



Socialist Health Association Standing Orders for Central Council

The Standing Orders must be read alongside the Constitution of the Association. In any dispute over the application of the Constitution to the Standing Orders the Constitution takes preference in a manner to be determined by the Chair.

A. Role of the Central Council

The execution of the decisions made at Annual and Special Meetings of the members of the Association, and the administration of the affairs and property of the Association shall be vested in the Central Council.

The Central Council shall conduct the general business of the Association, appoint such paid officers and staff as it deems necessary, set up such sub-committees and special interest groups as are considered desirable from time to time, receive regular reports from those sub-committees and special interest groups, sanction publications and appoint all delegates to represent the Association nationally.

The Central Council shall be responsible for ensuring that policies decided by the Association for staff employment terms and conditions (including volunteers and unpaid staff) and for the operation of the Complaints, Discipline and Grievance Procedure (as published and agreed by Officers in April 2014) are regularly reviewed and properly implemented by the Officers.

At all times Central Council shall act in accord with the objects of the Constitution and with policy as laid down by Annual and Special meetings, but in between such meetings it should decide the Association's policy on new and other matters coming before it. Such decisions of policy will be subject to ratification at the Annual Meeting through the Annual Report of Central Council. The duration, terms of reference and any delegated roles and responsibilities of sub committees and special interest groups shall be agreed by Central Council.

Administrative decisions between Central Council meetings may be taken by the agreement of any two Officers (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer); which can be facilitated by email exchange. Where necessary on important matters a decision may be taken through email of all Central Council members, provided a full and proper record is kept and reported to the next Central Council meeting.

Every Central Council meeting must receive a report from the Secretary of decisions taken by the Officers since the previous meeting. Wherever possible this report should be circulated prior to the meeting.

Every Central Council meeting must receive a report from the Treasurer summarising the income, expenditure and any significant debtors or creditors. Wherever possible this report should be circulated prior to the meeting.

Every Central Council meeting should receive a report, which can be very brief, from each of the Central Council Vice Chairs on their special areas of work. Wherever possible these reports should be circulated prior to the meeting.

The Central Council shall agree and submit an Annual Report to the Annual Meeting for ratification of decisions taken during the period since the previous Annual Meeting.

B. Membership of the Executive Committee

As set out in the Constitution the Central Council shall consist of the Officers (Chair, Treasurer and Secretary), twenty directly elected members, branch delegates, representatives from SHA Scotland and SHA Wales and a representative from each nationally affiliated organisation.

Central Council may elect up to 4 Vice Chairs from amongst its members to support special areas of work provided those special areas have been properly defined and approved by Central Council. The election of Officers, branch delegates and other members of the Central Council will be conducted as set out in the Constitution Sections 11 and 13.

Who attends any Central Council meeting as the representative from an affiliated body is a matter for the affiliated body to decide.

Where a vacancy arises among the Officers the vacancy should be filled by a member elected by Central Council. The Officers remaining shall first notify members of the vacancy and ask for expressions of interest.

Where vacancies arise amongst Central Council members the vacancy should be filled by co-opting a member, usually the person who had the highest number of votes amongst those not elected at the previous round of elections for Central Council. Someone co-opted to fill a vacancy shall be a full member of the Central Council and entitled to vote.

Central Council may co-opt up to 5 members to carry out functions that have been defined and agreed by Central Council. The period for co-option shall be determined by Central Council. Such co-opted members may not vote.

A Central Council member who fails to attend two successive meetings without good reason or apology shall be deemed to have resigned.

C. Attendees

Any member of the Association may attend a Central Council meeting. They can participate at the discretion of the Chair but are not be able to vote.

D. Meetings

Central Council meetings shall normally meet quarterly as determined by the Chair in consultation with the Secretary. The Chair will convene a meeting on the request of any 12 members of Central Council, stating the business to be conducted.

Other than in exceptional circumstances no meeting shall be held at any venue which does not ensure fully inclusive access and appropriate facilities.

A meeting may take place through an online tool such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams if the Chair decides this is the most appropriate and inclusive method available.

Formal notice of meetings shall be sent out by the approved communications (email) method by the Secretary to all those entitled to attend if possible, at least fourteen days prior to the meeting. Such notice shall as far as possible include an indication of the business to be transacted at the meeting. The Notice shall also be published on the Association's web site in order to inform all members. The formal Agenda for the meeting will be circulated by the Secretary prior to the meeting with whatever supporting documents are necessary, normally at least 7 days prior to the meeting. This shall be by email.

Exceptionally, further supporting documents may be sent by the Secretary but not within 2 days of the meeting.

The Agenda and documents shall also be published on the Association's web site in order to inform all members.

There should be a designated Minutes Taker. Minutes of Central Council meetings should be available to Central Council members in draft form within 10 days of the meeting and will be subject to formal approval at the following meeting. The Minutes will be published on the Association's web site.

Every meeting shall have an Agenda item for reports from Officers. Wherever possible these reports should be brief verbal updates or else be circulated prior to the meeting. Any Officer who fails to submit a report to two successive meetings without reasonable cause shall be asked to resign. The procedure for putting motions forward for a meeting is set out below. Otherwise agenda items, running order, any timings for agenda items and other matters relating to the smooth running of Central Council meetings shall be decided by the Chair in consultation with the Secretary.

E. Meeting times

Meetings shall not take longer than two hours unless an extension of no more than 30 minutes is agreed by two thirds of those present. Business not concluded will be dealt with by the Officers or carried forward to the next meeting.

F. Quorum

The quorum for meetings shall be 8 and must include at least two of the Officers.

G. Chair

The Chair shall preside at all meetings unless in the absence of the Chair the Secretary shall call on those present to elect a chair for the meeting. For the purpose of these Standing Orders any chair of a meeting so elected will have all the powers vested in the Association Chair for the duration of the meeting.

H. Notice of motion

Motions for consideration at a Central Council meeting shall be accepted only from members entitled to attend and participate in the meeting and must be received by the Secretary in writing not less than ten days prior to the meeting for which they are intended.

Motions proposed for discussion shall be made available to those entitled to attend with the notice and agenda of the meeting.

Emergency motions must be sent to the Secretary as soon as the nature of the emergency allows before the commencement of the meeting. Emergency business may be accepted by the majority of the meeting but only on the recommendation of the Chair who shall interpret the term 'emergency' in a bona fide manner.

I. Discussion of motion

No motion shall be discussed until it has been moved and seconded at the meeting.

Speakers shall address the Chair and shall only speak once on any motion except by permission of the Chair, providing that the mover of a motion or an amendment may reply to the discussion without introducing new matter for debate; such reply shall close the discussion. No mover of a motion shall be allowed more than five minutes, and no other speaker shall be allowed more than three minutes unless agreed by the meeting to be 'further heard' for a specified period. Amendments to a motion may be moved and seconded from the floor and shall be handed to the Secretary in writing. This can be through the chat box in Zoom or other medium.

Amendments shall be taken in order with one amendment being disposed of before another is moved. If an amendment is carried, the amended resolution becomes a motion to which further amendments may be moved.

J. Procedural motions

A motion of 'next business' shall not be taken until the mover and seconder of a motion have been heard. Any motion of 'next business', 'that the vote be taken', 'to adjourn', 'no-confidence in the chair' shall be moved, seconded and put to the vote without discussion. After such a vote the chair need not accept a further procedural motion for a period of 20 minutes. If a vote of no confidence in the Chair is passed with a majority of two thirds, then the meeting shall immediately elect another member to act as Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

K. Motion to rescind resolution

No motion to rescind a resolution shall be valid within six months from the date on which the resolution was carried.

L. Voting on motions

Voting shall be by show of hands. In the event of there being an equality of votes the Chair may give a casting vote. If the chair does not wish to give a casting vote, the motion is not carried.

M. Chair's ruling

Any breach of or question to standing orders may be raised by a member rising to a point of order. The Chair's ruling on any point arising from the Constitution or standing orders is final unless immediately challenged by not less than four members; such a challenge shall be put to the meeting without discussion and shall only be carried with the support of two thirds of the members present.

N. Miscellaneous

Central Council meetings shall be conducted in a friendly and orderly manner and organised in such a way as to maximise participation from members. No member shall be precluded from attendance because they cannot gain access to the meeting place for any reason.

Harassment or intimidation of any member is unacceptable as is any form of discrimination on the basis of gender, age, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability or race.

Any member acting in an unruly or disruptive manner, in contravention of the Standing Orders, may be removed from the meeting by action of the Chair. The Chair shall put such a motion to the meeting, which to be carried shall require the support of two-thirds of those present and voting. Any member who has been removed from two meetings during a 12-month period shall be ineligible to attend meetings for the next 12 months.

O. Variation of Standing Orders

These Standing Orders may be varied by a two thirds majority vote of the Central Council.