

# **Inaugural General Meeting of the new local party covering the Constituencies of Bath, Frome and East Somerset, and North East Somerset and Hanham.**

**Minutes of the Bath and North East Somerset IGM held on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

**Virtual meeting by Zoom with approximately 45 members attending**

## **1. Introduction from the Chair**

Simon Taylor Chair of the current BANES local party welcomed everyone to the meeting. Simon explained that each of the constituencies will have representation on the new executive alongside Councillor representation. Over 2024 the arrangements will be reviewed in order to ensure that arrangements are working for everyone and changes brought forward as needed. The name of the new local party will be subject to a members consultation in the new year. All members from across the new constituencies have had the opportunity to stand as officers or members of the executive.

## **2. Formation of the new local party**

The following motion to establish the new local party was presented to the meeting and passed following a vote:

That the Bath and North East Somerset Liberal Democrats be established as a Local Party of the Liberal Democrats in accordance with the Party Constitution and as the successor within its area of Bath and North East Somerset Liberal Democrats, South Gloucestershire Liberal Democrats, Somerton and Frome Liberal Democrats, Wells Liberal Democrats, and their predecessors.

## **3. Adoption of the local party constitution**

The following motion to adopt the new local party constitution was passed following a vote:

That the Model Constitution for Local Parties (England) be adopted as the Constitution of the Local Party, subject to such amendments as may be agreed by the meeting (all such amendments being conditional upon approval by the Regional Party).

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE MODEL CONSTITUTION**

In defining the area of the local party:

1.2. The area of the Local Party shall be the parliamentary constituencies of Bath, Frome and East Somerset, North East Somerset and Hanham.

In defining the membership of the Executive committee, to ensure that members from across the new local party area are represented:

5.3 (f) Two representatives from each of the parliamentary seats within the local party;

5.3 (g) Three representatives of the Local Party's members from Bath and North East Somerset Council, elected by and from such members; One representative of the Local Party's members from each of South Gloucester and Somerset Councils, elected by and from such members;

The full version of the proposed constitution is [available online](#)

A General meeting can be held during the year following further consultations with members and discussions of any representations. It was noted that this should not stand in the way of General Election Campaigning.

#### **4. Outline Budget for 2024**

Steven Gourley outlined some challenges for 2024 including rising staff costs and the possible provision of a Frome base at an estimated cost of £20,000.

The outline budget was noted.

#### **5. Elections of Officers and Executive members**

Hal MacFie acting as Returning Officer, set out the nominations received. There will be a ballot of all members for the role of Vice-Chair that has received two nominations.

Chair Simon Taylor

Vice Chair – Appointment to follow Nominations from Cllr Manda Rigby and Barry O’Leary

Treasurer – Steven Gourley

Data Officer - Clive Dellard

Secretary - Sally Long

Elections Officer – Katie Hall

Membership Development Officer – Fran Edwards

Diversity Champion – Alice Hovanessian

Executive members

Paul Crossley

Paul Strasburger

Claire Jackson – with responsibility for regional links

Dave Wood – with responsibility for campaigns

2 vacancies

**Youth and Students Rep** - Toby Hawkins

**Bath Reps** - Christine White and Kiran Kataria

**Frome and ES reps** - Catherine Howells and 1 vacancy

**Hanham and NES reps** - 2 vacancies

Hal MacFie offer to reopen nominations for any of the vacancies if anyone at the meeting wished to stand, however no one put themselves forward, accordingly vacancies may be filled by the Executive.

## **6. Parliamentary Campaigns in the constituencies**

**Frome and East Somerset** have a target to knock on 1000 doors a month to be an advanced seat. The selection of a candidate is in progress. It is likely that the seat would get considerable HQ support

**North East Somerset and Hanham** Existing held council wards will be worked and the aim will be to build capacity in the Hanham wards

**Bath** as an advanced seat will hope to secure a win and also support the other constituencies

**The meeting was then concluded and members thanked for attending.**

**Following the meeting Wera Hobhouse MP and Sarah Dyke MP both addressed the members.**

Wera said it had been an amazing year with the Lib Dems firmly back in the region. She has successfully introduced a bill in Parliament that has protected workers from Sexual Harassment in the work place. She continues her role as Climate Change spokesperson and stressed that local government has a large role to play in achieving net zero.

Sarah thanked all the members who helped her in the by-election. She stressed the importance of strong voices for the community. Sarah was sworn in on 4<sup>th</sup> September, she is standing up for rural communities as a key issue.