

## **A democratic selection process for the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Replace Chapter 5, Clause IV, section 5 and 6 with the following and renumber existing section 7 accordingly:

- 5 If a CLP is represented in Parliament by a member of the PLP, that MP shall indicate, no later than 30 months after the last general election, or by an earlier specified date if the NEC believes that there is a significant prospect of an early general election, whether or not s/he wishes to stand for re-election.
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  - A If a sitting MP has not indicated by that date that s/he wishes to stand for re-election, if s/he has indicated s/he wishes to retire, or if there is no sitting Labour MP, the NEC shall agree a timetable for a selection process for that constituency, candidates shall be invited to express interest in the selection and a Shortlisting Committee shall be appointed in line with procedural guidance to be issued by the NEC.
  - B In line with that timetable, party units and affiliates may make nominations in accordance with NEC guidance, and in doing so may interview interested candidates or not as they see fit. Any decision to invite some of the interested candidates to interview by party units must be made at a meeting to which all members of that unit have been invited, in accordance with party rules and with an explanation of the decisions that will be made at it.
  - C After the closing date for nominations, the Shortlisting Committee shall present to all members of the CLP who are eligible to vote (in accordance with Clause I.1.A above) a shortlist of nominated candidates. That shortlist must reflect the requirements of the NEC to ensure that candidates are representative of our society in accordance with Clause I.E.i above, and be subject to the requirement that any candidate who has received nominations from party branches representing over half of the CLP membership, or from more than half the affiliates and party units other than branches shall be included, subject to meeting eligibility criteria.
7.
  - A If a sitting MP has indicated by that date that s/he wishes to stand for re-election, the NEC shall agree a timetable for a selection process for that constituency, candidates shall be invited to express interest in the selection and a Shortlisting Committee shall be appointed in line with procedural guidance to be issued by the NEC.
  - B In line with that timetable, party units and affiliates may make a single nomination each in accordance with NEC guidance, and in doing so may interview interested candidates or not as they see fit. Any decision to shortlist some of the interested candidates for consideration by party units for nomination must be made at a meeting to which all members of that unit have been invited, in accordance with party rules and with an explanation of the decisions that will be made at it. Whether party units make nominations following interviews or based on candidates' applications, the sitting MP must be considered alongside and on equal terms to other candidates. If party units choose not to invite other candidates, then the sitting MP shall not attend the nomination meeting.

- C If the sitting MP receives both (i) nominations from party branches with a combined membership of more than two thirds of the CLP membership, and (ii) nominations submitted by more than two thirds of the affiliates and party units other than branches submitting nominations, then the sitting MP shall be automatically reselected.
- D Where the sitting MP is not automatically reselected, the Shortlisting Committee shall present to all members of the CLP who are eligible to vote in accordance with Clause I.1.A above a shortlist of nominated candidates. That shortlist must reflect the requirements of the NEC to ensure that candidates are representative of our society in accordance with Clause I.E.i above, it must include the sitting MP and it must be subject to the requirement that any candidate who has received nominations either from party branches with a combined membership of more than one half of the CLP membership or from more than half of the affiliates and party units other than branches making nominations shall be included, subject to meeting eligibility criteria.
- E If the said MP is not selected as the prospective parliamentary candidate s/he shall have the right of appeal to the NEC. The appeal can only be made on the grounds that the procedures laid down in the rules and the general provisions of the constitution, rules and standing orders have not been properly carried out. The NEC must receive the appeal by the date on which they consider endorsement of the parliamentary candidate for the constituency.

**For comparison the existing rule reads:**

Chapter 5 (Selections, rights and responsibilities of candidates for elected public office) Clause IV (Selection of Westminster parliamentary candidates)

- 4. The NEC may establish a national parliamentary panel of candidates in the selection procedure appended to these rules. Nominees do not have to be members of any national parliamentary panel to seek selection. Where a national panel is established by the NEC then candidates recommended by nationally affiliated organisations through their own procedures shall automatically be included on the national panel subject to agreement between the NEC and the affiliate that their procedures set similar criteria for accreditation.
- 5. If a CLP is represented in Parliament by a member of the PLP:
  - A If the sitting MP wishes to stand for re-election, a trigger ballot will be carried out through Party units and affiliates according to NEC guidelines. If the MP wins the trigger ballot he/ she will, subject to NEC endorsement, be selected as the CLP's prospective parliamentary candidate.
  - B If the MP fails to win the trigger ballot, he/ she shall be eligible for nomination for selection as the prospective parliamentary candidate, and s/he shall be included in the shortlist of candidates from whom the selection shall be made.

- C. If the said MP is not selected as the prospective parliamentary candidate s/he shall have the right of appeal to the NEC. The appeal can only be made on the grounds that the procedures laid down in the rules and the general provisions of the constitution, rules and standing orders have not been properly carried out. The appeal must be received by the NEC by the date on which they consider endorsement of the parliamentary candidate for the constituency.
  - D. When there is a formal announcement of a royal proclamation to dissolve Parliament before the trigger ballot or the constituency selection meeting(s) have been held, the provisions of this clause (other than this paragraph) shall be suspended and the said MP shall be reselected as the prospective parliamentary candidate, subject to NEC endorsement. <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
  - E. If the MP has intimated her or his intention to retire, the provisions of this clause shall not apply.
6. In all circumstances (i.e. where there is no MP, where the MP has announced s/he is retiring or where the MP is putting themselves forward for re-selection but has failed to win the trigger ballot) the CLP Shortlisting Committee shall draw up a shortlist of interested candidates to present to all members of the CLP who are eligible to vote in accordance with Clause I.1.A above.
7. The selection of candidates shall consist of a vote, by eliminating ballot, of all eligible individual members of the constituency on the basis of one member one vote.

### **Supporting Argument**

Many of the problems faced by the Labour Party in recent years have been caused by the wide gap between the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) and the membership. This gap has been exacerbated by the lack of meaningful mechanisms ensuring democratic accountability between members and MPs, particularly regarding selections. The lack of local membership input in selections exacerbates under-representation of working class candidates in the Parliamentary Labour Party. By ensuring a nominations process, this rule change allows both sitting MPs and potential candidates to seek out nominations from local units and affiliates, thereby increasing the accountability between members and MPs. It replaces the ineffective trigger ballot mechanism which requires members to organise on a solely negative basis (to 'trigger' a selection) in order to have any input into candidate selection with an open system of nominations. This process allows MPs to get automatically reselected if they have the clear support of members and trade union affiliates, whilst at the same time offering other candidates a reasonable chance of getting a guaranteed place on the shortlist. In doing so, it addresses the gap between the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) and the membership which has caused so many problems in recent years.

