

## **Protocol for selecting a Parliamentary By-election candidate**

This is the separate process in the case of by-elections as specified in article 3.2 of the English Party Selection Rules, and takes place under the special provisions specified in articles 11.6 and 11.8 of the Federal Constitution.

1. The decision to proceed with a by-election selection shall be made by the Chair of the English Candidates' Committee [ECC], in conjunction with the Chair of the Campaigns and Communications Committee [CCC] and the Regional Candidates' Chair [RCC] of the relevant region. Any of these office holders may delegate the responsibility for making this decision as required.
2. The RCC shall appoint a suitably experienced Returning Officer [RO] from outside the Local Party concerned. The RO is responsible for administering the by-election selection process, in conjunction with the Candidates' Office, and shall report regularly to the RCC on the progress of the selection.
3. If there is a sitting PPC, he or she should be contacted to remind them of the special provisions governing by-elections.
4. The Local Party Chair, or his or her agreed deputy, shall be contacted regarding a Local Party profile for inclusion with the application pack, and the composition of the selection committee, both of which shall be agreed by the RO.
5. The RO shall agree a timetable and rules for the selection process for the specific by-election in question with reference to clause 11.8 of the Federal Constitution.
6. All fully approved Westminster candidates should be notified by e-mail that the selection is taking place and that all applications must be sent to the RO by a set closing date. This email should include the timetable (if agreed) and the rules. If a candidate does not have e-mail, there is no duty to contact.
7. If there was a sitting PPC before the by-election selection process came into effect in the constituency in question, (or, if there have been boundary changes, in any constituency in which more than 33% of the electorate [on 2005 figures] are in the constituency in question), and he or she has submitted an application for the by-election selection, then his or her name should be automatically added to the list of candidates that is put before the By-election Panel.
8. The local selection committee shall meet with the RO to draw up a list of candidates to go before the By-election panel. The RO shall carry out any necessary training at this meeting, and shall ensure that the selection committee make their decision based upon the by-election selection criteria.

9. The short listed candidates are then interviewed by a By-election Panel at Party HQ. The panel shall consist of:

- The Chair or Vice-Chair of the ECC (or nominee)
- An MP (preferably one who has fought a by-election or similar type of seat)
- The RCC from the Region where the by-election is taking place (or nominee)
- The Director of Campaigns (or nominee)

The panel shall be conducted according to the guidance issued by the ECC and shall normally be chaired by either the Chair of the ECC or the MP. All members of the panel shall vote, with the Chair having a casting vote in the event of a tie. The Candidates' Office shall make the arrangements for the interviews, booking rooms, contacting panel members and contacting the interviewees.

10. The panel will produce the final list from which the local members will select their candidate. They have the discretion to reduce the number of applicants put forward by the Local Party selection committee, and should give due regard to providing members with a choice.

11. The final selection will take place at the hustings. There will be no provision for postal or proxy votes, and no option to re-open nominations. In arranging the hustings meeting, due regard shall be given to allowing sufficient time for applicants to meet and talk to members.

12. There is no right of appeal against the outcome.

13. If the seat is not won at the by-election, and the by-election candidate and/or the person who was the sitting PPC before the by-election selection process came into effect (if different) indicate(s) to the Local Party Chair that they want to stand again, there shall be a vote of the Local Party Executive as to whether to use the "special reselection process ... permitted for ... the previous candidate" as specified in 11.5 f) of the Federal constitution.