

LABOUR FRIENDS OF KASHMIR CONSTITUTION

1. Name

The name of the Association is the Labour Party Friends of Kashmir (hereinafter referred to as "LFK").

2. Objectives and Powers

(a) LFK is established:

- i. To promote an understanding and appreciation amongst Labour representatives and members about the political and humanitarian issues facing the people of Jammu and Kashmir.
- ii. To ensure the Labour Party and its representative play a proactive and constructive role in securing long term peace and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir by supporting the right to self-determination, as mandated by the United Nations and international law.
- iii. To call for an end to the military occupation of the region, which currently exists as the world's most militarised region.
- iv. To promote positive relations and strong international partnerships between representatives from the United Kingdom and Kashmiri's on both sides of the Line of Control.
- v. To maximise electoral support for the Labour Party amongst the Kashmiri community in the UK and campaign for the election for a Labour government.
- vi. To campaign for reflective governance at local, regional, and national levels by increasing the number of Kashmiri's elected at all levels within the Labour Party, with a particular focus on females and young Kashmiris.

(b) In furtherance of the LFK objectives LFK may:

- (i) Bring together in conference, representatives of voluntary organisations, Government departments, statutory authorities and individuals.
- (ii) Arrange, provide or join others in holding meetings, lectures, classes, seminars, training courses and conferences.
- (iii) Organise fact finding and observation missions to Jammu and Kashmir.
- (iv) Collect and disseminate information on all matters affecting the said objects and exchange such information with other bodies having similar objects whether in this country or overseas.
- (v) Write print or otherwise reproduce and circulate, gratuitously or otherwise, papers, books, periodicals, briefings, or other documents or films or recorded tapes (whether audio or visual or both) as shall further the LFK's objectives.

- (vi) Employ and pay any person or persons to supervise, organise and carry on the work of LFK.
- (vii) Purchase, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any property and any rights and privileges necessary for the promotion of the objectives and construct, maintain and alter any buildings or erections necessary for the work of the LFK.
- (viii) Make regulations for any property, which may be so acquired.
- (ix) Subject to such consents as may be required by law, sell, let, mortgage, dispose of or turn to account all or any of the property or assets of the LFK.
- (x) Subject to such consents as may be required by law, borrow or raise money for the objectives and accept gifts on such terms and on such security as shall be deemed necessary.
- (xi) Raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any person or persons, whatsoever, but resident in the UK, by way of subscriptions and otherwise.
- (xii) Invest the moneys of the LFK not immediately required for the said objectives in or upon such investments, securities or property (in Britain) as may be thought fit, subject nevertheless to such conditions (if any) as may be for the time being imposed or required by law.
- (xiii) Do all such lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said objectives, but will not in any circumstances use or cause to be used, LFK to be involved in the internal national politics of Jammu and Kashmir.

3. Membership

- (a) Full membership of the LFK shall be open to:
 - (i) Individuals of 14 years and over who are interested in furthering the work of the LFK and who are members of the Labour Party and have paid the annual subscription as laid down from time to time by the Executive Committee hereinafter mentioned,
 - (ii) Any organisation affiliated to the Labour Party, namely trade unions and their branches, co-operative societies, socialist societies and any other affiliated organisation.
- (b) Any member of LFK ceasing to be a member of the Labour Party, either through resignation or by virtue of contravening the Labour Party rules, shall automatically cease to be a member of LFK.
- (c) Each member organisation shall appoint one individual person to represent it and vote on its behalf at General Meetings of the LFK. In the event of such individual person resigning or otherwise leaving the organisation, he or she shall forthwith cease to be a representative thereof.
- (d) The Executive Committee shall have the right:

- (i) To approve or reject applications of membership, and
 - (ii) To reject the applications of any members involved in entryism, and
 - (iii) For the good and sufficient reason to terminate the membership of any individual or organisation provided that the individual member concerned or the organisation (as the case may be) shall have the right to be heard by the said Executive Committee before the final decision is made.
- (e) Individual members shall complete a membership application form and shall pay an annual subscription of £10 per annum or such sum as may be specified by the Executive Committee. The subscription will normally be payable by direct debit.
 - (f) It is an abuse for one individual to pay the LFK membership for another individual who would otherwise be unwilling to pay for their own subscription or to recruit a member who does not live at the claimed address.
 - (g) Member organisations shall pay such annual subscription as may be determined by the Executive Committee, the subscription to reflect the number of members of the organisation.
 - (h) The General Secretary will maintain a list of the current members of LFK.

4. Parliamentary Labour Party Liaison Committee, Local & Regional Government Liaison Committee, Trade Union/Affiliates Liaison Committee and Local Branches

- (a) The Executive Committee shall set up a Parliamentary Labour Party Liaison Committee to meet at least 3 times a year with membership open to Labour Members of the Westminster Parliament who support the objectives of LFK.
- (b) The Executive Committee shall set up a Local & Regional Government Liaison Committee to meet 3 times a year with membership open to Labour Members of the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly, London Assembly, Labour Councillors in any local authority in the United Kingdom, Labour Police and Crime Commissioners, Labour Mayors and any such national or regional assemblies as may subsequently be created, who supports the objectives of LFK.
- (c) The Executive Committee shall set up a Trade Union & Affiliates Liaison Committee to meet at least 3 times a year with membership open to affiliated to the Labour Party, namely trade unions and their branches, co-operative societies, socialist societies and any other affiliated organisation who has acquired membership of LFK.
- (d) The Executive Committee shall have the power to recognise a local branch which (i) has a minimum of thirty individual members qualified under Rule 3; (ii) shares the objectives of the Association; and (iii) has submitted its constitution for approval.
- (e) The geographical boundaries of any branch should normally reflect those of the Regions adopted by the Labour Party. No branch should be smaller than a Region as adopted by the Labour Party.
- (f) The constitution of a local branch shall conform to the constitution of LFK and membership of the branch shall be limited to those eligible under Rule 3.
- (g) All members of the local branch must be fully paid up members of LFK.

- (h) The General Secretary of a local branch shall complete an annual return circulated by LFK and shall supply during the year such reports on its activities as LFK may require.
- (i) In the event of a local society failing to meet regularly, or behaving in a manner contrary to the constitution and objectives of LFK, the Executive Committee shall have the power to withdraw or suspend recognition subject to the right of the local branch to appeal to the Annual General Meeting.

5. Patrons

- (a) The Executive Committee may invite as patrons distinguished persons including ministers of a Labour Government or Shadow Labour ministers who subscribe to the aims and objectives of the LFK.
- (b) The Executive Committee shall maintain a register of current Patrons and review the list of Patrons from time to time.
- (c) Patrons shall not be entitled to vote, unless they are also individual members of the Association.

6. Officers and Membership of the Executive Committee

- (a) At the Annual General Meeting hereinafter mentioned the LFK shall elect the following Officers who shall be members of the Executive Committee, namely Chair, National Coordinator, two Vice Chairs, General Secretary, Head of Stakeholder Management, Membership Secretary, Treasurer, Trade Union and Affiliations Officer, Women's Officer, 2 x Youth Officer, and other such other Officers as the LFK shall from time to time decide. At least one third of these officers shall be women and at least one of the two vice chair's shall be a woman.
- (b) Chair/Convener of the local branches will be ex-officio (non-voting) members of the Executive Committee.
- (c) The Executive Committee may appoint additional members of the Executive Committee to represent any Region of the Labour Party for which there is no representative on the Executive Committee. The Labour Party Regions/Nations are currently: Eastern ; East Midlands; Greater London; North: North West; Scotland; South East; South West; Wales; West Midlands; and Yorkshire & Humber.
- (d) Two members of the Executive Committee may be nominated by the affiliated organisation admitted into membership under Clause 3(a) (vii), one of whom may be nominated by the trade union affiliates and a second by the other affiliates.
- (e) Three members of the Executive Committee may be nominated by the Parliamentary Labour Party Liaison Committee admitted into membership under Clause 3(a) (vii), one of whom may be nominated from the House of Lord's.
- (f) The Chair and other Officers of the LFK shall hold office until the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting of the LFK next after their election but shall be eligible for re-election provided that no Officer shall hold any one office for more than 5 continuous years, but may continue as an officer in a different capacity for a further 3 years (maximum). On the expiration of 8 years continuous service as an Officer, one further year must elapse before any former Officer shall be eligible for re-election.

- (g) The Chair, National Coordinator and General Secretary shall be ex officio members of any other Committee established by LFK.

7. Executive Committee

- (a) Subject as hereinafter mentioned the policy and general management of LFK shall be conducted by the Executive Committee.
- (b) The Officers of the Executive Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the LFK in accordance with Clause 8 (b).
- (c) In addition to the members so elected and to those serving by virtue of Clause 6 (b), (c) and (d), the Executive Committee may co-opt further members from those being full members of the LFK, whether individual or representative, provided that the number of co-opted members shall not exceed one-third of the total membership of the Executive Committee at the time of co-option. Co-opts shall be confirmed as Executive Committee members at the time of the next Annual General Meeting following their co-option.
- (d) Any casual vacancy in the Executive Committee may be filled by the Executive Committee and any person appointed to fill such a casual vacancy shall hold office until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting of the LFK and shall be eligible for election at the Meeting.
- (e) Any failure to elect or any defect in the election, appointment, co-option or qualification of any member shall not invalidate the proceedings of the Executive Committee.
- (f) The Executive Committee shall appoint and fix the remuneration of staff (not being members of the Executive Committee) as may in their opinion be necessary.
- (g) The Executive Committee may appoint such special or standing committees as may be deemed necessary by the Executive Committee and shall determine their terms of reference, powers, duration and composition. All acts and proceedings of such special or standing committees shall be reported back to the Executive Committee as soon as possible.

8. Biennial and General Meetings of LFK

- (a) Once in every 2 years in June or July, a Biennial General Meeting of the LFK shall be held at such time and place as the Executive Committee shall determine. At least 21 clear days notice shall be given in writing by the General Secretary to each member.
- (b) At such Biennial General Meeting the business shall include:
 - (i) the election of Officers and the confirmation of any co-optees;
 - (ii) the appointment of an auditor (s) and fixing their remuneration, if any;
 - (iii) the approval of an annual report relating to the activities of LFK;
 - (iv) the approval of audited accounts; and
 - (iv) the transaction of such other business as the Chair or the Executive

Committee may consider to be appropriate.

- (c) Members may submit resolutions, provided that they are submitted to the General Secretary not less than 35 days before the meeting. Resolutions will be circulated to the members with the notice of the meeting.
- (d) The Chair, at his or her discretion, may accept any emergency resolutions.
- (e) The Chair of the Executive Committee may at any time at his/her discretion and the General Secretary shall within 21 days of receiving a written request to do so signed by not less than three Executive Committee members and giving reasons for the request, call a Special General Meeting of the LFK.
- (f) The new Executive Committee shall come into office immediately after the Biennial General Meeting.

9. Nominations of Officers and Executive Committee Members

- (a) Only full members of the LFK whether individual or representative shall be eligible to serve as Officers or members of the Executive Committee.
- (b) Nominations for Officers or members of the Executive Committee must be made by full members of the LFK in writing and must be in the hands of the General Secretary at least 14 days before the Biennial General Meeting.
- (c) Should nominations exceed vacancies, elections shall be by secret ballot provided that the first members of the Executive Committee shall be elected by personal vote at the first General Meeting of the LFK.

10. Rules of procedure at all meetings

- (a) Quorum: The quorum at a General Meeting or any meeting of the Executive Committee or any committee appointed under Clause 7(g) shall be 3 voting members or such other number as the LFK may in General Meeting from time to time determine.
- (b) Voting: Save as otherwise herein provided, all questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote thereat, but in case of an equality of votes the chairperson of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
- (c) Minutes: The Executive Committee and all other committees shall keep minute books, and the appropriate General Secretary shall enter therein a record of all proceedings and resolutions.
- (d) Standing Orders and Rules: The Executive Committee shall have power to adopt and issue Standing Orders and/or rules for the LFK. Such Standing Orders and/or Rules shall come into operation immediately provided always that they shall be subject to review by the LFK in General Meeting and shall not be inconsistent with the provisions of this Constitution.

11. Finance

- (a) All moneys raised on behalf of the LFK shall be applied to further the objects of

the LFK and for no other purpose provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent the payment in good faith or reasonable and proper remuneration to any employee of the LFK or the repayment to members of the Executive Committee or of any committee appointed under Clause 7 (g) of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.

- (b) The Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the LFK. The financial year shall be the calendar year.
- (c) The Executive Committee shall submit a statement of the accounts for the previous financial year to the Annual General Meeting.
- (d) A bank account shall be opened in the name of the LFK with Co-operative Bank or with such other bank as the Executive Committee shall from time to time decide. The Executive Committee shall authorise in writing the Chair, National Coordinator, Vice Chairs, Treasurer, and General Secretary of the LFK to sign cheques on behalf of the LFK.

12. Trust Property

The title to all real or personal property which may be acquired by or on behalf of the LFK shall vest in not less than three or more than five individuals.

13. Alterations to the Constitution

Any alternations to this constitution shall receive the assent of not less than two thirds of the membership of the LFK for the time being whether individual or representative present and voting at a meeting specially called for the purpose provided that notice of any such alternation shall have been received by the General Secretary in writing not less than 21 clear days before the meeting at which the alternation is to be proposed. At least 14 clear days' notice in writing of such a meeting, setting forth the terms of the alternation, shall be sent by the General Secretary to each member of the LFK.

14. Dissolution

If the Executive Committee by a simple majority decide at any time that on the grounds of expense or otherwise it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the LFK, it shall call a meeting of all members of the LFK who have the power to vote, of which meeting not less than 21 days' notice (stating the terms of the Resolution to be proposed thereat) shall be given. If such a decision shall be confirmed by not less than two thirds of the membership of the LFK for the time being whether individual or representative present and voting at a meeting, the Executive Committee shall have power to dispose of any assets held by or on behalf of the LFK. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given to the national Labour Party or transferred to such other institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of the LFK as the national Labour Party may determine.

15. Notices

Any notice shall normally be served by the General Secretary on any member by e-mailing it to the member at an e-mail address notified by the member to the General Secretary. Any notice may also be served on a member personally. Where an individual member does not have an e-mail address, any notice shall

be served by sending it through the post in a prepaid letter addressed to such member at his or her last known address in the United Kingdom, and any letter so sent shall be deemed to have been received within 3 days of posting.

16. Interpretation

For the interpretation of this Constitution, the Interpretation Act 1978 shall apply as it applies to the interpretation of an Act of Parliament.

Adopted 21st May 2020

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Gwynne', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Andrew Gwynne MP – Chairman, Labour Friends of Kashmir