

# **RULES FOR CONSERVATIVE COUNCIL GROUPS**

**These rules are mandatory for all recognised Conservative Council Groups. Rules may not be omitted or adapted, except where Groups are required to choose one option from those provided. Additional rules may be added in accordance with section 14 following consultation with, and approval by, the CCA.**

## **1. NAME**

1.1 The name of the Group shall be “[insert name of Council] Conservative Group”.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Group shall be:

- 2.1 to serve the people of [insert name of Council area] by working to ensure that the services that [insert name of Council] (hereafter referred to as “the Council”) provides, facilitates, or commissions reflect their needs and offer value for money;
- 2.2 to promote the values and policies of the Conservative Party (hereafter referred to as “the Party”);
- 2.3 to work with local Conservative Constituency Associations or Multi-Constituency Association (MCA) and Conservative councillors on any other councils that provide services to the people of [insert name of Council area] to secure the maximum possible Conservative representation on the Council; and
- 2.4 to work with the relevant Conservative Constituency Associations or MCA to assist in the return of Conservative candidates at other elections.

## **3. MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 Subject to Rules 3.3 to 3.6 below, membership of the Group shall be open to any current member of the Conservative Party who is:

3.1.1 A member of the Council who, when they were last elected, stood as an authorised Conservative Party candidate and

3.1.1.1 who has not resigned from the Group since then; or

3.1.1.2 who has not been suspended from the Group since then, unless such suspension has either been overturned on appeal, or the Member has completed the period of suspension; or

3.1.1.3 who has not been expelled from the Group since then, unless such expulsion has been overturned on appeal.

3.1.2 any other member of the Council, provided their application to join the Group is approved at a Group meeting by a majority of those present and entitled to vote, following the procedure outlined in 3.2.

- 3.2 Upon receipt of an application to join the Group, the Group Leader shall inform the Chairman of the relevant Conservative Constituency Association or MCA. If the Chairman of that Association is unable to be present at the Group meeting at which the application is discussed, the Group Leader shall invite him or her to put his or her views in writing and read them to the meeting.
- 3.3 Members of the Group (hereafter referred to as “Members”) shall be members of the Party. Suspension or expulsion from, or non-membership of, a Conservative Association, MCA or from the Party nationally will result in action being taken in accordance with Section 13.
- 3.4 Members shall join the Conservative Councillors’ Association within two months of their joining the Group and by 30th June each year thereafter.
- 3.5 Members shall be required to pay any annual subscription to the Group at a rate agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Group.
- 3.6 A Group Rules Register shall be maintained by the appropriate Officer of the Group, to record the receipt of a copy of these rules, and the agreement of each Member to abide by them. The Group Rules Register shall be updated for each Member within one month of their first joining the Group, and within one month of their subsequent elections.
- 3.7 For the purposes of these Rules, the phrase “total underlying membership” shall be defined as the number of Members of the Conservative Group who are also, at the time any necessary calculation is carried out, registered with the Council under the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 as members of the official Conservative Group, and recognised as such by the Conservative Party.

#### **4. OFFICERS**

- 4.1 The Officers of the Group shall, as a minimum, comprise the roles outlined in 4.1.1 and 4.1.2. Additionally the functions of the officers outlined in 4.1.3 to 4.1.5 (as detailed in sections 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7) must be undertaken by an appropriate officer of the group but local discretion may be exercised in the title of such officers and the allocation of duties.
- 4.1.1 a Group Leader, who shall be the Leader of the Council if the Group either controls the Council, or is in an arrangement with another political group (or groups) whereby the Conservative Group provides the Council Leader and who shall occupy the most senior position available to the Conservative Group under any other arrangements;
- 4.1.2 a Group Deputy Leader, who shall be the Deputy Leader of the Council if the Group controls the Council;
- 4.1.3 a Group Whip;
- 4.1.4 a Group Treasurer; and
- 4.1.5 a Group Secretary.

- 4.2 The positions of Officers of the Group shall be filled as set out below, with any vacancy for any of these positions that arises during the year being filled in accordance with Rule 8.7
- 4.2.1 The Group Leader shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Group
- 4.2.2 The position of Group Deputy Leader shall be filled using one of the following options: *(The option selected shall become Rule 4.2.2)*
- 4.2.2.1 The Group Deputy Leader shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Group
- 4.2.2.2 The Group Deputy Leader shall be appointed by the Group Leader at the Annual Meeting of the Group
- 4.2.2.3 The Group Leader will nominate a preferred candidate for Group Deputy Leader and seek the Group's ratification of this candidate at the Annual Meeting of the Group
- 4.2.3 The position of Group Whip (or any Officer undertaking the majority of the functions listed in section 4.5) shall be filled using one of the following options: *(The option selected shall become Rule 4.2.3)*
- 4.2.3.1 The Group Whip shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Group
- 4.2.3.2 The Group Whip shall be appointed by the Group Leader at the Annual Meeting of the Group
- 4.2.3.3 The Group Leader will nominate a preferred candidate for Group Whip and seek the Group's ratification of this candidate at the Annual Meeting of the Group
- 4.2.4 The Group Treasurer and Group Secretary shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Group
- 4.3 The duties of the Group Leader shall be:
- 4.3.1 to be the Conservative nominee for Council Leader, unless the Conservative Group is in an arrangement with another political group and the agreed terms of such an arrangement provide for the Conservative Group to support an alternative nominee;
- 4.3.2 to co-ordinate Group activity;
- 4.3.3 to be the lead spokesman for the Group in all dealings, relationships, and activities, including those within the Council, with the media and with the wider Conservative Party;
- 4.3.4 to appoint officers of the Group as specified by these Group Rules, Group spokesmen, and Group members to serve on the Council's committees.

- 4.3.5 to nominate representatives of the Group to serve on the relevant Conservative Constituency Associations' or MCA Executives, if the rules of those Associations provide for such representatives;
  - 4.3.6 to chair meetings of the Group, except in circumstances where these rules provide for an alternative, or to delegate this responsibility; and
  - 4.3.7 to present a strategy for the Group for the year ahead to the Annual Meeting.
- 4.4 The duties of the Deputy Group Leader shall be:
- 4.4.1 to assist the Group Leader with his or her duties;
  - 4.4.2 to carry out the duties of the Group Leader in his or her absence.
- 4.5 The duties of the Group Whip shall be:
- 4.5.1 to promote internal communication and unity of purpose within the Conservative Group; this duty to include:
- 4.5.1.1 ensuring that Group Members are aware of key Group policies and lines to take;
  - 4.5.1.2 ensuring Group Members are aware of their obligations under section 9 of these Group Rules;
  - 4.5.1.3 ensuring the Group Leader and Group Spokesmen are aware of the views of Group Members;
  - 4.5.1.4 to maintain a record of attendance by Members at meetings of the Council and its committees, and meetings of the Group;
- 4.6 The duties of the Group Treasurer shall be:
- 4.6.1 to collect Members' Group subscriptions;
  - 4.6.2 to collect Members' subscriptions to the Conservative Councillors' Association (CCA) where a Group CCA subscription is paid, or where Members pay their CCA subscriptions as individuals, to remind them of this obligation and to seek confirmation from the Members that such payments have been made;
  - 4.6.3 to handle Group funds in accordance with Rules 6.1-6.5; and
  - 4.6.4 to submit a certified statement of accounts, prepared by someone who is not a Group Member, to the Annual Meeting of the Group.
- 4.7 The duties of the Group Secretary shall be:
- 4.7.1 to send out notice of Group meetings;

- 4.7.2 to keep a record of decisions taken at Group meetings and to communicate those decisions to Members who were not present;
  - 4.7.3 to count any secret ballots unless the ballot concerns a position for which the Secretary is standing, in which case the Members present shall elect an Acting Returning Officer; and
  - 4.7.4 to ensure that an up-to-date copy of the Group Rules is provided to the following:
    - 4.7.4.1 Group Members,
    - 4.7.4.2 the Agent(s)/Constituency Organiser(s) of the relevant Conservative Constituency Association(s) or MCA,
    - 4.7.4.3 the relevant Area Campaign Manager, and
    - 4.7.4.4 the Head of Local Government at Conservative Campaign Headquarters (CCHQ)
  - 4.8 In the event of a motion of no confidence in any elected Group Officer, duly put at a Group Meeting, being supported by more than half of the Group's total underlying membership, that position shall be considered vacant and filled by election at a Group meeting to be held not less than 7, and not more than 14, days following the day on which the motion of no confidence was agreed.
  - 4.9 In the event of a motion of no confidence in any Group Officer appointed by the Group Leader, duly put at a Group Meeting, being supported by more than half of the Group's total underlying membership, the Group Leader shall report back to the Group on his or her proposals to rectify the matter at a Group meeting to be held not less than 7, and not more than 14, days following the day on which the motion of no confidence was agreed.
  - 4.10 References to 14 days in Rules 4.8 and 4.9 may be extended to 21 days upon the agreement of two-thirds of those attending the Group Meeting which passed the motion of no confidence.
  - 4.11 In the event that a motion of no confidence in any Group Officer other than the Group Leader, duly put at a Group Meeting, is passed, there will be an additional agenda item for that meeting "Appointment of acting [Group Officer]". Where the motion of no confidence concerns the Group Leader, the Group Deputy Leader shall become interim leader until such time as a new Group Leader is elected.
- 5. SPOKESMEN AND NOMINATIONS FOR COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND CEREMONIAL POSITIONS**
- 5.1 Group Spokesmen shall be appointed by the Group Leader and notified to the Group at the earliest opportunity and before a public announcement is made.
  - 5.2 Group nominations for Council committees shall be decided by the Group Leader reflecting, where possible, Members' preferences.

- 5.3 Group nominations for ceremonial positions shall be decided at the Annual Meeting of the Group in accordance with Rules 8.2 to 8.6. Any vacancy that arises during the year shall be filled in accordance with Rule 8.7.

## **6. FUNDS**

- 6.1 Any Group subscriptions shall be paid into a Group account.
- 6.2 The Annual Meeting of the Group shall appoint no fewer than two signatories for said account.
- 6.3 Any bank drafts, cheques, banking mandates, or similar documents shall always require signature by no fewer than two authorised signatories.
- 6.4 The Annual Meeting of the Group shall agree a de minimis threshold up to which the expenditure of Group funds may be authorised by no fewer than two Group Officers and above which expenditure may be authorised only by a majority of those present and entitled to vote at a Group meeting.
- 6.5 Any Member who stands down as a councillor, or resigns or is expelled from the Group shall have no rights or interest in the Group's funds, including no right of rebate.

## **7. MEETINGS**

- 7.1 The Group shall meet at some point after the distribution of papers prior to each meeting of the Council, other than the Annual Meeting, to discuss the agenda for the Council meeting and to consider any other business:
- 7.1.1 of which not less than seven days' notice has been given to the Group Secretary in writing; or
- 7.1.2 which, with the agreement of a majority of those present and entitled to vote, is raised at the meeting, other than a motion of no confidence in a Group Officer, a decision to form an administration with Independents or another political party, a proposal for disciplinary action against a Member or a motion to amend these Rules. Notice of any of these matters must be given to the Group Secretary in accordance with Rule 7.1.1.
- 7.2 Additional meetings of the Group shall be held either:
- 7.2.1 at the discretion of the Group Leader to consider business he or she wishes to be discussed and any other business which, with the agreement of a majority of those present and entitled to vote, is raised at the meeting, other than a motion of no confidence in a Group Officer, a decision to form an administration with Independents or another political party, a proposal for disciplinary action against a Member or a motion to amend these Rules. Notice of any of these matters must be given to the Group Secretary in accordance with Rule 7.1.1.; or
- 7.2.2 upon receipt by the Group Secretary of a request signed by not less than one-third of the Group stating the nature of the business to be discussed. A Group meeting

shall be held within 14 days of the receipt of such a request. Only the business stated in the request shall be discussed.

- 7.3 The Chairmen and Agents/Constituency Organisers of the relevant Conservative Constituency Associations or MCA; any Conservative Members of Parliament or Prospective Parliamentary Candidates for the relevant constituencies; the relevant Area Chairman and Area Campaign Manager; any Conservative Group political assistant; and any prospective Conservative candidates for forthcoming elections to the Council shall be invited to attend and speak at Group meetings but shall not have voting rights.
- 7.4 Non-Members shall be excluded from any part of a Group meeting where matters of Council business that are exempt under the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, or have otherwise been resolved by the Council to be restricted to Members, are being discussed.
- 7.5 The Group Secretary shall send Members and others entitled to attend notice of Group meetings not more than ten, and not less than seven, days before the date of the meeting. Such notice shall contain the date, time and venue of the meeting and an agenda. Distribution may be by post, email (preferably to a non-council email address) or a Group messaging forum of which all those invited are members.
- 7.6 Voting at Group meetings, except for a contested election of a Group Leader, Deputy Group Leader, Group Treasurer, Group Secretary and Conservative nominations for ceremonial positions, which shall be by secret ballot, shall be by show of hands unless a secret ballot is demanded by at least one-third of the Members present or at the discretion of the chairman.
  - 7.6.1 In the event of a tie, where voting is by show of hands, the chairman shall have a second or casting vote.
  - 7.6.2 In the event of a tie, where voting is by secret ballot, there shall be an opportunity for further discussion, interview, presentation or questions as appropriate, followed by a second ballot. Where the second ballot results in a tied vote, the chairman shall have a second or casting vote.
  - 7.6.3 Members may appoint a proxy to vote on their behalf at the Annual Meeting in accordance with rule 8.5 or at a meeting called for the purpose outlined in rule 8.7. Proxy voting is not permitted at other meetings of the Group. Group Members are permitted to act as a proxy for no more than two absent Group Members in addition to casting their own vote.
- 7.7 **At the discretion of the Group Leader, Group meetings may be conducted virtually using online conferencing software. Every effort should be made to ensure that all Group members are able to access the chosen software.**
  - 7.7.1 **Where meetings take place virtually, rules 7.1 to 7.5 continue to apply.**
  - 7.7.2 **Voting at virtual meetings must take place in line with the requirements of rule 7.6. Where a secret ballot is required, every effort must be made to ensure that the method of voting chosen protects the anonymity of the ballot. Any method of voting proposed must be supported by not less than half of the Group's total underlying membership, prior to the vote being taken, for a ballot to be validly conducted.**

7.7.3 Group meetings conducted virtually must not be recorded without the express permission of all parties present and participating. Where a meeting is recorded, due consideration must be given to the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation.

7.8 Where the council is unable to meet for an extended period or where the Council is operating under emergency procedures, a Group meeting shall take place at least once every eight weeks, calculated from the date the last Group meeting took place. The Group Secretary will agree a date for the meeting with the Group Leader, giving at least 7 days' notice to members. At such meetings, the Group Leader will update members on action taken by the Council since the previous meeting and any proposed future action. Members will be offered an opportunity to ask questions and raise any concerns.

## **8. ANNUAL MEETING**

8.1 The Annual Meeting of the Group shall be held no more than 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting of the Council and following that year's local elections if elections are scheduled for the Council, unless written dispensation has been granted by the CCA to hold the Annual Meeting at a different time in line with established practice. A Group that holds such dispensation may opt to change its AGM date to the standard practice under this Rule using Rule 14.3. The business of the Annual Meeting shall be to:

8.1.1 elect or appoint Group Officers in accordance with section 4.2;

8.1.2 receive a certified statement of accounts for any Group funds for the previous twelve months;

8.1.3 agree any Group subscription for the next twelve months;

8.1.4 appoint no fewer than two signatories for any Group account;

8.1.5 agree a de minimis threshold below which the expenditure of any Group funds may be authorised by two Group Officers but above which expenditure may only be authorised if approved by a majority of those present and entitled to vote at a Group meeting;

8.1.6 consider the Group Leader's proposed strategy for the Group for the next twelve months; and

8.1.7 consider any other business of which at least 14 days' notice has been given to the Group Secretary in writing.

8.2 The Group Secretary shall send notice of the Annual Meeting to all those entitled to attend normal Group meetings not more than 35, and not less than 14, days before the date of the meeting. Such notice should contain the date, time and venue of the meeting, nomination forms for positions up for election and an agenda.

8.2.1 In a year where ordinary elections are scheduled to take place, notice shall also be sent to all Conservative candidates standing for election in the area of the authority, in anticipation of their being elected to the council prior to the Annual Meeting.

8.3 In order to be validly nominated for a position, a Member must consent to nomination and be proposed and seconded by other Members. Nominations submitted to the Group

Secretary up to midday on the day before the meeting shall be valid unless no nominations are received, in which case nominations received at the meeting shall be accepted.

- 8.4 Where there is more than one nomination for any position, voting shall be by secret ballot. Candidates may, if they wish, appoint a counting agent to scrutinise the count on their behalf. The candidate that receives the most votes shall be declared elected.
- 8.5 Members unable to attend the Annual Meeting may, by notice in writing to the Group Secretary not less than seven days prior to the meeting, appoint another Member as their proxy to vote on their behalf.
- 8.6 Whoever is chairing the meeting may still cast his or her casting vote if the vote is tied even if he or she is one of the candidates.
- 8.7 Casual vacancies that arise between Annual Meetings shall be filled using the process outlined in **Rules 8.3 to 8.6**, save that any references to “Annual Meeting” should be replaced by “next Group meeting”. That meeting shall be called in accordance with the rules of Section 7. **Until such time as the vacancy is filled, the Group Leader shall appoint an ‘acting’ officer to ensure that the functions of the role are carried out. Where the vacancy occurs in the office of Group Leader, the Group Deputy Leader shall carry out this role until a new Group Leader is elected.**
- 8.8 The Group Leader shall chair the Annual Meeting. In the absence of the Group Leader, the first item of business shall be to elect a chairman of the meeting.

## **9. DECISION MAKING**

- 9.1 Members shall be expected to support decisions taken at Group meetings on all issues other than matters of conscience and matters specific to their ward/division:
  - 9.1.1 at meetings of the Council and its committees, other than at scrutiny or standards committees or on matters where the Council or its committees are acting in a quasi-judicial capacity (such as planning and licensing);
  - 9.1.2 in their comments to the media and on social media; and
  - 9.1.3 at any other public meeting.
- 9.2 If a Member feels he or she is unable to support a Group decision on any issue, including a matter of conscience or a matter specific to his or her ward/division, he or she shall discuss the issue with the Group Leader and/or Group Whip before voting or saying anything in public.
- 9.3 If urgent matters arise between Group meetings, for example during the course of a Council meeting, the Group Leader, in consultation wherever possible with other Group Officers, shall have discretion to decide what the Group’s position shall be. Members shall be expected to support such decisions unless the issue is a matter of conscience or a matter specific to their ward/division.
- 9.4 Members shall notify the Group Leader or Group Whip of formal questions they intend to ask, motions they intend to move, any joint motions they intend to support and, where possible, speeches they intend to make at meetings of the full Council.

9.5 Members shall not accept positions in a multi-party executive without having received approval to do so at a Group meeting. Prior to the matter being considered at a Group meeting, the Group Leader shall inform the Chairman/Chairmen of the local Conservative Constituency Association/Associations or MCA. If he/she/they is/are unable to be present at the Group meeting, the Group Leader shall invite him/her/them to put his/her/their views in writing and read them to the meeting.

## **10. ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS**

10.1 Members shall seek to attend all meetings of the Council and those committees of the Council on which they have been nominated to serve and all meetings of the Group.

10.1.1 If they are unable to attend all, or part, of any such meeting, they shall endeavour to inform the Group Leader or the Group Whip of their intended absence beforehand.

10.1.2 The Group Whip will maintain a record of attendance

10.1.3 Repeated failure to attend Group meetings and/or failure to submit apologies, will result in a warning from the Group Whip.

10.1.4 Failure to respond to such a warning may result in disciplinary action under Section 13.

## **11. CONDUCT**

11.1 Members shall observe the highest standards in their conduct as councillors, Members of the Group and Members of the Party.

11.2 In particular, Members shall observe the letter and spirit of the Council's Code of Conduct and the Conservative Party's Code of Conduct.

11.3 Members shall ensure that their conduct in their business and private lives does not cause embarrassment to the Group or the Conservative Party.

11.4 Members shall ensure that their conduct on social media and other online platforms reflects the requirements in rules 11.1 to 11.3.

11.5 Members appointed by the Group or the Council to any non-Council body shall observe equivalent ethical standards in carrying out those duties.

## **12. CONFIDENTIALITY**

12.1 Members shall treat Group business as confidential and shall not disclose either directly or indirectly any information about the proceedings other than to report to their Association and Branch on their activities as a councillor or in making a complaint under Rules 13.13 or 13.14.

12.2 This includes, but is not limited to, any report of the proceedings at Group meetings, or communication of any kind relating to them, being made to the media, on a social media or

other online platform, or to any member of, or person connected with, any opposition Group or party.

- 12.3 Reports of decisions made or lines taken at a Group meeting may be made only with the authority of the Group Leader or a Group Member acting in the capacity of the Group Leader.

### **13. BREACHES OF THESE RULES AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

- 13.1 If a Member is charged with a criminal offence, he or she shall be considered to have breached Rule 11.1 if the offence relates to his or her council work or Rule 11.3 if it relates to his or her business or private life and shall immediately be suspended from the Group. The Group Leader shall inform Members at the next Group meeting.

13.1.1 Where the Group Leader is the subject of the criminal charge, the action required in Rule 13.1 shall be undertaken by the Group Whip.

- 13.2 If the Member concerned is subsequently acquitted or the charges are dropped, he or she shall be immediately re-instated. If he or she is found guilty of a criminal offence that does not disqualify him or her from being a member of the Council, he or she may be re-instated provided his or her application to re-join the Group (in accordance with Rules 3.1 and 3.2) is approved by a majority of those present and entitled to vote at a Group meeting.

- 13.3 If a Member believes any other breach of these Rules has occurred he or she shall, in the first instance, raise the matter with the Group Leader.

13.3.1 Where an alleged breach of the rules relates to the Group Leader members shall, in the first instance, raise the matter with the Group Whip who will undertake the role of the Group Leader in the following procedures.

13.3.2 Where an alleged breach of the rules relates to a member to whom the Group Leader is closely related or in any other circumstances where the Group Leader is perceived as having a personal interest members shall, in the first instance, raise the matter with the Group Whip who will undertake the role of the Group Leader in the following procedures.

- 13.4 The Group Leader shall investigate the matter and, if he or she considers that a breach has occurred, take action, if possible, to remedy it and report the matter to a Group meeting, if necessary with a recommendation for disciplinary action against the Member concerned.

- 13.5 In circumstances where immediate action is required to address the behaviour of a Group member or to protect the reputation of the Group or the Conservative Party, the Group Leader, in consultation with the Group Whip, shall have the ability to suspend the member in question immediately, and for a period not exceeding 21 days, pending an investigation.

13.5.1 Any investigation under Rule 13.5 shall be undertaken by the Group Leader. The result of the investigation must be presented to the Group at the next Group meeting (notified in accordance with Rule 7.1.1) following the procedure in Rules **13.6 to 13.9** at which point the temporary suspension lapses immediately.

- 13.5.2 If there is insufficient time under Rule 7.1.1 to add this item to the meeting agenda or no Group meeting is scheduled to take place within the next 21 days then the Group Leader shall call an extraordinary meeting under rule 7.2.1.
- 13.5.3 Where the Group Member against whom action is required under Rule 13.5 is the Group Leader, Rule 7.2.2 should be used to call an extraordinary Group Meeting, at which the Group Deputy Leader shall preside.
- 13.5.4 Where the Group Member against whom action is required under Rule 13.5 is the Group Whip, then the consultation referred to under Rule 13.5 shall normally be with the Group Deputy Leader, or another Group Officer if appropriate.
- 13.6 If the Group Leader finds that no breach has occurred but the Member who raised the matter is dissatisfied with the Group Leader's investigation, he or she may have the alleged breach and his or her own proposals for disciplinary action discussed at a Group meeting by following the procedure set out in Rule 7.1 or Rule 7.2.2.
- 13.7 Subject to Rule 13.1, any Member who is alleged to have breached the Rules shall be given an opportunity to address the Group before any decision is taken. In order to prepare their response, the member will be provided with a copy of the report of the investigation that is to be presented to the Group, at least 48 hours before the meeting is to take place.
- 13.8 A Group meeting may, with the support of a majority of the Members present, vote to censure a Member. All Members, including the Member who is the subject of the complaint, may vote.
- 13.9 A Group meeting may, with the support of not less than two-thirds of the Members present and more than half of the Group's total underlying membership, suspend for a maximum of six months, or expel, a Member from the Group. All Members, including the Member who is the subject of the complaint, may vote.
- 13.10 In the event of a Member being expelled from the Group under Rule 13.9, or of a Member choosing to leave the Group, the Group via the Group Secretary, or another Member duly appointed to act as Group Secretary, shall within seven days write to the individual concerned confirming that he or she is no longer a Member of the Group and copy the communication to the Chairmen of the relevant Conservative Constituency Association or MCA and to the Conservative Councillors' Association. Notification shall also be sent to the Leader of any other Conservative Council Group of which that person remains a Member.
- 13.11 In the event of a Member being suspended from the Group under Rule 13.9, the Group via the Group Secretary shall within seven days write to the individual concerned outlining the terms and duration of the suspension and copy the communication to the Chairmen of the relevant Conservative Constituency Association or MCA and to the Conservative Councillors' Association. Notification shall also be sent to the Leader of any other Conservative Council Group of which that person remains a Member.
- 13.12 A Member who is suspended under Rule 13.1, 13.5 or 13.9 shall not be entitled to attend Group meetings, but shall continue to be subject to Section 11 of these Rules. Upon completion of their period of suspension, the Member shall automatically be re-instated as a member of the Group. The Group Secretary shall write to the suspended Member confirming the end of the suspension period.

13.12.1 At the time of suspending a Member, the Group shall determine whether or not the suspended Member shall remain a member of the Group under the provisions of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 or any successor legislation.

13.13 If a Member who has been the subject of any disciplinary action is dissatisfied with the decision of the Group in respect of disciplinary action, he or she may report the matter to the relevant Area Management Executive within 14 days of the Group meeting at which the disciplinary action was taken.

13.14 If the Member referred to in 13.13 is dissatisfied with the action taken by the Area Management Executive, he or she may, within 14 days of the decision, appeal to the Board of the Conservative Councillors' Association (CCA). The decision of the CCA Board shall be final and binding.

#### **14. ALTERATIONS TO THESE RULES**

14.1 The standard CCA-approved clauses within these Group Rules are mandatory and may not be amended or deleted except:

14.1.1 where Groups are required to select one option from those provided, or

14.1.2 where the standard Rules are updated from time to time by the Conservative Councillors' Association, in which case they shall be effective from the date specified by the CCA.

14.2 No additional rules may be added that are inconsistent with any of the mandatory rule

14.3 Any proposal to adopt or amend additional rules, or to alter Group practice under rules 4.2.2, 4.2.3, or 8.1 must be considered at a Group meeting and shall require support from not less than two-thirds of those present and entitled to vote and more than half of the Group's total underlying membership to receive approval.

Rachel Oldham, Head of Local Government 2021