

The Centrist Party Constitution

Aims

The Centrist Party is a political party which seeks to enable as many people as possible from as wide a variety of backgrounds as possible to stand for elections at every administrative level from Parish to Parliament. This is achieved by the simple means of authorising use of party emblems to those who endorse The Centrist Party “core values”.

The party will have a light touch approach to identifying and approving nominations to stand for election and will leave individual candidates to take responsibility for their own campaigns. However, advice and guidance will be made available to all candidates to help ensure that the party is not brought into disrepute and to help ensure that candidates comply with all relevant electoral laws and other relevant legislation. However, The Centrist Party is not legally responsible for the activities, errors or omissions of candidates. Some finance may be made available such as part funding of deposits for any Parliamentary election fought.

The party will always attempt to ensure that all campaigns reflect the core values of the party.

The Centrist Party is a political franchise as opposed to a traditional party. It is a political brand identity thus avoiding the heavy bureaucratic structure associated with many other political parties. There will be no branches or branch structure. Members may form community groups but if formed these can have no financial identity recognised by The Centrist Party. The Centrist Party will not recognise groups or branches calling themselves “The Centrist Party”. Such groups will not be allowed to use images and descriptions in elections. Individuals must apply to use them as individuals. For non-election, promotional material any member can utilise any of the images and descriptions that appear on the website. The use of images and descriptions are only covered by election law not copyright.

Members will have access to election materials made available on the party website in respect of any election they wish to contest. The nominating officer has the responsibility of sanctioning the use of the emblems and descriptions on application by any member who wishes to stand in an election.

If a member is refused permission to use the “The Centrist Party” identity marks and description there is an appeals process. In the first instance, the appeal is to the leader of the party and the final appeal is to the management committee. The full committee’s decision on the matter of the use of the identity marks and descriptions is final.

The Centrist Party will advertise for new members and potential candidates where there are elections taking place, as well as promoting local members.

Membership

The membership of The Centrist Party is free and we have permission to store details of party members on a database. Members must embrace The Centrist Party “core values”. Members will be invited to an Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held within three months of the 1st of January each year i.e. no later than the 1st April. Invitations will be sent out by e-mail to members. The AGM could be held anywhere but is likely to be held in an area close to the greatest number of members.

Up to a week prior to the AGM, the membership will be able to propose and second a candidate for the posts of leader, nominating officer, treasurer and fourth officer. If no formal nominations are received nominations can be taken from the floor at the AGM.

The membership will be kept informed about The Centrist Party via the party website.

It is also proposed that “workshop” events will be delivered to gauge the views and opinions of members and guide policy and to explain the core values and manifesto pledges.

A record will be kept of member’s details and this will be managed in line with the Data Protection Act and used for no purpose other than communicating with members.

Core Values

The Centrist Party believes in a fair society where all people, regardless of socio-economic background, can live a life where they are empowered, enterprising and have equality of opportunity

We believe in a society where government, business and civil society works together cohesively and for the greater good of society.

The Centrist Party is a Centrist party politically and all members and candidates must share a centrist view of politics and society.

Roles

The party will comprise of a leader, a nominating officer, treasurer and a maximum of one other. This group of party officers will be known as the management team.

Party Leader

The leader’s role is to be the figurehead for the party and to chair management meetings, act as the main spokesman for the party, call the AGM and to sign off minutes of the AGM and all management meetings that take place. The leader acts as chairman of the party and arbitrates in any disputes between the management team and any individual members. It is anticipated that in disputes between The Centrist Party and members will be resolved by an appeal to the leader. If this fails to resolve the dispute then an appeal can be made to the full management committee. The decision of the full committee is final. The leader is a signatory to The Centrist Party bank account.

The Treasurer

The Treasurer’s role is to manage the party finances including its bank account in line with the financial statement, maintain a record of all donations and membership fees and submit annual accounts in line with PPERA. All financial records will be retained by the Treasurer. All records of donations made to The Centrist Party campaigns will be reported in election returns as required to Returning Officers. The Electoral Commission will be informed of any donations made to The Centrist Party.

Individuals campaigning on their own behalf will submit their own returns to the Local Authority Returning Officers as required by electoral law.

The Treasurer is responsible for and manages and is a signatory for The Centrist Party Bank account and submits accounts annually to the management team and AGM for approval.

Nominating Officer

The nominating officer's role is to lead policy and campaign strategy as well as manage the interests of the wider membership. The nominating officer decides on application whether to allow a potential candidate to use an identity mark and descriptions that belong to The Centrist Party. Where the right to use an identity mark is withheld the candidate can apply to the leader to have the decision investigated and possibly reconsidered. The right of final appeal lies with the full management committee.

The right to use the identity mark and description will only be withheld on the grounds that the potential candidate has acted improperly or illegally or has refused overtly to abide by the parties core values and manifesto pledges.

All policy proposed by the Nominating Officer must have the backing of the management team.

The Nominating Officer is a signatory on The Centrist Party bank account.

The Fourth Officer

The fourth officer if appointed supports the work of The Centrist Party in a range of capacities which can include publicity, liaison and public relations. The fourth officer is a member of the Management Committee and may be a signatory to The Centrist Party Bank account.

Management Team

All decisions about party strategy have to be agreed by a majority of the management team with the leader having the casting vote.

These roles are elected annually by the membership of the party. Holders can be re-elected as many times as the membership accept.

The Management team considers and makes a final determination on all matters of dispute between members and The Centrist Party where the dispute has not been resolved by appeal to the leader.

The annual AGM is organised by the management team and takes place within three months of the 1st of January. Nominations for the four officers positions can be submitted in advance in writing to the party address or can come from the floor at the AGM in the absence of a formal nomination. The AGM will be quorum with three officers in attendance, or two officers if the party leader is in attendance, and as many members who are able to attend.

The annual AGM is the only formal membership meeting convened by the party. There will be no formal branches although local campaign groups will be permissible.

Any changes to the Constitution proposed by the Management Team must have the backing of the membership at the AGM.