

How to be a Deputy Chairman Political

The Deputy Chairman Political (DCP) has the responsibility of coordinating political activity within the area that their Association¹ covers.

They play a key role in all political matters, from Candidate Selection to coordinating and running canvassing to helping run the Association's social media presence, sometimes with and sometimes without professional support. This document aims to define the role of a Deputy Chairman Political and provide useful advice for carrying out the role.

The primary role of the DCP is to fight and win elections. Every Association needs to have a clear campaigning plan, which should be known and understood by the Association's Executive Council. DCP should work with their Association's candidates and any professional staff to lead in drawing up the campaign plan.

The DCP should also work closely with the Deputy Chairman Membership and Finance and/or Treasurer to ensure that their Association campaigning is in line with what the Association can afford.

The areas of responsibilities listed opposite are the core roles that every DCP must fulfil.

Responsibilities (Main)

- Coordinating the Campaigning across your Association. Instigate a programme of surveying, canvassing and data collection both throughout the constituency and online.
- Work with Conservative candidates to implement campaign strategies for Local and General Elections.
- Work with elected representatives to put in place campaigns on local issues throughout the area.
- Brief and train members and volunteers in preparation for local and national elections.
- Encourage the regular production and distribution of Conservative newsletters and e-newsletters whenever possible.
- Play a role in the selection of Candidates.



Coordinating the Campaigning across your Association

Campaigning should take place throughout the year not just at election time! Your Association should be looking to build the incumbency of your elected representatives outside of election periods.

The DCP should lead in establishing a programme of campaigning activities throughout the year. These must be targeted to those areas of greatest political importance. It is important that a campaign plan is produced for all election campaigns and an incumbency plan is developed in between elections. All activity should be co-ordinated to fit into these plans which should complement the Association's Strategy Plan.

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The campaign plans should contain the practicalities of running a political campaign. When and over what period do you want to deliver certain pieces of printed literature? What is your canvassing schedule? What is the rough budget for your campaign? These are all questions that your plans should answer. Your campaign plans may also precede and so include the selection of candidates. You should also ensure that digital campaigning is built into your plan.

It is important that the DCP works with other officers as well as professional staff and elected representatives where they exist to agree on any plan. No DCP can win an election on their own, but they can lose one by overstressing themselves.

Alongside campaign plans, the DCP should also work on drawing up and maintaining the following:

- **A Delivery network:** The DCP should know how many deliverers the Association has. The DCP should look to assign specific routes to specific deliverers monitoring where any gaps may be. Maintaining a strong delivery network covering as much as possible of the Associations area enables leaflets to be distributed as quickly as possible. It is strongly recommended to base for network on Walk Routes from VoteSource.
- **Poster Sites:** An up-to-date list of poster sites for use in election campaigns should be maintained by the DCP.
- **Data Entry:** It is also worthwhile for the DCP to compile a list of members willing to help with data entry tasks such as entering the Marked Register. Doing so enables Associations to complete time-consuming tasks quickly and efficiently.

If you require any assistance in putting together your programme of campaign activities, please contact your local Battleground Campaign Manager.

Instigate a programme of surveying and canvassing throughout the constituency

To be able to target effectively it is essential that the Association has a comprehensive and accurate record of electors' voting intentions.

The DCP should instigate an extensive canvassing schedule throughout the year. Shaped by the Association's budget and the type of housing within the area that an Association covers, this schedule should include a combination of Door-to-door canvassing, knock-and-drop surveys as well as telephone and digital canvassing.

Across every electoral unit (e.g. Ward, Division, Constituency) within the organisation a 'pledge' target should be set – a 'pledge' being an individual canvassed as a strong Conservative (C).

You can see the recommended formula for calculating a pledge target in the box opposite.

The pledge target should be set using the following formula:

Electorate multiplied by Turnout, divided by 2; then add 1; then divide by 60 and multiply by 100.

For example, a pledge target for a local government ward could be:

Electorate 4,817 on a 36% turnout = 1,734 to vote.

(Electorate multiplied by Turnout)

Resultantly a candidate would need 867 votes plus 1 to win. (Divide by 2 then add 1)

However, even with a reasonable GOTV operation, you should plan on a 60% turnout of your pledged support.

Divide the winning target of 868 by 60 and multiply by 100 = 1,447 (divide by 60 and multiply by 100).

1,447 pledges are required to win based on 60% GOTV of pledges.



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Work with Conservative candidates to implement a campaign strategy for Local and General Elections

If the Party is to be an effective campaigning organisation all parts of the Party must work together during elections. The DCP should work with the Conservative Group in putting together the manifesto for the local elections for local elections as well as agree the target seats and the overall strategy.

The DCP should consult widely with the other officers and members to ensure that the strategy is realistic and achievable. Once agreed it is the responsibility of the DCP to communicate and explain this strategy to the members of the Association and prospective council candidates as well as deliver it.

For General Elections the DCP's role is slightly different. It is more focused on the delivery of the campaign. Ensuring that literature is delivered on time, that canvassing is taking place across the constituency and that the campaign's digital output is frequent and effective form crucial parts of the role.

The DCP has less of a say over the overall strategy and messaging but should work with the Parliamentary Candidate to generate local content, creating the narrative that the candidate will be a strong local voice for their constituency.

Work with elected representatives to put in place campaigns on local issues throughout the area

Our Party must be seen as an active part of the community and be in touch with the electorate's concerns. Running local campaigns is crucial to achieving this. They improve its visibility and standing within the local community.

Local campaigns are a crucial part of representatives and candidates at all levels building their incumbency. Picking the right local issues builds support from the electorate and our Party's candidates. Local campaigns also collect valuable contact details that we can use to build a relationship with voters over time.

A record of standing up for the electorate's interests can make all the difference in a tight electoral race.

Brief and train members and volunteers in preparation for local and national elections

One of the main reasons people do not continue to volunteer having shown an interest is that they are not properly briefed and supported. The DCP should ensure that regular training sessions are run in all areas of campaigning.

They should also ensure that all volunteers are aware of:

- The importance of volunteering
- What you want them to do
- How what you are asking them to do fits into the campaign
- How it will contribute to the success of the campaign

All of this helps to ensure that volunteers feel that they are a crucial part of the Association's local activities. Volunteering for the Party should be a positive, rewarding and fun experience. The DCP plays an important part in ensuring that it is.

Encourage the regular production and distribution of Conservative newsletters and e-newsletters whenever possible

Regular direct communication with the electorate is vital. Printed newsletters should still form an important part of any communications strategy. Associations should look to produce and distribute a minimum of three communications outside election time per annum.

It is the responsibility of the DCP to ensure that this is possible by maintaining a strong delivery network. They may also play a role in pulling together and producing the literature. The content in your literature should focus on local issues as much as possible to increase the chance of your leaflet being read.

The DCP should also look to ensure an electronic version of the newsletter is sent out to anyone that the Association holds an email for.

Play a role in the selection of Candidates

The DCP should ensure that the Association maintains an approved List of local government candidates and has a selection process in place that is according to the rules supplied by CCHQ.

All candidates (including sitting councillors) are required to submit forms for inclusion on the Approved List and a file of these should be maintained. The DCP must make sure that the selection procedure has correctly been followed and that the Association is



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routinely contesting all vacant seats at elections and by-elections.

The DCP may also play an important role in the selection of their constituency's Parliamentary Candidate.

Responsibilities (Additional)

Below are some additional responsibilities that DCP may also undertake:

- Instigate regular contact with the local and regional media.
- Set up policy discussion groups in the constituency.
- Find and brief suitable volunteers to serve as Conservative representatives on School Governing bodies and local bodies panels.
- Instigate regular contact with the local and regional media

Although the elected representatives will be the main contact with the media, the DCP needs to ensure that the local Association builds up a positive relationship with particularly local print media.

Not all the media coverage needs to be political and often it is easier to get a story published that is not. Placing non-political stories shows that the Party is in touch with the local community and with issues that matter to real people.

For assistance with advice on contacting the local print media please get in touch with your CCHQ Regional Press Officer.

Set up policy discussion groups in the constituency

It is important that members of the Party are given the opportunity to discuss ideas and develop policy. The Conservative Policy Forum sends regular briefs to constituencies to be debated, with the responses being returned to CCHQ.

The DCP should also instigate a variety of other political discussions throughout the Association, to encourage political involvement at all levels. Consider inviting an expert to give their informed view to help enliven the discussion at these events.

Find and brief suitable volunteers to serve as Conservative representatives on School Governing bodies and other local bodies panels

As well as the appointment of school governors several other local authority appointments require nominations from the Conservative Party.

If there are no suitable nominees from the Party these posts either go unfilled or are passed to our opponents. It is important that each Association has a list of people prepared to serve on these various bodies.

If you need any further guidance on the role and responsibilities of a DCP, you can email voluntaryparty@conservatives.com for advice

