

A: Preamble

A.1 The 'Rules of Procedure' is the Rule Book of the Independent Union (IU) – hereinafter referred to as 'the Party'.

A.2 These Rules of Procedure should be read in conjunction with the Party Constitution, which, in the event of a clash, shall always take precedence.

A.3 These rules came into effect following approval by the Independent Union Executive Committee on 18th February 2019.

A.4 Except where otherwise stated, these Rules may be amended by a simple majority vote of the National Executive Committee.

A.5 These are made in accordance with the Constitution of the Independent Union and have regard to Article 10.2 of the Party Constitution.

A.6 The Rules of Procedure shall be made available electronically to members through the Party website.

A.7 Any supporter shall be sent a written copy of the Rules of Procedure upon request to the Party's administrative Head Office.

A.8 The Party may make an appropriate administrative charge not exceeding £5 for written copies of the Rules of Procedure to cover the economic cost of printing, packaging, and posting.

A.9 For the avoidance of doubt, throughout the Rules of Procedure the masculine implies a person of either gender.

A.10 In the event of internal inconsistency within these Rules of Procedure, the National Executive Committee (or the Party Chairman, Party Secretary acting with the NEC's authorisation) shall determine which Rule has precedence.

B: Terms and conditions of membership

B.1 Membership shall be given as a 'Registered supporter' on a 'supporter' basis starting from the date of receipt of the initial subscription and continue for the number of years for which the subscription has been paid. Supporters include those who represent the Party in the Executive and as elected representatives.

B.2 Supporter subscriptions are not refundable.

B.3 Supporters shall be considered to be Supporters until the end of the month of expiry. Membership shall be considered to have lapsed if not renewed within a further two months.

B.4 The Party may refuse or rescind an application for supporter status if the Union Executive Committee considers that the application does not fulfil the criteria for membership as set out in the Party Constitution.

B.5 The Party Chairman has the right to suspend or expel supporters who clearly bring the Party into disrepute by association with or membership of an organisation, membership of which the Executive has declared to be incompatible with membership of the Party or establish a group in opposition to the Independent Union.

B.6 Supporter status is not available to anyone who is or has previously been a member of the British National Party, the National Front, the UK First party, the English Defence League, the British Freedom Party, British People's Party, Hearts of Oak, The For Britain Movement, Pegida UK, National Action and the Britain First Party (or any other parties or organisations later added to the proscribed list). Any applications made from people who are or have been members of these organisations will be refused, and any subscriptions collected will be refunded. By making an application for membership, the applicant certifies that he is not and has never been a member of either of these parties. The proscribed list of parties and organisations can be updated by the Union Executive at any time.

B.7 Any action under paragraph 1.5 shall be confirmed by the Executive at the earliest opportunity.

B.8 A member shall be classed as 'in good standing' if at any given moment their subscriptions are up to date, they are not subject to any suspension or exclusion either from elected office or from standing as a candidate of any sort in any election, and they are not subject to any form of suspension or restriction as to their membership of the Party.

B.9 Any member who fails to maintain their subscriptions may have their membership revoked immediately, although a three months grace period may also be offered by the Party on a discretionary basis. Following the expiration of a membership, an ex-member's payment of a membership subscription shall be considered to be a fresh application for membership.

C: Data Protection and Branding Rules

Data

C.1.1 All persons holding a Party database (full or partial) must sign the Party's Data Protection forms and return the form to Head Office.

C.1.2 No member/supporter shall give a copy of any part of the database to any other member. The Party Executive reserves the right to remove data held by any individual without reason.

C.1.3 Any member/supporter who holds a Party database but is not entitled to do so must hand back the copy of the Database to the Party (or otherwise destroy it irrevocably if held in electronic form). The Party Chairman and Secretary may rescind authority to hold all or part of a Party database.

C.1.4 All Paid up Supporters have the right to view a copy of the records held about them on the Party database. This can be obtained only by sending a written request to Head Office.

C.1.5 Any person in receipt of a database shall take reasonable steps to ensure that the data is secure taking into account GDPR regulations.

C.1.6 Use of the Party database is authorised for contacting supporters for official Party purposes only.

C.1.7 The Party shall comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and all other relevant Data Protection legislation.

Publications

C.2.1 An Independent Union publication is defined as any publication, whether physical or online, which bears the Party's name and/or logo which purports to represent the Independent Union

C.2.2 Apart from the exceptions detailed below, any publication must be authorised before it can be placed into the public domain. Any publication which awaits authorisation must be clearly labelled as 'DRAFT'.

C.2.3 The following people may authorise a publication whose scope is national: the Party Leader, the Party Deputy Leader and the Party Chairman.

C.2.5 Any supporter, candidate or elected member who intentionally distributes an Independent Union publication which is unauthorised shall be considered to bring the Party into disrepute.

C.2.6 Any supporter producing a publication shall be responsible for ensuring that it is compliant with Party policy, electoral law, the publishing requirements of the Electoral Commission, the Advertising Standards code of practice and the law relating to defamation.

C.2.7 Any material breach of Section C of these Rules of Procedure may form grounds for disciplinary action the Party Constitution.

Online conduct

C.3.1 For the purpose of these Rules of Procedure, 'online conduct' shall refer to any Facebook status or group, Twitter post, forum post, posting on any other social media account, website, email, blog, article or other material published on the internet by a paid up Supporter.

C.3.2 For the purpose of C.3.1, a member's online conduct shall include postings under a pseudonym or alias.

C.3.3 Whilst the Party recognises the right of members to hold their own personal views, supporters should be aware at all times that their online conduct may reflect upon the Party, and should act in such a way as to avoid causing embarrassment to the Party.

C.3.4 Any of the following people may require the immediate withdrawal of a member's online content: The Party Leader, the Party Chairman, the Party Secretary, Failure to withdraw content promptly shall be considered grounds for disciplinary action under the Party Constitution.

C.3.5 All Party supporters shall refrain from any posting expressing racist, homophobic, xenophobic or otherwise discriminatory views.

C.3.6 No Party member shall share, retweet, 'like' or otherwise distribute online content created by, or in support of, any organisation on the Proscribed List.

C.3.11 Any supporter who: a) Holds public elected office or is a member of the House of Lords; b) regional or national position within the Party; c) Has been selected as an IU candidate for any public election; d) Is employed by the Party, or e) Is employed as a Parliamentary or other assistant to one of the Party's elected representatives, shall be held to a higher standard of accountability than an 'ordinary' supporter of the Party, reflecting the increased level of media scrutiny for those whose comments are associated with the Party. For the purposes of Section C.3 of the Rules, such members shall hereinafter be referred to as 'officials'.

C.3.12 When making public statements officials must make it clear that they are giving a personal view. Any such statements must be made in a constructive manner and not harm the image of the Party or risk bringing the Party into disrepute.

Online Content

C.3.13 All official online content can only be approved and implemented by recognised appointed officials agreed by the Union Executive and with approval of the Party Chairman and/or Leader. Other postings made in the Party name, whether by a supporter or not cannot be classed as an official Independent Union publication.

C.3.14 If the Party Chairman, or his designated deputies, decide not to approve an application, or pre-existing item, they will write or email requesting removal, and specify a time frame for compliance. Failure to comply will be deemed grounds for revocation of supporter status.

C.3.15 Should an item be found to be non-compliant with the guide, the Party Chairman, or his designated deputies will write or email, citing the relevant reasons, requesting action or remedial work and specifying a time frame for compliance. Failure to comply will be deemed grounds for the revocation of supporter status.

D: Election to public office

D: Rights and responsibilities of candidates

D.1 By applying to become an Independent Union candidate the applicant grants permission for the Party to make such use, including publication or broadcasting via any medium, as the Party sees fit of any intellectual property such as photographs, written personal statements, recorded information and any other data received by the Party from the applicant.

D.2 The applicant further agrees, upon such application, that copyright in such material as is set out in R.1 shall henceforth solely vest in the Party.

D.3 Anyone becoming a candidate consents to publication of the telephone numbers and email addresses that they have provided to the Party for the purpose of allowing members of the public to contact them, unless they expressly state in writing that such information is copyright or they advance any matter of personal security which reasonably justifies such information being withheld.

D.4 The Union Executive has the sole right to de-select candidates previously selected to stand for Independent Union at any type of public election and shall maintain a list of people who shall not be permitted to stand for IU at any type of public election.

D.5 In the event of serious misconduct by a candidate, the Party Chairman shall have the right to suspend a candidate for up to 7 days pending a decision from the Union Executive.

D.6 No former member of a Party or organisation on the proscribed list may be selected as an IU candidate for any type of election, whether external or internal to the Party.

D.7 No supporter may stand for election as an IU candidate if they are currently a member of another political Party. The Party Chairman may permit an exception to D.7 where he believes it to be in the Party's strategic interests to do so.

D.8 At the time of application, a candidate must disclose any prior criminal convictions to the Party.

D.9 In the event that a candidate is convicted of a criminal offence subsequent to disclosure under D.8, the candidate must notify the Party Secretary and the General Secretary. Where the Party's reputation could be affected, the matter shall be referred to the Party Chairman who may suspend the candidate from office pending an Executive decision concerning removal from office.

D.10 Failure to disclose information required in D.8 or D.9 may be grounds for disciplinary action.

E: Candidate Selection Rules for General Elections and Westminster by-elections

E.1 The process of selecting candidates for General Elections shall be overseen by the Party Chairman or person/s appointed by the Union Executive.

E.2 A PPC Selection Procedure shall be produced by the Party Executive which provides timescales and information for candidates on how to apply. Failure to comply with the requirements of this procedure may result in candidates not being selected.

E.3 The Party shall not discriminate for or against any member on grounds of gender, race, religion, ethnicity or sexuality when selecting prospective candidates.

E.4 Applicants must declare any past or present links to extremist organisations, parties or organisations on the proscribed list and any information which might prove embarrassing to the Party if known. They must also declare current membership of any other Party. Failure to disclose such information will be grounds for candidacy to be revoked.

E.5 No former member of a Party or organisation on the proscribed list shall be permitted to apply to stand as a an IU candidate; such information shall automatically lead to authority to stand being revoked and the matter will be referred to the Union Executive.

E.6 The Party reserves the right to reject any applicant without giving a reason at any stage. Any candidate so rejected will have a right of appeal to the Union Executive as set out in the Constitution.

E.7 All applicants must be paid-up supporters of the Party in good standing.

E.8 All applicants must provide evidence of any previous criminal convictions through an enhanced DBS check. No candidate may be selected without the Party having sight of this document.

E.9 Previous convictions will not automatically result in rejection as a possible candidate but the chairman of the Selection Panel may refer the decision to the Union Executive if there is any doubt.

E.10 The full application procedure, deposits and selection process is to be determined by the Union Executive agreed by majority vote and all supporters should be notified of the process by email and where no email is given, by post.

E.11 In accordance with the Constitution of the party as in force, the Union Executive reserves the right to withdraw approval from a candidate and remove them from the national Approved List.

E.12 The above outlines also determine the rules of selection for candidates standing in Mayoral and Police and Crime Commissioner Elections. By Elections may also adopt these rules in a shorter timescale or expedite the selection process altogether with the agreement of a majority vote of the Union Executive.

E.13 The Union Executive may decide not to appoint a candidate in a Westminster by election if it is deemed in the Party or the Country's best interests. In such circumstances, no candidate will be selected.

F: Candidate Selection Rules for Local Authority Elections and Council by-elections

F.1 In general the IU is expected to field the maximum number of candidates that they are able to at local authority elections.

F.2 In general the County or Constituency organiser shall have responsibility for candidate selection for local authority elections and by-elections. This will be subject to approval by the Union Executive.

F.3 The Party Executive will reject anyone as a proposed candidate who has at any time previously been a member of any extremist organisation or any Party currently on the proscribed list.

F.4 If a supporter considers that there are specific reasons why F.3 should not apply in a particular case, they may appeal to first to the County Organiser or in absence of a County Organiser the Union Executive or designated subcommittee for permission to select the candidate. The decision of the County Organiser may be appealed to the Union Executive.

Rules governing the conduct of elected members

G.1 All elected members are expected to act at all times in a manner which reflects positively upon the Party, elected members are expected to be aware that by virtue of their elected position, their actions are subject to greater public scrutiny and that therefore poor behaviour can damage the Party or bring it into disrepute.

G.2 Elected members should not make public statements which contradict Party principles.

G.3 Elected members should refrain from public criticism of other Party members.

G.4 In the event of a serious breach of G.2 or G.3 above, disciplinary action may be taken against the member concerned.

G.5 Elected members are expected to remain as paid-up supporters of IU for the remainder of their term of office.

G.6 Elected members holding paid positions are expected to contribute to the central party from income. This is to be set and agreed by the Executive in consultation with elected members.

G.7 Elected members shall accept collective decisions concerning membership of a Group. Notwithstanding any rule concerning the independent mandate of an elected member, the Party may take any disciplinary measure, including expulsion from the Party, against any elected member who fails to accept such collective decisions. By applying for reselection to be a candidate the applicant shall be deemed specifically to have read and agreed to this Rule.

G.8 The extent to which the rules in this section (G) have been complied with by elected members with paid positions shall be noted and considered by an interview panel before an elected member is reselected as a candidate and shall, if deemed appropriate, be proper and valid reasons for the elected member being deselected. By applying for reselection to be a candidate of any kind the applicant shall be deemed specifically to have read and agreed to this Rule.

G.9 IU councillors should not be subject to a formal 'whipping' system but may form a Council Group that upholds the principles of the Independent Union.

G.10 IU councillors may join with other independent councillors or residents' associations if this permits sufficient representation to form a Group or gain representation under the relevant Council governance arrangements. The Union Executive may over-rule this in specific instances where it believes that membership of a specific Group could harm the Party.

G.15 All IU elected representatives must inform the Party Chairman immediately of any internal investigation made against them, and of any criminal investigation or court case pending.

G.16 Elected IU members at all levels are expected to take up their seats and to represent their constituents to the best of their ability.