

## APPENDIX A

### STANDING ORDERS FOR THE CONDUCT OF GENERAL MEETINGS

#### 1. Order of Business

The first item of business in each session shall be the announcement of the timetable by the Steering Committee. This decision of the Steering Committee shall be final unless a challenge is made by at least four voting members and supported by a two-thirds majority.

#### 2. Chair - Maintenance of Order

- (a) Before speaking members must be recognised by the Chair, who shall decide the order of the speakers.
- (b) If the Chair calls a member to order, or for any other reason intervenes in the proceedings, no-one shall speak until the Chair permits.
- (c) If a member refuses to obey the Chair when called to order, the Chair may cause her or him to be expelled from the meeting. That member shall not be allowed to take any further part in the meeting until the meeting has been given a satisfactory apology.

#### 3. Chair's Ruling

- (a) The ruling of the Chair on any question under Standing Orders or on points of order shall be final unless a challenge is made by at least four voting members and supported by a two-thirds majority.
- (b) If a ruling by the Chair is successfully challenged but the Chair refuses to accept this challenge, the Steering Committee shall nominate someone else to Chair the remainder of that session.

#### 4. Motions and Amendments

- (a) Unless a majority of voting members present agree otherwise, a motion or amendment must be proposed and seconded in person by the two members who placed it on the agenda or by two full or professional associate members of the branch or committee which did so.
- (b) The motion on any particular subject is referred to as the '*original*' motion; all succeeding motions on that subject are referred to as '*amendments*'. If a motion is amended the resulting motion is known as the '*substantive*' motion.

- (c) Before beginning the proposal speech the mover of the original motion may indicate that she or he accepts one or more amendments. If a majority of the meeting agrees, the motion shall be amended without debate.
- (d) Any remaining amendments will be debated in turn after the original motion has been proposed and seconded. When an amendment has been proposed, no further amendment may be discussed until the current amendment has been dealt with.
- (e) If an amendment is carried, the original motion is amended accordingly and any further proposed amendments apply to that new substantive motion.
- (f) After all the proposed amendments have been dealt with, the resulting substantive motion is open to debate and becomes the resolution of the meeting if it is carried.
- (g) The proposer of a motion which has been omitted from the agenda may appeal through the Steering Committee for its inclusion. The meeting shall decide without discussion.

## **5. Compositing Motions and Amendments**

If the various proposers and seconders agree, motions or amendments may be composited according to rules determined by the Steering Committee. Where possible, the agreed wording should be given to the General Secretary (or the Chair of the Steering Committee acting on behalf of the General Secretary) before the day's business begins.

## **6. Withdrawal of a Motion or Amendment**

- (a) The proposer of a motion or amendment who wishes to withdraw it before it is put to the meeting must notify the Steering Committee as soon as possible after coming to that intention. The Steering Committee will advise her or him at what point in the meeting to inform the membership of her or his decision.
- (b) No motion or amendment which has been properly proposed and seconded shall be withdrawn unless a simple majority of the meeting agrees.

## **7. Emergency Motions**

- (a) Emergency motions shall be debated only in exceptional circumstances and must be submitted in writing to the General Secretary or Chair of the Steering Committee acting on behalf of the General Secretary. They must relate to urgent issues:
  - (i) which have arisen since the closing date for motions;
  - (ii) which cannot be dealt with in any other way, and
  - (iii) which are of such gravity as to justify rearrangement of business.

- (b)
  - (i) If the emergency nature of the motion is accepted by the Steering Committee and approved by the meeting, the motion shall be placed on the agenda.
  - (ii) If the emergency nature of the motion is not accepted by the Steering Committee, the proposer of the motion shall have the right to challenge the Steering Committee's ruling by explaining in not more than two minutes the emergency nature of the motion. The ruling shall then be put to the meeting for decision without debate.
  - (iii) It shall not be possible to amend emergency motions.

## 8. Time-keepers

Time-keepers shall be appointed by the Steering Committee.

## 9. Speeches

- (a) No-one shall speak more than once on any motion except as follows:-
  - (i) a proposer has a right of reply in accordance with Standing Order 11;
  - (ii) someone may raise a point of order or request information despite having spoken in the debate;
  - (iii) anyone may speak once on any amendment despite having already spoken on the original motion or previous amendments.
- (b) Someone may formally second a motion or amendment but reserve the right to speak until later in the debate.
- (c) The maximum time allowed for speeches shall take account of interruptions for points of order or seeking information and shall be:
  - (i) six minutes for the proposer of a motion;
  - (ii) three minutes for the seconder and subsequent speakers;
  - (iii) three minutes for any speaker on an amendment including the proposer;
  - (iv) three minutes for any right of reply.

## 10. Points of Order and Requests for Information

- (a) Members wishing to raise points of order or seek information must first obtain the permission of the Chair at an appropriate juncture.
- (b) A member raising **a point of order** should quote the Standing Order, or the section of the constitution under which the point of order is raised. All other business shall cease until the point of order is dealt with.
- (c) A member may, with the permission of the Chair, interrupt the debate in order to **seek information**, but will not be permitted to give information at this juncture.

## 11. Right of Reply

- (a) The 'right of reply' entitles the speaker to reply to the debate but no new matter may be introduced.
- (b) *If no amendment is passed*, the proposer of the original motion shall have the right to reply at the close of the debate on that motion.
- (c) *If an amendment is moved*, the proposer of the original motion may speak during the debate on the amendment, but may also reply to that debate at the end. The proposer of the amendment shall not have a right of reply.
- (d) *When an amendment is accepted by the proposer of the original motion*, she or he shall retain the right to reply to the debate on the substantive motion.
- (e) *When an amendment is not accepted by the proposer of the original motion, but is carried*, the right of reply to the debate on the substantive motion passes to the proposer of the amendment (unless she or he waives that right in favour of the proposer of the original motion).

## 12. Reports

- (a) A statement or report presented to the meeting shall be assumed to be on a motion that the meeting adopts the statement or report and Standing Orders 2 to 11 apply, except that a chair or deputy in presenting a main committee report for adoption shall be allowed a maximum of fifteen minutes to present that report.
- (b) Where it is proposed that a report or other statement be adopted by the meeting a speaker may move a procedural amendment that the report or statement or certain defined paragraphs of the report or statement be referred back or referred back for specific alterations to be made. Such a procedural amendment may be debated as though it were an amendment to a motion and Standing Orders 2 to 9 shall apply.
- (c) Following a resolution to refer back a report or statement, there shall be no further discussion or vote and the meeting shall move to next business. Resolutions to refer back a section of the report or statement shall have the effect of excluding that section.

## 13. Voting

- (a) All decisions shall be made by a simple majority except where the Constitution or Standing Orders require a two-thirds majority.
- (b) Where voting takes place by show of hands, it shall be followed by a ballot at the Chair's discretion or on a request supported by at least twenty voting members.
- (c) Abstentions shall be disregarded in all votes.

## 14. Closing the Debate

- (a) A call for **'the closure'** or for **'next business'** may be proposed and seconded only by members who have not spoken at any time in the debate. No speeches are allowed on such calls.
- (b) If a call for **'the closure'** is carried the meeting shall move immediately to the right of reply followed by a vote.
- (c) If a call for **'next business'** is carried the meeting shall move immediately to the next item of business without any further speeches or a vote on the original motion or any amendments.

## 15. Adjournment

Any member who has not already spoken during the debate on the question before the meeting may move the adjournment of the question under discussion or of the meeting, but must confine her or his remarks to the reasons for and length of the adjournment and must not discuss any other matter. The mover of the motion on which the adjournment has been moved shall be allowed the right of reply on the question of the adjournment but such reply shall not prejudice her or his right of reply on her or his own motion.

## 16. Rescinding a Resolution

No resolution shall be rescinded or amended at the same meeting at which it has been passed.

## 17. Suspension of Standing Orders

In the event of any matter of urgency arising the Chair may accept a call for the suspension of Standing Orders. Any member may propose the suspension of one or more of these Standing Orders, stating concisely the reason for the suspension. If formally seconded, such a motion shall be put to the vote without debate or amendment. It shall be carried only if supported by a two-thirds majority.