
Election of Select Committee Chairs final note

- 1 This note describes the practical arrangements for the election of select committee chairs by secret ballot. The election will take place on 29 January between 10am and 4pm in Committee Room 16. Nominations close on 27 January at 4pm.

Process

- 2 The election of select committee chairs is governed by Standing Order No. 122B. Not all select committee chairs are elected by the House—the relevant chairs are those listed in the Standing Order (see the end of this note for a list), and the chair of the Backbench Business Committee, who is elected under Standing Order No. 122D. The election for the Backbench Business Committee chair will take place to the same timetable, but the nomination requirements are different.
- 3 At the start of the Parliament all relevant chairs must be elected by the House. However, the House must first allocate the posts of particular committee chairs to specific parties. A motion doing this was agreed by the House on 16 January. **Members can only submit a nomination for a committee chair post that has been allocated to their party.**

Nominations for all posts apart from Backbench Business

- 4 The deadline for nominations is 4pm on 27 January. Nominations should be submitted to the Table Office.
- 5 Nomination forms are available from the Table Office, Vote Office and Procedural Hub, but

the form need not be used, provided that in all respects nominations meet the provisions of Standing Order No. 122B. **To be valid, nominations must contain a signed statement made by the candidate declaring willingness to stand, and must be accompanied by the signatures of 15 Members elected to the House as members of the same party as the candidate (or 10% of the Members elected to the House as members of that party, whichever is the lower).** In the event that more than 15 signatures are submitted from the same party as the candidate, only the first 15 valid signatures are printed.

- 6 Nominations may be accompanied by the signatures of up to five Members elected to the House as members of any party other than that to which the chair is allocated or of no party. In the event that more than five signatures are submitted, only the first five valid signatures are printed.
- 7 No Member may sign the nomination of more than one candidate for chair of the same committee—if any Member does so, that Member's signature will be invalidated for all nominations for that position. (Hence candidates may choose to obtain and submit more than 15 nominations, so that the nomination remains valid if a nominator is declared invalid.)
- 8 Candidates must declare any relevant interests with their nomination. This may include interests which are not required for the Register of Members' Financial Interests: for example, the interests of family members or interests falling below the financial threshold, if the interests are relevant to the committee's remit. Candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with paragraphs 1 to 6 of Chapter 2 of the

Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members, which explain which interests might need to be declared; and with Chapter 3 of the Guide, which explains how the lobbying rule could restrict them in committee proceedings if they have financial interests. Further information can be obtained from the Registrar of Members' Financial Interests at commonsregistrar@parliament.uk or x3277.

- 9 Candidates have the option of providing a 500-word supporting statement, which will be published online and in a booklet of candidates. It would help if candidates could send an electronic copy of their statement to Joanna Dodd, Clerk of Elections, (doddj@parliament.uk).
- 10 Valid nominations received each day are printed in the next day's House business papers. They will also be published on the Parliament website, along with the candidate's sponsors, any declared interests and any supporting statement.
- 11 As soon as possible after the close of nominations, the list of candidates and their sponsors will be placed in the Vote Office in Members' Lobby and published online.
- 12 A booklet will also be published containing a photograph of each candidate, their sponsors, any declared interests and any supporting statement.

Nominations for Backbench Business Committee

- 13 The deadline for nominations is the same as for other committees: 27 January at 4pm. A specific nomination form for the Backbench Business Committee is available from the Table Office, Vote Office and Procedural Hub, but this form need not be used, provided that in all respects nominations meet the provisions of Standing Order No. 122D.
- 14 To be valid, nominations for the Backbench Business Committee chair must contain a signed statement made by the candidate declaring their willingness to stand for election, accompanied by the signatures of not fewer than 20 nor more than 25 Members, of whom no fewer than 10 shall be members of a party represented in Her Majesty's Government and no fewer than 10 shall be members of a party not so represented or of no party.

- 15 No Member may be a candidate for chair of the Backbench Business Committee if that Member's party is represented in Her Majesty's Government.
- 16 No Member may sign the statement of more than one candidate—if any Member does so, that Member's signature will be invalidated for all nominations.
- 17 Candidates have the option of providing a 500-word supporting statement, which will be published online and in a booklet of candidates. It would help if candidates could send an electronic copy of their statements to Joanna Dodd, Clerk of Elections, (doddj@parliament.uk).

Ballots

- 18 The ballot will be held on 29 January between 10am and 4pm. It is a secret ballot.
- 19 Any Member who is on the Parliamentary Estate but is incapacitated from voting in the committee room may ask for a clerk to obtain a ballot paper on their behalf, bring it to them, and cast it in the ballot box. Members who need to use this service should make such a request in writing or by email to Joanna Dodd, Clerk of Elections, Public Bill Office (doddj@parliament.uk). Requests should arrive not later than one hour before the ballot opens.
- 20 Members who have proxy votes for parental absence in operation must ask their nominated proxy to cast their vote on their behalf. No other form of proxy voting is allowed.
- 21 There will be a separate ballot paper for each position, as part of a booklet of papers. The ballot paper will give the names of candidates in alphabetical order. Members should vote by ranking as many candidates as they wish in order of preference, marking 1 by the name of their first preference, 2 by the name of their second preference, and so on. Members should complete the ballot paper at one of the stations erected in the room, and then deposit it in one of the ballot boxes at the exit.
- 22 Once the ballot is closed, the entrance doors to the committee room will be locked. All Members in the room when the doors are locked will be allowed to vote.

Count

- 23** The ballots will be counted under the Alternative Vote system. For each chair, any candidate who receives more than half the first preferences shall be elected. If no candidate is so elected, the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes is removed and their votes distributed among the remaining candidates according to the preferences on them. If no candidate has more than half the votes, the process of removal and distribution is repeated, until one candidate has more than half the votes.
- 24** As soon as practicable after the closing of the ballot, the result will be announced by the Speaker and published. This may happen at the start of business the following day.
- 25** The Member elected formally takes up their position as chair of the committee when the remaining members of the committee have been appointed by the House.
- 26** Chairs are elected to serve until the end of the Parliament, with the exception of the chair of the Backbench Business Committee, who serves until the end of the Session.
- 27** The House agreed a motion on 16 January to allocate Chairs as follows:

Select committees appointed under Standing Order No. 152:

Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.....	Labour
Defence.....	Conservative
Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.....	Conservative
Education.....	Conservative
Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.....	Conservative
Foreign Affairs.....	Conservative
Health and Social Care.....	Conservative
Home Affairs.....	Labour
Housing, Communities and Local Government.....	Labour
International Development.....	Labour
International Trade.....	Scottish National Party
Justice.....	Conservative
Northern Ireland Affairs.....	Conservative
Science and Technology.....	Conservative
Scottish Affairs.....	Scottish National Party
Transport.....	Conservative
Treasury.....	Conservative
Welsh Affairs.....	Conservative
Women and Equalities.....	Conservative
Work and Pensions.....	Labour

Other specified select committees:

Environmental Audit.....	Conservative
Exiting the European Union.....	Labour
Petitions.....	Labour
Procedure.....	Conservative
Public Accounts.....	Labour
Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs.....	Conservative
Standards.....	Labour

Contacts

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