

Deputy Chairman Membership & Finance

This document is to be used in conjunction with regularly supplied advice and templates through the CCHQ Financial Compliance and Organisation Departments.

Introduction

The Deputy Chairman Membership and Finance has particular responsibility for membership, fundraising and dealing with all the financial matters of the Association.

If the Executive Council determines that the role is not to be combined then an Association may elect a separate Treasurer. This decision must be made by the Executive Council before an Annual General Meeting of members. Membership and fundraising are closely linked with political campaigning. They equal money and helpers - where Associations are strong at raising funds and recruiting and retaining a good number of members they are usually strong campaigners.

Although the overall aim must be to raise the income in any legal way to enable the Association to fulfil its aims, it is recommended to aim for an even split in fundraising:

- 33% Membership Subscriptions
- 33% Branch Fundraising
- 33% Central Association Fundraising

It is therefore important for a Deputy Chairman Membership and Finance to recognise as part of their remit, the need for both robust membership numbers and also, with fellow Officers, seeking to have members organised in to as many active Branches as possible. If an Association cannot grow and maintain a branch infrastructure it will put extra pressure on the need for greater central Association fundraising.

The combined responsibilities of the Deputy Chairman Membership and Finance are:

Finance

- To prepare and manage a balanced annual Association budget that can achieve the realistic political objectives of the Association.
- To maintain up to date accounts which shall be provided regularly for each of the Association's Management team and Executive Council meetings.
- To control the Association's expenditure and ensure that all invoices are paid on time.
- To present annual verified and certified accounts for the Association at its AGM.
- To be aware of and comply with PPERA compliance regulations.
- To establish an annual programme of central Association fundraising.
- To organise Fighting Fund Appeals for every election.



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● **Preparing a balanced annual Association budget**

It is essential that a realistic and achievable balanced budget is set each year so that the Association can put its plans into action. This would be prepared each autumn and signed off by the final Management Team and Executive Council meetings of the year.

The annual budget should be on a month by month basis so that income and expenditure can be monitored throughout the year and problems addressed immediately. Use past accounts to help plan the likely levels of income and expenditure through the year. Remember that election years will require greater funding but also provide more opportunity for financial appeals.

It is important that the budget is built on the basis of what is needed to run an effective Association rather than entirely on what might be a rather pessimistic or conservative estimate of what can be raised. Balancing the books is no achievement in itself if it is merely a report of inadequate income matching insufficient expenditure to meet the needs of the Association.

It is also sensible to establish a three year financial plan as part of the Association's Strategy Plan which aims to plan for replacement of major items such as IT and printing equipment, office furniture, redecoration etc. Plan ahead to ensure that sufficient income is raised to fight elections and a surplus to help through times of reduced income such as the period after a General Election. If the Association owns or leases a building it is advisable to include payments to a building fund to ensure that repairs and renewals are carried out on a regular basis. However, it is essential

that ownership of a building does not become a drain on an Association. Members do not join the Party to pay for the maintenance of dilapidated buildings and if the building cannot be proved to be a cost-effective means of providing an office and maybe income for the Association then serious consideration needs to be given as to whether it is an asset worth retaining.

● **Provision of regularly updated accounts, control of expenditure and payment of invoices on time**

The accounts must be kept up to date and current reports provided at all Management Team and Executive Council meetings.

A clear understanding of the Association's financial position will enable control of expenditure. If a monthly budget forecast has been completed it should be easier to maintain control of the cash flow. If income is consistently below the budgeted level it may be necessary to reduce expenditure BUT only as a last resort and after all attempts at increased income generation have been exhausted. Simply reducing expenditure is an easy way out. Refusing to pay invoices is not an option. All should be paid promptly.

● **To present annual verified and certified accounts at the Association AGM**

It is essential that accurate end of year accounts detailing the financial position and performance of the Association are put to the Annual General Meeting each year.

On that basis, the turn of the year is when all financial records from the Branches and the

Association need to be collected and collated using the templates as supplied by the CCHQ Financial Compliance Department. The accounts should then be passed to the independent verifier as agreed by the previous year's AGM and returned for the Management Team and Executive Council meetings, held in the early part of the New Year, to scrutinize and adopt for tabling at the Annual General Meeting so that the members may analyse, question and vote on adoption.

● **To be aware of and comply with PPERA (Compliance) Regulations**

The Political Parties Elections and Referendums Act places an obligation on Associations regarding the reporting of donations of goods and services, cash and in kind, also publishing of accounts. The Financial Compliance Department at CCHQ regularly issues information and advice on all these matters and these can be found on **Campaign Toolkit**.

● **Set an annual programme of central Association fundraising**

The Association should seek to raise at least a third of its annual income from a programme of central Association fundraising which might include Christmas and Summer Draws, a Patrons Club, Luncheon Club, Annual Dinner.



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These should not encroach on Branch fundraising and should seek to attract 'new money' to the Association i.e. being run as much to involve non-members as members. If real money is to be raised then events of a major nature should be geared towards such thus attract donations and ticket sales from the business and professional community. It is important that a central diary of fundraising events is held by the Association and communicated regularly to members and Branches so as to get in to people's diaries early and to avoid event clashes.

Your local CCHQ field team and the Voluntary Party Manager team will be happy to offer advice on ways to increase your fundraising capabilities and there is guidance on a number of fundraising ideas on **Campaign Toolkit**.

- **To organise fighting fund appeals for every election**

If the organisation of the substantial type of election campaign that will maximise an election result is to be achieved then a Fighting Fund must be organised in good time, with thought and planning.

The objective being to raise the sort of income required to meet the election budget. Campaigns should not be under-gunned due to lack of monies.

Membership

- Updating of **Votesource** membership records promptly for those who pay their subscription by local standing order to the Association.
- Acceptance or Rejection on **Votesource** of new member applications.
- Send regular newsletters, bulletins, information etc to members and work with your fellow Officers to ensure that the Association's website and digital presence are regularly updated and always happening and current.
- Get to know the interests and skills of the members and ensure that they are always asked for help and invited to be involved. Nurture your volunteers.
- Ensure that all members' email addresses and mobile numbers are captured and loaded on to **Votesource**, keeping records up to date.
- Carry out constant membership recruitment activities.
- Chase up lapsed members and recruit back.
- Use the advice and information on **Campaign Toolkit** to help with recruitment, nurturing volunteers and communication.

- **Local Standing Order Payments**

Updating of **Votesource** membership records for those who pay their subscriptions by local Standing Order to the Association should be done as soon

as the payment arrives in the Association bank account thus online banking is important to facilitate this. Where an Association has a separate Treasurer, work out between you who is doing what on this. Failure results in people ceasing to be members which creates upset and not getting a vote in ballots.

- **New Membership Applications**

Review the **Votesource** Membership acceptance tile each week to see if your Association has any new applications to accept. The accept or reject button would need to be pressed within 21 days before the system automatically accepts them. You would need to google, also scrutinise the Voting Intentions record and social media to ensure that such aren't against the Party and its values.

- **Send Regular Communications to Members**

Just as any membership based organisation, members have a right to expect and should be sent, regular newsletters, bulletins, and invitations to events/activities. Use of new media is important with this and as part of this, ensuring that the Association's website and digital presence are regularly updated and always looking current and vibrant – they are your shop window. They act as a public face of the Association thus to inform and hopefully attract new support and involvement.



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- **Get to Know the Skills and Interests of the Members, Ask and Involve Them**

All types of produced communications to members should incorporate the opportunity for them to specify their interests and skills, mark on **Votesource**, then make sure they are asked to help and be involved with whatever projects or activities are being run. Equally, don't dismiss activities because the current Officers haven't the time or skills, call up those who have and can make something happen.

- **Carry Out Constant Membership Recruitment Activities**

Focus on the membership target audiences that are periodically put on to **Votesource**, also those VIs that score 10 and use the recruitment advice and templates from the **Campaign Toolkit**.

