

SPC1 Structures and Procedures Committee

Proposer:	Structures and Procedures Committee
Resolution date:	10/27/2018
Agenda item:	A Reports

Report Details

People

There have been a variety of people on SPC throughout this year. We began with Hannah Clare, Liam McClelland, George Scrogings and Chandler Wilson.

Throughout the year we had resignations from the latter three and co-opted Alex Price, Reece Stafferton, Megan Banks and Vicci Jennings. Reece later resigned as they were potentially to put themselves forward in the Young Greens elections.

The reasons people resigned are varied but were mostly personal/health related. Thank you to everyone who sat on SPC this year.

General Duties

The role of SPC is to safeguard our constitutional documents and help others understand it. Throughout the year SPC has perhaps been more active than previous SPCs have, partially due to the nature of working with a new Constitution and Standing Orders.

Our main duties are outlined below, however there are some duties which have not fit into those categories that we thought right to include here:

- Supporting EC with counting votes for co-options

- Supported EC with Vote of No Confidences (VNC), due to new confidentiality in Standing Orders

- Wrote an example constitution for groups of the regions of England and nation of Wales to adopt and supported some groups with adopting this

- Wrote guides to the responsibilities each committee have and to various parts our constitutional documents
- Provided an SPC induction to new members of EC to ensure they were aware of their responsibilities
- Supported with AGMs, including acting as ERO for some
- Hosted quarterly Q&As
- Made attempts to increase engagement in Q&As and reports
- Compiled and uploaded monthly and quarterly reports (with next to no missing reports)
- Kept our team action plan up to date
- Ensured consistent delivery of monthly and quarterly reports, with barely any gaps from non-submission

Minor Edits to Constitution and Standing Orders

We are required to report any minor edits to the Constitution or Standing Orders, as per our power outlined in Article 3.3 of the Young Greens Constitution. These are as follows:

- Clarification in standing orders that 'one year term' is inclusive of whether you no longer fulfil the requirements for YG membership as defined in Article 1.5 of the constitution e.g. are no longer a student or turn 30
- Standardisation of punctuation in constitution and standing orders
- Deleted duplicate 5.1 in liberation group section of constitution
- Added a space between two words in Article 5.14 and again in Byelaw 1.2
- Amended reference to 'subsection 1' in Article 5.4 to reference Article 5.2 which is where this now lies
- Amended list of roles in Article 2.6 so it reflects those listed in Standing Orders D1.5
- Amended Article 5.5 so it lists the same policies as those listed in Article 5.9

- Removed the redundant term 'Policy Papers' from the Standing Orders

Rulings

Please find all rulings responded to this year below:

Are job shares allowed for Young Greens positions?

It is the opinion of SPC that job shares are permissible in the Young Greens Constitution, under the following conditions:

? The job share would share one vote

? The quota of EC would remain 50%+1 counting if they were one person

? Due to the current gender identities of members of EC, both parts of the job share would need to be filled with someone who is not a man, unless it is a three-way job share, in which case a man can fill one third.

? If one part of the job share votes, it is assumed the job share is in agreement until it is said otherwise. If votes are contradictory, then they will be cancelled out.

? One part of the job share voting will count for quoracy

Can candidates apply for more than one of the roles outlined in D1.5 of the standing orders in a co-option process?

SPC ruled that the rule of D1.5 also applied for co-options and therefore they could not do so.

Can reports to the membership have sections marked confidential?

SPC discussed this issue and concluded that there is no provision for confidentiality in the reporting requirements outlined for various elected committees, defined in Byelaws 1-4 in the Constitution. SPC advised that if elected representatives wish something to be dealt with as confidential they should not report this in their report. If they wished to whistleblow, they should follow the complaints and disputes procedure outlined in Article 5.

Can hustings be completed as text only hustings?

SPC is of the opinion that hustings refer to hosting a verbal hustings at a defined time, which can take place in person or online. However, to ensure this process is as accessible as possible, this does not exclude written submissions being made to these hustings where people are unable to attend, feel uncomfortable or unable to ask in response to any questions that will be asked.

Where there are co-options to empty roles while there are other empty roles which would be required to be filled by non-men to fulfil the gender balancing of the full committee, how does Byelaw 1.2 of

our Constitution and Section D4.7 apply? As no candidates have applied for the current vacant position of Senate Co-chair (which cannot be filled by a man as set out in Section D4.6 of the Standing Orders) would there be a requirement on the gender of the person co-opted to fill the vacant Internal Comms role (for which there are applications) to ensure that the whole Committee is not more than 50% men

SPC is of the opinion that the gender rules in the standing orders, Section D Part 4.7 must be abided by as far as possible. There will be occasions where resignations mean that there are more people who self-define as men on the committee. However, where the Executive Committee takes any action as a whole, e.g. through co-option, they must ensure their action does not lead to more than 50% of the committee self-defining as a man. This is similar to how elections would work where there are more candidates who self-define as men elected - one position would instead remain unfilled. It is of the opinion of SPC that the executive committee took an action in their co-option of an internal communications officer that was unconstitutional. Although there was a vacant position on the Executive Committee that must not be held by someone who self-defines as a man, the co-option of a man meant that more than 50% of filled positions on the Executive Committee defined as a man. In this occasion, we believe the committee should not have co-opted until the reserved role had an applicant, to ensure that Section D Part 4.7 was not breached.

Can members of EC use their Young greens email to propose motions to conference?

SPC is of the opinion that our constitutional documents do not restrict people from using their Young Greens email to propose and support motions to Green Party conference. However, it does note that the Standing Orders Part D, Section 5.5 denies the right to use Young Greens 'administrative email' for motions and elections in the Young Greens AGM. Therefore, SPC advises that members who have a Young Greens email should consider the use of this for other matters.

Do members co-opted as a job-share remain a member of EC where their job-share partner resigns?

The job share was co-opted together and if one part resigns, the whole job share resigns. In line with D6.1, a new co-option therefore would need to take place. The standing orders are quite clear that a co-option can only take place after a call out and hustings.

Can a member of EC co-opt a job share?

SPC have made two previous rulings on job shares. These have been considered when producing this ruling. One previous ruling asked if the whole job share needs to resign if one part wishes to no longer be a member. We consider this a similar situation. We would like to state that job-shares are an interpretation and not codified in the constitution at present. The choice of voting for a job-share is different to voting for a person in a role by themselves. As a result, if one part of a job share resigns or someone wishes to add someone to a job share, this is a new officer. Therefore, to add a job-share or take one away, the person remaining in post or the new job share will need to be co-opted in line with Standing Orders D6.1. The standing orders are quite clear that a co-option can only take place after a call out and hustings. However, the Standing Orders do not specify the length of time this call out needs to be advertised for. EC could therefore in theory open a call out for a short period of time and vote to co-opt following this.

Can job shares put themselves forward in the Young Greens elections?

SPC have concluded that previous rulings regarding job shares apply for the election. From an ERO point of view, they are accountable to the spending limits as a joint candidate, as detailed in the election rules

Can job shares run for Co-Chair?

SPC is of the opinion that the Co-Chair position, while elected separately, is a job share. This is because the

role is a shared portfolio of responsibilities. In addition to this, in external bodies where the co-chairs hold a seat, they tend to share a vote and are therefore considered a job-share within the party.

Does B3.9 in the Standing Orders mean that any proposer can propose any amendment to their own paper at convention, provided it can be explained verbally, because the amendments would have to be considered friendly?

SPC is of the opinion that this is the case.

Complaints and Disputes

Complaints and Disputes Committee this year was comprised of a variety of volunteers. Originally Liam McClelland chaired the committee and later Vicci Jennings.

Thank you to those, along with Badger T Hill, Reece Stafferton, Isabella Moir, Molly Arthurs, Lucas North, Amy Heley, Tino Bere for serving on C&D or helping with complaints.

There have been two cases this year. At the time of writing, the latter is yet to be resolved. This is in breach of the constitution and SPC submitted a formal apology to the complainant on behalf of C&D for this.

The former case was in regards to a potential safeguarding matter that could bring the party into disrepute (separate from the widely reported case in the press). This was considered and investigated by C&D and they recommended a termination of Young Greens membership to the Executive Committee and that the case was referred to the Green Party Complaints Procedure. EC voted to terminate their membership and the person later had their membership of the Green Party of England and Wales removed.

Elections

This year SPC sought to use a piece of software to manage nominations to the Young Greens Elections. This is one used by the Federation of Young European Greens. We also wanted to ensure a robust and free online voting system.

We want to issue a huge thank you to Lucas North, Convention Officer on EC who supported hugely with this aim, including building the voting system. We hope this has made the process of submitting nominations easier for users and certainly made it easier for us to process.

We appointed Benedict Allbrooke as Electoral Returning Officer this year and Hannah Clare as Deputy Electoral Returning Officer. We wish to offer a huge thanks to Benedict for his work on this, in particular in face of a number of requests and questions from people that he faced personal comments for, despite the decisions being those of the ERO team. As an ERO team they have ensured the elections remain fair and in line with the Standing Orders.

At the time of writing, the ERO team along with SPC have completed two investigations into candidates. In both cases these were upheld with no action taken.

Finally, we sought to ensure that we provided ample guides to potential candidates so that the roles available were clear (thank you to previous SPC's who this was largely derivative from). We also hosted two training webinars for candidates to make the rules clear to them. We hope candidates have found all of the above helpful.

Papers

While we had a new constitution and standing orders this year, some things remained unclear and a large part of this was the different types of 'Motion' to convention. We took an interpretation which clarified these as follows:

- Resolutions - Priorities for the Executive Committee
- Motions - Policy or Organisational
- Changes to the Constitution or Standing Orders - self explanatory
- Emergency Motions - Motions passed the deadline

As a whole we have referred to these as papers. We are pleased this has been clarified with a Paper to Convention, cementing this in future.

We wrote guides to each type of paper and supported those who approached us. We also produced videos on how to submit them.