

THE CONSTITUTION THE LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL BRITISH GROUP

NAME

1. The name of the group shall be The Liberal International [British Group] hereinafter referred to as 'the Group.
2. The Group is an Associated Organisation of the Social and Liberal Democrats and the term Liberal in this Constitution shall be interpreted, wherever appropriate, to include Liberal Democrats.

OBJECTS

3. The Liberal International [British Group] is an association of people working for the following objects:
 - a. to affiliate to the Liberal International and to support and assist its work;
 - b. to win general acceptance within the United Kingdom for the principles set out in the Liberal Manifesto formulated at the Oxford Conference, April 1947, the Declaration of Oxford 1967 and the Liberal Appeal of Rome 1981; *
 - c. to assist its members in developing co_operation with Liberals and Liberal groups abroad;
 - d. to conduct research into matters which have a bearing on the establishment of liberal institutions, liberal economies and personal freedom throughout the world;
 - e. to initiate and support activities to promote Liberalism internationally together with a greater measure of co_operation between Liberals and Liberal groups in all countries.

MEMBERSHIP

4. Membership of the Group shall be open to all those residing in the United Kingdom and British nationals living abroad who accept the above objects.
5. Youth membership of the Group shall be open to those under the age of 25 years who accept the above objects.
6. Honorary associate membership of the Group shall be open to people of Liberal outlook in countries where no section of the Liberal International (World Liberal Union) has been formed. Honorary associate membership shall be entitled to all benefits of membership save voting rights.
7. Corporate Membership of the Group shall be open to all formally established associations, business firms or limited liability companies which wish to promote the objects set out in Clause 3 above.
8. Prospective members shall declare their membership of political parties and shall inform the secretary if, after joining, they become a member of a political party which has no formal links with Liberal International.
9. Notwithstanding Clauses 2 to 6 above the Executive Committee of the Group shall, subject to a two-thirds majority of those present and excluding the president, have power to refuse membership to, or withdraw membership from, any person whose activities are, or have been, in its opinion inconsistent with support of the above objects or whose actions have been in any other way seriously injurious to the Group. Any such refusal or withdrawal of membership shall be subject to appeal to the president of the Group whose decision shall be final.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

10. Subscriptions shall be due on 1 January in each calendar year. Subscriptions for new members who join between 15 September and 31 December shall be deemed to cover the balance of that year and the following calendar year.
11. The annual subscriptions shall be set by a general meeting and remain in force until altered.
12. All members shall pay the appropriate subscription as above. Any member who is more than three months in arrears with his subscription shall be deemed to have resigned and his name shall be removed from the Group's books. Exceptions to this rule may be made by the Executive Committee.

OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

13. An unlimited number of patrons shall be elected annually.
14. The following honorary officers shall be elected annually by a postal ballot of all members and youth members:
 - a. President (who shall be the principal public representative of the membership and responsible to the membership for ensuring observance of the Constitution);
 - b. Up to eight Vice Presidents;
 - c. A Treasurer;
 - d. A Membership Treasurer;
 - e. An Organising Secretary;
 - f. A Minutes Secretary.
15. The President may serve for up to three years consecutively (subject to annual re-election) but shall not be eligible for re-election for a year

thereafter.

16. There shall be an Executive Committee comprising the honorary officers, one member appointed by each regional committee, each of whom may have a named alternate, and 12 ordinary members elected annually by a postal ballot of all members and youth members. The Executive Committee shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from amongst its own members. The Executive Committee may, in addition, co-opt up to four other members to fulfil specific roles or provide specific areas of expertise. The potential co-optee must consent, in writing, prior to the relevant Executive Committee meeting.
17. The chairman may serve for up to three years consecutively (subject to annual re-election) but shall not be eligible for re-election for a year thereafter.
18. The chairman shall have responsibility for ensuring the organisation and work of the Group, with the help of fellow officers and a vice-chairman (likewise elected by the Executive Committee). The chairman and vice-chairman shall have the standing of honorary officers during their terms of office.
19. All contested elections shall be conducted by single transferable vote.

REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

20. LI Executive:
The group's vice-president to LI should be the current chairman. The group's other representative should be elected from amongst the executive, for a two year period (i.e.: 4 LI executives/congress meetings) at the first executive meeting after the AGM, or if a casual

vacancy occur, the first executive meeting thereafter for the duration of the term.

21. Liberal Democrats' International Relations Committee:

The group's representative(s) should be elected from amongst the executive at the first executive meeting after the AGM, or if a casual vacancy occurs, the first executive meeting thereafter for the duration of the term.

22. Other representation:

This formula shall apply to any other body that the Group is represented on. In the event of representation on a new group, election will take place at the first executive thereafter, for the duration of the life of that executive, normal procedures following from the next AGM.

23. The Group's representatives to other bodies will submit regular written reports to the executive, at a period determined by the executive.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

24. A general meeting of the Group shall be held annually. All members, youth members and honorary associate members shall be entitled to attend. Corporate members shall be entitled to send one representative who shall be entitled to vote.

25. The treasurers shall present to the annual general meeting an audited statement of the accounts for the previous financial year. The financial year of the Group shall run from 1 January to 31 December.

26. An auditor shall be appointed by the annual general meeting.

27. Notice of the annual general meeting shall be sent to all members at least six weeks in advance.

Nominations for officers or for the committee must be received at the office of the Group not less than four weeks before the annual general meeting. The consent of nominees must first be obtained. In the event of a contested election, ballot papers must be sent out not less than three weeks before the annual general meeting, together with such biographical details as the candidate may have submitted with their consent to nomination, subject to a maximum of 75 words. The ballot papers must be returned not less than one week before the annual general meeting.

28. Written notice of any resolution which a member intends to move at the annual general meeting must reach the Group's office not less than seven days before the annual general meeting and be signed by at least four members of the Group. The president, or other chairman of the annual general meeting, will exercise discretion over which will be debated and in what order. In exceptional circumstances a simple majority of members present shall have power to overrule the President's decision.

REGIONAL COMMITTEES

29. Regional Committees may be established in any of the English regions of the Party, or any combination thereof, or in any of the constituent nations of the United Kingdom subject to the approval of the executive committee.
30. The constitution of the regional committees shall be subject to approval by the executive committee. They shall accord voting rights at their annual general meetings to all members of the British Group resident in their respective regions

or nations. The executive committee shall arrange financial assistance for each regional committee and annual quota payments from each regional committee by mutual agreement.

ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

31. The constitution of the Group may be altered by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at a general meeting subject to 20 above.

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

32. A special general meeting (i.e. a general meeting other than the annual general meeting) may be called by the executive committee and shall be called if 25 members of the Group so desire and notify the President in writing. At least one month's notice shall be given of a Special General Meeting.

This Constitution was adopted at the Annual General Meeting held at the National Liberal Club on 15 May 1990, amended at the Annual General Meetings held in Abbey Gardens, Westminster, on 17 June 1997, the House of Lords on 27 July 1999, the House of Lords on 19 July 2000, the House of Lords on 17 July 2002.