



Standing Orders

Penrith & Eden Branch Labour Party (BLP)

These Standing Orders are based on Chapter 15, *Model Standing Orders for Party Units*, of the Labour Party Rule Book 2016.

1. These procedural rules are designed to provide a framework for well-ordered Party meetings. Party units may adapt local standing orders to reflect their specific method of operation; however, local arrangements must not conflict with the provisions of the model rules which have the full authority of the NEC and form part of the rule book.

2. Any alterations to these Standing Orders must be agreed at an Annual General Meeting.

A. Annual General Meetings (AGM)

i. The Annual General Meeting of Penrith & Eden Branch Labour Party shall be held in May each year.

ii. A formal notice of the annual meeting shall be sent by the secretary to all Party units and organisations entitled to be represented at least 28 days prior to the meeting. A notice detailing the business of the annual meeting shall be sent to all duly appointed delegates or eligible members at least seven days prior to the meeting.

iii. Where a ballot is to be held at the AGM for the position of an executive officer (eg. Chair, Vice Chair Secretary, Treasurer), a delegate to the CLP Executive (4 delegates), a functional officer or an auditor, the nominees may address the meeting and/or provide a written address, which will be distributed at the meeting with the intention of supporting their candidacy.

B. Ordinary Meetings (Branch Meetings)

i. Commencing in January 2017, Ordinary Meetings of the Branch membership shall be held on the **last Monday of every month** except for August and December. The meetings will commence at 7.15pm and end at 9.15pm. There shall be no meetings to transact ordinary business during the period of a national election campaign.

ii. Formal notice of all meetings shall be sent out by the secretary to all those entitled to attend at least seven days prior to the meeting. Such notice shall include an indication of the business to be transacted at the meeting.

iii. A record of attendance at meetings shall be kept and those attending may be required to show a credential and/or proof of membership card to gain entry to the meeting room.

iv. The record of the previous meeting, the minutes, shall be circulated along with the formal notice of the meeting 7 days prior to the meeting.

E. Meeting times

i. Meetings shall commence at 7.15pm and close two hours from the notified starting time, except that a particular meeting may be temporarily extended for a specified period with the support of two-thirds of the members present.

ii. Business meetings shall not be held if a quorum is not present within 30 minutes of the appointed time; always provided that in special circumstances members present may agree to transact pressing business subject to the ratification of the proceedings by the next quorate meeting.

F. Quorum

i. The quorum for the AGM of the Branch shall be 10. The quorum for Branch meetings shall be 6.

ii. The proceedings and resolutions of any quorate meeting shall not be held to be invalid simply through the accidental failure to give notice of the meeting to, or the non-receipt of such notice by, any person entitled to attend.

iii. A roll of members present shall be taken at every meeting and recorded within the minutes.

G. Entitlement to attend

i. All delegates must be current endorsed individual members of the Party residing and registered as electors or, exceptionally if they are not eligible to be registered to vote, residing only within the area covered by this Party unit. Delegates whose details have been duly notified by their organisations to the secretary of this Party unit shall be entitled to attend meetings and to vote.

ii. When an annual or special meeting is not held for any reason or is abandoned without completing the business on the agenda, such meeting must be reconvened as soon as practicable in order for any necessary outstanding business to be transacted. Only those eligible to participate in the meeting as first convened, whether or not held, shall be entitled to participate in any further reconvened meeting.

H. Chair

i. The elected chair of this body shall preside at all meetings, except where otherwise provided for in the rules of the Party unit.

ii. In the absence of the chair one of the vice-chairs shall preside and in the absence of both the secretary and other officer shall call on those present to elect a member to take the chair of the meeting. Should the office holder arrive once a member has been elected to preside in her or his place then she or he may claim, if they wish, the right to preside at the meeting once the current item of business has been disposed of.

iii. At the annual meeting the chair shall preside until a successor is elected, except where the chair is not a duly appointed delegate to the meeting; in which case the election of chair shall be taken as the first item on the agenda. The new chair shall take over the conduct of the meeting forthwith and proceed to the election of other officers and further business.

I. Party business

i. The prime function of Party meetings is to provide delegates and members with the opportunity to participate in Party activities through social contact, political debate and policy discussion; and to establish objectives for the Party in the area for campaigning, the development of Party organisation and the promotion of links with sympathetic individuals and bodies within the wider community.

ii. Plans for campaigning on local issues, the development of community engagement and the strengthening of both links and communication with individual members, affiliates, supporters and community groups should be central to all business.

iii. The agenda of all Party meetings shall be drawn up to give due priority to the Party business highlighted above, the endorsement and introduction of new members and/ or delegates, the discussion of resolutions, Party policy items and other matters of interest to Party members and the receipt of reports from public representatives.

iv. The agenda of the Branch meeting shall deal with policy and political debate. The following model agenda may be used as a template for each agenda.

1. Apologies for absence
2. Introduction of new delegates
3. Visiting speaker (optional)
4. Minutes of last meeting
5. Matters arising
6. Resolutions
7. Campaigns and Election Planning

8. Reports (Treasurer, Secretary, Chair, Functional Officers, Membership, Other).
9. Any Other Business

v. Nominations for delegates and representatives to other bodies should be sought as widely from among Party members as possible. Wherever practicable, any vacancies to be filled shall be advertised to all members as they arise and any Party member who has indicated willingness to accept nomination shall be considered for any post, unless otherwise stated in the rules.

vi. Party business shall in general have precedence at all business meetings of this body.

J. Notice of motion

i. Original motions for the general meeting of this body shall be accepted only from members entitled to attend and participate in the meeting and must be received by the secretary in writing not less than 14 days prior to the meeting for which they are intended.

ii. Motions for discussion shall be made available to those entitled to attend with the notice and agenda of the relevant meeting, except for emergency motions which must be sent in writing to the secretary as soon as the nature of the emergency allows before the commencement of the meeting. Emergency business may be accepted by the majority of the meeting on the recommendation of the chair who shall interpret the term 'emergency' in a bona fide manner.

K. Discussion of motion

i. No motion shall be discussed at a meeting until it has been moved and seconded. Where a motion has been submitted by a Party unit or organisation it must be moved by a delegate from that Party unit or organisation.

ii. Speakers shall address the chair and shall only speak once on any motion except by permission of the chair, providing that the mover of a motion or an amendment may reply to the discussion without introducing new matter for debate; such reply shall close the discussion. No speaker shall be allowed more than five minutes, unless agreed by the meeting to be 'further heard' for a specified period.

iii. Amendments to any motion may be moved and seconded from the floor of the meeting and shall be handed to the secretary in writing. Amendments shall be taken in order with one amendment being disposed of before another is moved. If an amendment is carried, the amended resolution becomes a motion to which further amendments may be moved.

L. Procedural motions

i. A motion of 'next business' shall not be taken until the mover and seconder of a motion have been heard. Any motion 'of next business', 'that the vote be taken', 'to adjourn', 'of no-confidence in the chair' shall be moved, seconded and put to the vote without discussion; after such a vote the chair need not accept a further procedural motion for a period of 20 minutes.

M. Motion to rescind resolution

i. No motion to rescind a resolution of this body shall be valid within three months from the date on which the resolution was carried. Notice of rescinding motion must be given in writing and made available to those entitled to attend the relevant meeting in line with rule I. above.

N. Voting on motions

i. Voting shall be by show of hands except where the constitution of the Party provides for a ballot vote or where this body decides otherwise. In the event of there being an equality of votes on any matter decided by a show of hands, the chair may give a casting vote provided that s/he has not used an ordinary vote. If the chair does not wish to give a casting vote, the motion is not carried.

O. Ballot votes

i. The election of officers and/or representatives of this body shall be by secret paper eliminating ballot either in rounds or by preferential vote. The election of the Executive Committee members or large delegations may be by secret paper ballot using a multiple vote where members may not cast more votes than the num-

ber of positions to be filled. Any quotas for women laid down in the Party constitution which apply to this body shall be incorporated in the arrangements for the secret ballot.

ii. Ballot votes shall be held at meetings to select candidates and where otherwise provided for in the Party constitution; and where requested by any member supported by at least two others.

iii. In the event of a tie on a secret paper ballot the chair shall not have a casting vote. Where appropriate, the ballot shall be retaken and in the event of a continual tie lots may be drawn. In a preferential ballot the tie shall be broken by establishing which candidate had the highest number of first preference votes or took the earliest lead on transfers.

P. Chair's ruling

i. Any breach of or question to the rules or standing orders may be raised by a member rising to a point of order. The chair's ruling on any point arising from the rules or standing orders is final unless challenged by not less than four members; such a challenge shall be put to the meeting without discussion and shall only be carried with the support of two-thirds of the members present.

Q. Miscellaneous

i. Party meetings and events shall be conducted in a friendly and orderly manner and organised in such a way as to maximise participation from members. No member shall be precluded from attendance because they cannot gain access to the meeting place for any reason. Harassment or intimidation of any member is unacceptable as is any form of discrimination on the basis of gender, age, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability or race. Smoking is not permitted at any Party meeting.

ii. Any member acting in an unruly or disruptive manner, in contravention of the standing orders, may be removed from the meeting by action of the chair. The chair shall put such a motion to the meeting, which to be carried shall require the support of two-thirds of those present and voting. Any member who has been removed from two meetings during a 12-month period shall, with the approval of the appropriate RD(GS), be ineligible to attend meetings of this body for the next 12 months.

iii. This Party unit accepts the principle of minimum quotas for women at all levels of representation within the Party and shall take steps to ensure that 50 per cent of any delegation shall be women and, where only one delegate is appointed, a woman shall hold the position at least every other year.

iv. The general provisions of the constitution and rules of the Party shall apply to this body. No changes shall be made to the rules and standing orders of this organisation except at an annual or special meeting called for this purpose and carried with the support of two-thirds of the members present. No alteration shall be effective until it has received the approval of the appropriate officer of the NEC of the Party.