

Labour Campaign for Electoral Reform (LCER)

Protocol for Local and Regional Groups



Agreed by the LCER Executive 6 September 2022

LCER will enable members who wish to organise a local or regional group, where there are sufficient members who wish to participate in such a group. Local or regional groups (henceforth *groups*) may be set up at a range of scales (for example, a group of constituencies; a county; or a region).

- 1) Groups will engage in activities to promote LCER and its campaigns in their areas. This may include:
 - i. Recruiting local people to join LCER and encouraging local CLPs to affiliate to LCER
 - ii. Working with local Labour Parties and Trade Union branches
 - iii. Holding discussions and debates
 - iv. Running local campaigns
 - v. Contributing to debates within LCER and the Labour Party
- 2) Groups must:
 - i. Nominate a co-ordinator, who will act as a point of contact with the LCER Executive
 - ii. Encourage the participation of all LCER members within the group's area
 - iii. Hold an Annual Meeting each year, open to all LCER members living in the group's catchment area
 - iv. Actively encourage local Labour members and supporters to join LCER
 - v. Comply with GDPR legislation in all matters relating to data security
- 3) Groups may:
 - i. Submit an annual activity report to the Executive for inclusion in the LCER's annual report
 - ii. Fundraise in order to support their own activities, or those of LCER
 - iii. Invite non-members to participate in meetings and events
- 4) Groups must not:
 - i. Charge a membership fee (either to LCER members or to non-members); voluntary donations may be collected
 - ii. Affiliate to other political campaigns
 - iii. Accept affiliations from local CLPs or any other organisations
 - iv. Disseminate policy positions on matters other than electoral reform, or positions on electoral reform other than those agreed by LCER
- 5) Catchment areas
 - i. Normally, the catchment areas of groups will not overlap, though the Executive may exercise discretion. Where a new group is proposed that would overlap partly or wholly with an existing group, the Executive may decide to modify the boundaries of one or both groups, and/or to allow a degree of overlap; catchments may be altered if an arrangement is not working well.
 - ii. Groups may create an informal network over a specific area (eg a North of England network) to discuss issues, hold events or campaign together on issues that cover that area. Such informal networks would not control or bind local groups. Members wanting to establish a more regular network should contact the LCER Secretary for the Executive to consider the case.
 - iii. Where two groups overlap geographically, a member may take part in the activities of both groups. However, a member may only hold a co-ordinator or officer role in one group.
- 6) Setting up a group
 - i. A group may be set up with the support of at least six paid-up LCER members living in the proposed catchment area.
 - ii. Members wishing to set up a group should in the first instance contact the LCER Secretary. A member of the Executive (usually a member living in or near the proposed area) will assist with setting up the group.
 - iii. Once the establishment of a group has been agreed, the LCER Secretary will contact all LCER members (other than those who have opted out of email communications) living within the agreed catchment, with contact details of the member(s) setting up the group, details of the

forthcoming first meeting of the group, and information on any other events, meetings or campaigns that have been organised.

- iv. Groups will draw up rules to determine their own organisation (for example, in relation to the election of officers). These rules should be available to the LCER Executive.
- v. A new group should hold an Annual Meeting within its first year.

7) Membership of groups

- i. All paid-up members of LCER living in the geographical catchment of a group will automatically become members of that group.
- ii. An MP, Councillor or other elected representative who is a member of LCER and whose electoral area covers part of a group's catchment, will be considered a member of that group.
- iii. Groups may, in addition, maintain a mailing list of local supporters.
- iv. The right to vote on group decisions, to stand as an officer in a group, and to vote for officers, will be restricted to individuals who are paid-up members of LCER; and will be extended to all LCER members living in the catchment.

8) Operating a group

- i. Groups will be free to determine their own campaigning objectives and activities, provided they are consistent with the aims and objectives of LCER. Where the LCER Executive considers a campaigning activity or position to be contrary to LCER's aims or agreed policy, the group will be asked to amend the activity or position.
- ii. Groups will report regularly on their activities to the LCER Executive, usually via the regional representative on the Executive. Where appropriate, LCER will publicise campaigning and events undertaken by groups. Groups will ensure that the LCER Secretary is informed of the arrangements for their Annual Meeting and elections in good time, to enable all LCER members in the group's area to be informed and involved.
- iii. The local or regional nature of the group should be explicit on all statements, advertisements and other materials. Such statements must reflect agreed LCER policy; where there may be any doubt, prior endorsement must be sought from the Executive.

9) Finance

- i. Groups whose expenditure is minimal are free to operate without opening a bank account or appointing a Treasurer
- ii. Where a group decides to open a bank account, it must:
 - a. Elect a Treasurer, who would be responsible for the group's bookkeeping and accounting
 - b. Submit annual accounts to the Executive for inclusion in LCER's annual accounts.
 - c. Make available to the LCER Treasurer documentation of income and expenditure, including bank statements
- iii. Reasonable expenses incurred by groups may be reimbursed by LCER. Such expenses should be agreed with the LCER Treasurer before they are incurred.

10) GDPR compliance

- i. Where a group operates a mailing list or holds details of local supporters, this must be done in full compliance with GDPR and any other relevant legislation on privacy.
- ii. Mailing/contact lists should be accessible only by a small number of nominated individuals who have undergone training in the requirements of GDPR legislation.
- iii. Individuals' details must not be passed on (even to other members of LCER) without their express prior consent; no contact details should be shared with other political or commercial organisations.

11) Affiliations

- i. If and when LCER is accepted as an affiliated Socialist Society within the Labour Party, groups may wish to affiliate to a local CLP or CLPs, according to guidelines which will be issued by LCER.
- ii. Local groups shall not affiliate to any other political or campaigning organisations.

12) Withdrawal of recognition

- i. If a group appears to be inactive, fails to produce accounts on request (where relevant), or behaves in a manner contrary to the rules or principles of LCER, the Executive may withdraw or suspend recognition, subject to the right of the group to appeal to the next LCER AGM.