](#), on Facebook.
- Follow the [Lib Dem Press](#) team on Twitter.

10. ORDINARY MEMBERS

Each local party also has people elected to their Executive Committee as Ordinary Members, who do not hold specific roles. These are people who help by having a say in how the local party is run, and by taking on ad hoc roles and special projects based on their skills and interests (e.g. running policy groups, campaigning on local issues such as Housing or Transport, managing the local party website, fundraising...)

Being an Executive Committee member enables you to help guide the party in the best possible direction, and you can do it without taking on a specific functional role. It suits someone who is generally quite competent, and who likes to look at the bigger picture of their local party. **It's ideal for somebody who wants to be involved, but who may not want an official position.**

Key tasks

- Attend and participate in regular meetings, evaluating agenda items and voting on them.
- Scrutinise suggestions and decisions made by others.
- Offer your time to assist with tasks/projects.
- Be an approachable face in your local party, for other members who want to be more involved.
- Communicating the work of the committee to interested parties.

Skills & Attributes

- An ability to evaluate plans.
- Being good at providing feedback.
- Being a good listener - you'll have to attend several meetings per year.
- An ability to get your views across concisely.
- An ability to be impartial when assessing problems and solutions.
- Strategic thinking.
- An ability to understand a wide variety of documents, such as reports, minutes and budgets.

Help & Support

- You can join the Liberal Democrats Local Party Officers [Facebook Group](#), to make contact and share best practice with other officers