

# Welsh Young Liberals

## Constitutional Rewrite 2021

### Rationale

*At the 2020 Annual General Meeting of Welsh Young Liberals, a number of constitutional amendments were passed to update the constitution, previously updated in 2017. The constitution however remains bloated and contains a number of inaccuracies that have arisen out of changes made to Rhl Cymru's operations this year.*

*Following a similar structure to the recent Scottish Young Liberals constitutional rewrite, the aim of this new constitution is to produce a shorter constitution, with unnecessary clauses, detail and outdated roles removed, as well as to reflect the new financial arrangements implemented this year, and bring our constitution in line with Young Liberals best practice and conventions.*

Welsh Young Liberals Executive, September 2021

### Article 1 - Name and Scope of the Organisation

1. The name of the organisation shall be
  - a. Welsh Young Liberals, or WYL, in English.
  - b. Rhyddfrydwyr Ifanc Cymru, or Rhl Cymru, in Welsh.
    - i. All official materials produced by Welsh Young Liberals must be bilingual in English and Welsh, where possible.
    - ii. Every effort should be made to accommodate the use of both languages at Welsh Young Liberals events.
2. The organisation shall be hereafter referred to as Rhl Cymru.
3. Rhl Cymru exists to

- a. uphold and promote the values of the Liberal Democrats (the Federal Party) in Wales.
  - b. represent the interests of those under the age of 29 and students in Wales to the Welsh Liberal Democrats (the Welsh Party).
  - c. represent the interests of young people and students in Wales within the structure of the federal Young Liberals (YL).
  - d. represent Liberal Democrat policies and values to, and explain their relevance for, young people and students in Wales.
4. Rhl Cymru exists as
- a. the State Organisation for Wales as described in the Young Liberals Constitution, Section 2.2.a.
  - b. a Specified Associated Organisation (SAO) of the Welsh Party, as described under Section K.2.a. of the Welsh Party Constitution.
  - c. an independent organisation in all other regards.
5. Rhl Cymru shall be governed by an Executive committee, which shall be elected by the membership.

## Article 2 - Membership

1. Membership of Rhl Cymru is open to
  - a. any member of the Liberal Democrats who is
    - i. resident permanently in Wales or resides in Wales for the purpose of work or study, and
    - ii. under the age of 26, or who is under the age of 30 and has opted-in as a member, or
    - iii. a student of any age at any institution in Wales.
2. All members shall have the right to
  - a. vote in Rhl Cymru elections.
  - b. stand for election to the Executive of Rhl Cymru.
  - c. attend and apply to speak at any Annual General Meeting (AGM) or Emergency General Meeting (EGM).
  - d. request to attend any meetings of the Executive.

- e. contribute to Rhl Cymru activities, including the creation of policy for submission to Party Conferences.
3. The Executive shall have the power to withdraw membership of Rhl Cymru from any member where there is good cause for the behaviour or activities of a member to be discussed.
  - a. Members can only be considered for this for material breach of the [Liberal Democrats Members Code of Conduct](#) or if the Executive has other good cause for concern about the member's activity or behaviour.
  - b. Any member whose membership is considered for withdrawal in this way shall be allowed a fair hearing and be given the right of reply to any evidence brought against them.
  - c. The date of any such hearing shall be communicated to the members affected no less than 14 calendar days prior.
  - d. Members shall have a right to appeal any suspension, in the first instance to the Honorary President of Rhl Cymru, or the Welsh Party, or any body designated by the Welsh Party constitution to deal with such matters.
4. Members of Rhl Cymru shall have the right to establish local branches of Rhl Cymru through an established local party or group of local parties (Regional Groups), or at a University in Wales (Societies).
  - a. Branches should apply for accreditation through YL as soon as possible.

## Article 3 - Executive

1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the following Elected Officers:
  - a. Chair,
  - b. Vice-Chair,
  - c. Communications Officer,
  - d. Policy Officer,
  - e. Campaigns Officer,

- f. Non-Portfolio Officer.
2. There shall also be a Welsh Language Coordinator
    - a. This role shall be appointed by the Executive following a co-option process as outlined in Article 4.
    - b. The role shall be an advisory role to promote the use of Welsh in Rhl Cymru.
    - c. The Welsh Language Coordinator shall be eligible to attend all Executive meetings, including those conducted in 'closed' business sessions, not open to the Rhl Cymru membership at large.
    - d. The Welsh Language Coordinator shall have no voting rights at Executive meetings.
  3. The Executive has the power to make decisions with a simple majority vote at meetings.
    - a. The Chair shall have a casting and deliberative vote in the event of a tie.
  4. The Executive shall meet twelve (12) times per year, with dates arranged annually in advance.
    - a. All meetings shall be notified and members shall have the right to attend and may be allowed to speak at the discretion of the Chair.
  5. The Chair shall
    - a. be the primary spokesperson for Rhl Cymru and the primary point of contact for Rhl Cymru to the wider party.
    - b. chair meetings of the Executive.
    - c. act as the youth & student SAO Representative to the Welsh Party Board
    - d. have the right to act as the Rhl Cymru representative to Welsh Party and YL committees, unless specified by this constitution or voted on by the Executive
    - e. in collaboration with the Vice-Chair, draft and present the annual Rhl Cymru budget to the Executive for approval.

6. The Vice-Chair shall
  - a. assume the duties of the Chair in their absence.
  - b. act as treasurer of Rhl Cymru, and work with the Chair to prepare annual accounts and budgets for the Executive, and work with the YL Finance Officer or other Registered Officer to ensure accurate reporting of accounts for compliance with PPERA.
  - c. ensure minutes of Executive meetings are accurately taken.
  - d. co-ordinate the AGM and EGMs.
  
7. The Communications Officer shall
  - a. manage external communications of Rhl Cymru through regular updates of the Rhl Cymru website
  - b. manage the social media presence of Rhl Cymru
  - c. manage communications to members of Rhl Cymru through email
  - d. act as the Welsh State representative to the YL Communications Committee.
  
8. The Policy Officer shall
  - a. be responsible for monitoring policy developments within the Federal Liberal Democrats, Welsh Party and YL
  - b. raise issues relating to young people and students across Wales to the Welsh Party Policy Committee to steer future policy development
  - c. develop Rhl Cymru policy submissions to Welsh Party and YL conferences
  - d. act as the Rhl Cymru Representative to the Welsh Party Policy Development Committee.
  - e. act as the Welsh State Representative to the YL Policy Committee.
  
9. The Campaigns Officer shall
  - a. plan and organise Rhl Cymru activities relating to Rhl Cymru policy and objectives
  - b. plan and implement the annual Rhl Cymru Freshers campaign, in collaboration with the YL Campaigns Officer and committee.

- c. work with the Communications Officer to increase Rhl Cymru engagement with the public
- d. work with elected representatives and Local parties across Wales to plan campaigning activities
- e. act as Welsh State representative to the YL Campaigns Committee
- f. act as Rhl Cymru Representative to the Welsh Party Campaigns and Communications Committee.

10. The Non-Portfolio Officer shall

- a. assume any vacant roles on the Executive.
- b. assist the Executive with any projects or delegated responsibilities.
- c. deputise for Executive members at Committee meetings in their absence.

11. The Executive shall also appoint one of their members to attend the following committees:

- a. the Welsh Party's Membership Development Committee.
- b. the Welsh Party's Conference Committee.
- c. the YL Events Committee.

12. The Executive may request assistance to conduct their roles from the Honorary Officers or any ordinary members of Rhl Cymru, YL, the Welsh Party or the Federal Party.

13. The Executive may form sub-committees or working groups for a specific project or purpose.

## Article 4 - Elections and Co-options

1. Members of the Executive shall be elected annually by a ballot of all members of Rhl Cymru.
2. Members of the Executive shall serve a term from November 1st to the following October 31st, and shall be replaced at an Election of the full Executive.

3. Elections of the full Executive shall take place concurrently with YL elections. These elections shall be governed by the YL election regulations.
  - a. Members wishing to stand for Rhl Cymru Executive Officer roles may submit a Welsh translation of a manifesto.
4. Rhl Cymru may appoint a neutral Returning Officer (RO) to oversee the Election of Rhl Cymru Executive Officers, who shall be a member of the Federal Party but not a member of Rhl Cymru or YL.
5. In the event of a vacancy on the Executive, either through no member presenting themselves for nomination or due to resignation or removal of an Officer, a by-election or co-option shall be held.
  - a. The Executive shall have the right to decide whether to co-opt an Officer or hold a by-election.
  - b. Both by-elections and co-options shall be overseen by an RO.
  - c. By-elections shall consist of a 1-week nomination period, followed by a 1 week gap, then a 2-week voting period, the dates of which shall be determined by the RO.
  - d. Voting for by-elections shall be held electronically using Single Transferrable Vote (STV) with an option to Re-Open Nominations (RON) for each position.
  - e. Co-options shall consist of a 1-week nomination period followed by an interview with the Executive, after which the Executive will vote on which candidate to co-opt.
  - f. The Executive shall reserve the right to determine the form that nominations take and which information is necessary for candidates to provide, subject to the approval of the RO.

## Article 5 - Annual General Meeting

1. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall
  - a. receive and consider reports from all Officers on the Executive

- b. have the ability to amend the constitution of Rhl Cymru, subject to Article 5.8.
  - c. have the ability to move motions of confidence in Executive members.
- 2. AGM should be scheduled to coincide with the Autumn Conference of the Welsh Party.
- 3. Quorum required to conduct business shall be 5 members or 3% of the total membership of Rhl Cymru, whichever is higher.
  - a. If quorum is not achieved, business may be discussed but the power to take any decisions shall default to the Executive, with the exception of amending the constitution.
- 4. AGM shall be chaired by the Chair of Rhl Cymru, or in their absence the Vice-Chair.
- 5. Emergency General Meeting (EGM) may be called by the Executive.
  - a. The only business to be discussed at EGMs shall be that which is set out in the Notice of EGM.
- 6. Not less than twenty one (21) calendar days notice of AGM or an EGM must be given to members, including information about relevant motions and amendments.
- 7. Motions, amendments to motions, or any constitutional amendments must be submitted to the Vice Chair no less than fourteen (14) calendars before the AGM or EGM, if relevant.
- 8. Votes shall be passed with a simple majority, with exception of amendments to the constitution, which shall require a 2/3 majority to pass.
  - a. In the event of a tie, motions shall fail.

## Article 6 - Financial Regulations

- 1. Rhl Cymru's financial year is the calendar year.



2. The accounts for the year shall be presented, duly examined, for approval at the AGM and the examiner (who shall be a duly qualified person) for the following year shall be appointed by the AGM.
3. Accounts will be presented to the Executive at the start of each term.
4. Copies of the annual accounts shall be sent to the Principal Officer of the Party as required by the Party for the purpose of compliance with PPERA.

## Article 7 - Honorary Officers

1. At AGM, WYL may elect an Honorary President and up to two (2) Honorary Vice-Presidents.
2. Honorary Officers shall hold office until the next AGM, and may be re-elected for a maximum of three (3) terms.
3. The Honorary Officer shall not be members of Rhl Cymru, but must be a member of the Welsh Party, the Federal Party or a sister party.
4. The Honorary Officers shall uphold the values and principles of Rhl Cymru.
5. The Honorary President shall rule on appeals as outlined in Article 2, may offer advice or guidance to the Executive, and may be asked to make rulings on interpretation of the constitution.
6. The Honorary Vice-President shall act as RO for any by-elections or co-options to the Executive and assist the Honorary President with complaints procedures.
7. Honorary Officers may be approached to give advice to Executive Officers.

## Article 8 - Validity and Amendments

1. The constitution, or any amendments to it, shall be valid from the end of the AGM at which it is passed.
2. Amendments may be proposed by the Executive, any recognised branch or society, or by 10 individual members.
3. Amendments must be submitted to the Vice-Chair no less than seven (7) calendar days before AGM.
4. Amendments to this Constitution may only be made at a General Meeting if passed by at least two thirds of those present and voting.
5. Where this constitution is silent on any matter, the Welsh Party Constitution and/or the YL Constitution shall apply, as appropriate.
6. The Honorary President may be called to give rulings on matters of interpretation.