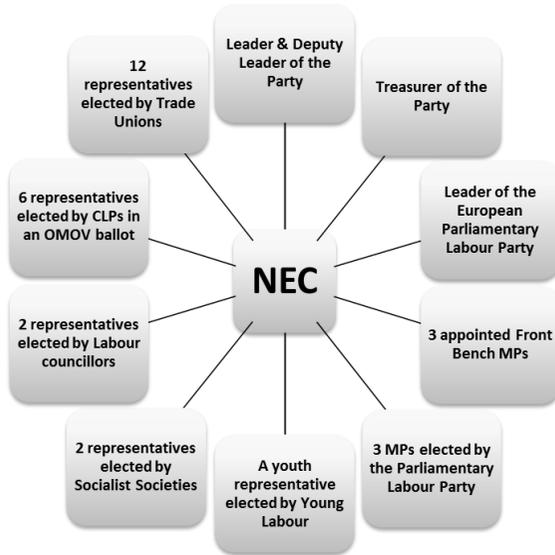


## What is the national governing body of the Labour Party?

The governing body of the Labour Party is the National Executive Committee (NEC). The NEC oversees the work of the Labour Party and its policy making process. It meets bi-monthly and has a number of sub-committees dealing



with specific areas such as disputes or equalities. All sections of the Labour Party are represented on the NEC. Some attend because of the position they hold. Others are elected, either at Labour Party conference, or by One Member One Vote (OMOV) ballots.

## How does the Labour Party make policy?

Labour Party conference meets annually in September and all CLPs and affiliated trade unions are entitled to send delegates. The number of delegates is determined by the number of members a CLP or trade union has. Conference is the ultimate authority in the party and decides the policy framework. CLPs and trade unions can submit a motion on a contemporary policy issue or propose a change to the Labour Party rules. The detailed policy development takes place outside of conference through the National Policy Forum. See *A Guide to How the Labour Party Makes Policy* for more details.



# YOUR PARTY

## YOUR VOICE



# A Guide to How the Labour Party Works

This brief guide is an introduction to the Labour Party structures locally, regionally and nationally. We hope it will be helpful but if you have any questions, please contact Unite's Political Department on 0207 611 2607 or email [unitepolitics@unitetheunion.org](mailto:unitepolitics@unitetheunion.org)

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## What are the local structures of the Labour Party?

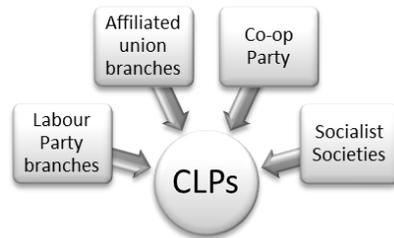
The Labour Party is divided into branches, usually based on the ward boundaries for councillors. Branch Labour Parties (BLPs) can send motions to and have representation at Constituency Labour Party (CLP) meetings. The key officers of the CLP form an Executive Committee (EC) which is accountable to the CLP.

## What happens at Branch Labour Party meetings?

Branches discuss political issues; plan local campaigning activities; send motions to the CLP meetings; nominate officers for the CLP; select local council candidates and participate in trigger ballots for sitting MPs.

## How do Constituency Labour Parties (CLPs) work?

CLPs are based on the electoral district for the MP. There are 3 main models for meetings. Some CLP meetings are open to all members and are known as All Member Meetings (AMMs); other CLPs operate a General Committee (GC) structure. Some GCs allow all members to attend but only elected delegates can vote, whilst some GCs are restricted to delegates only. Delegates are elected from Labour Party branches, affiliated trade union branches and socialist societies.



## Can I be a delegate to the General Committee?

You must be a full member of the Labour Party. You can be elected from your local Unite branch, so speak to your Unite Regional Political Officer. You can also be elected from your local Labour Party branch.

## What happens at Constituency Labour Party meetings?

CLP meetings discuss political issues; plan local campaigning activities; send motions and delegates to Labour Party Conference; elect officers and establish an Executive Committee to oversee the day-to-day business of the constituency. CLPs also organise hustings during candidate selections for the MP and MEPs and where relevant, MSPs, Welsh and London Assembly Members.

## Who are the officers of the CLP?

Each CLP has a set of executive officers: Chair; Vice-Chair; Vice-Chair Membership; Secretary; Treasurer; Women's Officer. These all sit on the Executive Committee and as the Labour Party operates a policy of gender balance, at least 50% of these officers must be women. In addition, the CLP can elect functional officers for specific areas of work, e.g. Political Education Officer; Trade Union Liaison Officer; Equality Officers for BAME, Disability, LGBT and Youth; Fundraising Officer etc.

## What are Equality Forums?

The Labour Party rules allow CLPs to establish a Women's Forum and an Ethnic Minorities' Forum. Membership is automatic and all women and all BAME members in a CLP are invited to attend the relevant forum. The aim is to encourage under-represented groups to be active in the Labour Party. The forums have the same nomination rights as branches and can elect 2 delegates to attend the GC.

## What is the Local Campaign Forum (LCF)?

Local Campaign Forums are based on council boundaries, allowing several CLPs that are part of the same local authority area to meet together. Membership comprises the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Labour Group of Councillors, representatives from CLPs and trade unions. Formerly known as Local Government Committees, LCFs recruit and shortlist potential candidates for council elections. They co-ordinate campaign activities and develop the election strategy locally. They also liaise with the Labour Group about local government issues and input into the manifesto for local elections.

## What are the regional structures of the Labour Party?

Scotland and Wales have their own Executives. England is divided into Regional Boards. Both the Executives and Regional Boards have a role in policy development and organise local conferences. In addition, they act as appeals bodies for candidates who have been excluded from the panel of local government candidates by their Local Campaign Forum and also councillors who have had the whip withdrawn by their Labour Group.