

## **Rules and Procedures for Constituency Groups**

(as passed by National Council on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

### **1. Name**

- 1.1 The name of the Constituency Group shall be **Limerick Greens**.
- 1.2 The Group may also be referred to as **Limerick Greens**.
- 1.3 These Rules and Procedures may only be amended by the National Council or the National Convention.

### **2. Objectives**

- 2.1 The object of the Constituency Group shall be to further the aims and objectives of the Green Party/Comhaontas Glas (GP/CG) within its area.
- 2.2 In particular, the Constituency Group is charged with creating a measurable plan stated as a series of targets looking forward, for example 5 years, in conjunction with the Regional Group for the National Executive Committee (NEC) and Head Office, to maximise electoral success within its Constituency Group area, e.g.
  1. To win the balance of power, or become the largest party in each Local Authority Area within the regional area.
  2. To win at least one seat in each local, National or EU parliament, subject to resources available.
  3. To create membership and fund-raising plans/targets consistent with the electoral target for the area.
  4. To initiate training of members, potential candidates and elected representatives to improve their performance.
  5. This plan needs to be documented in terms relevant to each electoral sub-division in the Constituency Group and regional area.
- 2.3 The Constituency Group will encourage the development of Local Groups (cumainn) in their area.
- 2.4 The Constituency Group will select a minimum number of targets from a list circulated by the General Secretary, on behalf of the NEC. Where the Constituency Group is part of a regional group, this will be done at regional level. The General Secretary will agree targets, support mechanisms and reporting mechanisms with the Constituency Group which will be set out in a separate document.

### **3. Membership**

3.1 Members of the Party resident in a Constituency should ideally register with the Constituency Group for that Constituency but membership of any Group shall be at the discretion of that Group subject to ratification by the National Executive Committee. In the Northern Ireland Region membership may include all individual members of GP/CG, the Scottish Green Party and the Green Party of England and Wales living within the Constituency Group area.

3.2 An individual may only be a member of one Constituency Group.

**3.3 The minimum membership is ten paid-up members.**

### **4. AGM and Meetings**

- 4.1 An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held every year.
- 4.2 A minimum of 21 days' notice of any AGM or Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) shall be sent to all members of the Constituency Group and to GP/CG Head Office.
- 4.3 If an AGM is not held within 18 months of the previous meeting, the Constituency Group will be considered to have dissolved itself.

4.4 Copies of the minutes of each AGM and EGM shall be circulated to all Constituency Group members who attended, as well as to GP/CG head office, within twenty one days of the date of the meeting. Minutes shall also be made available to Constituency Group members not attending the AGM/EGM on request.

4.5 For ordinary meetings, the notice and draft agenda shall be circulated one week in advance to all members or delegates. Motions proposed for adoption shall be clearly indicated. New motions will only be accepted onto the agenda after that date if they concern matters that have arisen since that date, if there is a specific reason why they must be dealt with before the next scheduled meeting of the group and if there is consensus to add them to the agenda. In exceptional circumstances, such as illness for example, a meeting may by consensus excuse a failure to circulate the notice or draft agenda one week in advance, in which case the meeting will be free to deal with the agenda as if it had been circulated one week in advance.

4.6 If an ordinary meeting is to be held outside of the normal schedule of meetings, notice shall be circulated two weeks in advance to all members or delegates.

4.7 An emergency meeting of the group may be called by the Executive, or by the Secretary or Chair, if there is no Executive. Such a meeting may only be called to discuss a matter or matters that have arisen since the previous meeting and if there is a specific reason why they must be dealt with before the next meeting of the group. If at the start of the meeting there is a challenge to the necessity of the meeting, then a 75% majority, excluding abstentions, must agree to a proposal to continue with the meeting.

4.8 Minutes of any meeting may be approved by the Executive or by the following Group meeting.

4.9 To be quorate, delegate meetings of the Constituency Group must have at least one third of delegates present and all other meetings must have present whichever is higher - at least 3 members or 10% of the paid up membership of the group, excluding probationary members, taking the number of paid up members as at 31st December of the previous year.

4.10 When a motion is passed by a group, one member shall be delegated to represent the group on that motion should clarification or further information be required after the meeting.

## **5. Constituency Group Officers**

5.1 At each AGM, the Constituency Group will elect its officers. The minimum requirement for recognition of a Group is to have a Secretary, a Chair and a Treasurer. Other officers may be appointed such as a Correspondence Secretary, Minutes Secretary, Membership Secretary, Recruitment Secretary, Policy Co-ordinator, Fundraising Officer, Youth Coordinator, Women's Coordinator and Communications Officer. The AGM shall decide who is to carry out the functions of chairing and communications if it does not appoint specific officers to such posts. The Constituency Group shall inform GP/CG of all new officers within two weeks of their election. This shall equally apply to the filling of casual vacancies.

Casual vacancies may be filled on an interim basis at any Executive meeting or meeting of the full group. At least one week's notice must be given to all voting members or delegates of any decision to fill a vacancy on a long-term basis.

5.2 The Group may decide to form an Executive which would include its officers, any Local Group delegates and any other members appointed to the Executive without holding a particular office. An Executive must have a minimum of four members. It may also include the Constituency Group delegates to National Council and Regional Council.

5.3 A quorum of one-third is required for Constituency Group Executive meetings.

5.4 The Executive may decide to dissolve itself or may be dissolved by the Constituency Group. A motion for the Constituency Group to dissolve the Executive must be requested by at least one-quarter of the members or delegates entitled to vote or one quarter of the Executive and at least one week's notice of such a motion must be given to all voting members or delegates.

5.5 A vote of no confidence in an officer must be requested by at least one-quarter of the members or delegates entitled to vote or one quarter of the Executive and at least one week's notice of such a motion must be given to all voting members or delegates.

## **6. Secretary**

6.1 The Secretary is responsible for

- a) correspondence.
- b) notification of meetings and keeping the minutes.

6.2 Where a specific Correspondence Secretary and/or Minutes Secretary have been appointed, they are responsible for correspondence or minutes respectively rather than the Secretary.

## **7. Chair**

7.1 The Chair shall have responsibility for

- a) Chairing Group meetings.
- b) Calling group meetings, subject to any decisions of the Executive or the full group.
- c) Ensuring that discussions at meetings are directed towards making decisions in an efficient manner and that decisions and actions are properly minuted and acted upon after the meetings.
- d) Ensuring that all members are treated equally at meetings and that individuals or individual issues do not dominate meetings, that discussions and meetings do not go on too long.

## **8. Treasurer**

8.1 The Treasurer shall have responsibility for

- a) Ensuring that financial systems accord with the legal responsibilities.
- b) Receiving the subscriptions and donations paid to head office by members of the Constituency Group.
- c) Sending annual accounts to the GP/CG Treasurer within two months of the financial year end, or as requested.
- d) Keeping account records in accordance with guidance from the GP/CG Treasurer and the electoral commission.
- e) Ensuring that the Constituency Group keeps accounting records for 6 years and forwarding all records to GP/CG head office in the event of the Constituency Group ceasing to exist.

8.2 The Treasurer shall be responsible to the GP/CG Treasurer for carrying out the duties listed in Rule 8.1.

## **9. Membership**

9.1 One officer of the Constituency Group must be nominated to handle membership changes, updates and services, and to liaise with Head Office, as appropriate.

9.2 This officer must notify head office of any subscriptions paid to the Group.

9.3 This officer should encourage members to pay their subscription by standing order.

## **10. Local Group Delegates**

10.1 A Constituency Group may operate on a delegate basis with the local groups (cumainn) in its area. In such a case, General Meetings may also be called by a meeting of all the Local Group delegates to the Executive.

10.2 Local Groups (cumainn) based around one or more local authority wards, towns or villages with a minimum membership of 5, may be recognised by the Constituency Group or its Executive.

10.3 Local Groups (cumainn) within the Constituency Group area may nominate two delegates to the Executive to report on local party activity.

10.4 The Constituency Group must ensure that the membership and officers have been properly trained in the day to day running of party affairs, the constitution and policies.

## **11. Communication**

11.1 The Constituency Group may issue a newsletter or other regular means of communication to all members in its area, as defined above.

**11.2 Press Statements or other external communications on behalf of the party and on Constituency Group or National Issues should be cleared with the Constituency Group Communications Officer and one other officer.**

11.3 Local government representatives are permitted to communicate externally on local authority matters in their local area, but are expected to be consistent with Green Principles and to liaise with each other to ensure consistency. When in doubt, they should consult the Constituency Group Communications Officer or regional communications officer whose decision is final between Executive or Group meetings.

**11.4 Only the following people may make a public statement on behalf of the Constituency Group: Members of the Constituency Group Executive, candidates for election and elected representatives. Statements must be consistent with GP/CG national policy or strategy but can be adapted to circumstances within the area. The Constituency Group, regional or national Communications Officer should clear statements.**

## **12. Elections and candidate selection**

12.1 The Constituency Group shall comply with GP/CG Rules and Procedures for Selection Conventions.

## **13. Standing orders**

13.1 The Constituency Group may choose to adopt Standing Orders to govern its affairs.

13.2 Standing Orders may not contradict the Constitution or any Rules and Procedures of the GP/CG.

## **14. Dissolution**

- 14.1 The Constituency Group can only be dissolved:
- a) By a legitimate EGM called specifically for that purpose.
  - b) By the Constituency Group not having called an AGM within 18 months of the previous such meeting.
  - c) By the NEC of the GP/CG, where it has been deemed that the Constituency Group is in breach of its constitutional requirements, or has, or is bringing the GP/CG into disrepute.

## **15. Conduct of meetings**

15.1 Those wishing to speak at meetings should indicate to the Chair and speak only when invited by the Chair.

15.2 The Chair may interrupt a speaker if they believe that they have spoken for long enough. This must be applied consistently to all participants.

15.3 If the Chair believes that a member is not conducting themselves properly at a meeting, they will take action. Improper conduct can include - persistent interruption without the permission of the Chair, shouting, aggressive behaviour and personalised comments.

15.4 If misconduct persists the following measures may be taken:

- a) The Chair will warn the person that if they continue they will be asked to leave the meeting.
- b) The Chair may order the person to leave the meeting.
- c) If an order to leave is challenged, the Chair will ask members to vote on the matter. If such a vote is passed, the member must leave and will also be automatically suspended for the next group meeting.
- d) The Chair may ask the meeting to vote to suspend a member for a specified period or number of meetings.

In the event of a vote to suspend a member, the member will be asked to absent themselves from the meeting once they have been given an opportunity to state their position and before a vote is taken. If the person refuses to absent themselves, then the vote will be deemed to have been passed.

A member who has been suspended may ask for the matter to be referred to the Management Committee.