

# Minutes of Bromley Liberal Democrat Party AGM

**Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 7.00pm: meeting held at Bromley URC and online**

	ITEM
1	<p><b>Apologies for absence were received from:</b> Ian Catchpole, Lesley &amp; Peter Furniss and Stephen Gosling.</p> <p><b>Attendees from the Exec:</b> Andrew Coleman, Rick Das, Suraj Gandecha (Chair), Gail Hilder, Julie Ireland, Mike Jones, David Marshall, Sandy Stern, Allan Tweddle and Tommy Velvick*</p> <p><b>Members:</b> Gita Bapat, John Beecroft, Rob Carrick, Graeme Casey, Martin Cooper, Carol Denyer, Claudio Gambarotta, Tudor Griffiths, Stephen Jefferies, Graham Jones, Chloe-Jane Ross, Andrew Stotesbury, Clive Wadhurst, and Stephen Wells. (*Online attendees)</p>
2	<p><b>The Minutes of previous the AGM held on 8 November 2022</b> The minutes were approved, proposed CJR, seconded GC.</p>
3	<p><b>Matters arising.</b> No matters arising.</p>
4	<p><b>Chair's Report.</b> SG noted that we have added a fourth MP (Sarah Dyke) in this parliament following the by-election in Somerton &amp; Frome, with assistance from Bromley volunteers. They lamented the state of the Conservative government and wondered what Starmer really had to offer. Our five councillors are doing a fantastic job of holding the Bromley Tories to account as well as representing their wards and listening to the concerns of local people. After years of Tory neglect, local people are seeing what it means to have a Lib Dem councillor. We are in the full swing of a by-election In Hayes and Coney Hall ward and have a great candidate in Tudor Griffiths. A strong effort from us could see us move the 'fab five' into the 'super six'! Looking forward to 2026, we intend to hold all our seats but also increase our number of councillors. Drawing on lots of data, our selected target wards are Farnborough &amp; Crofton, Orpington and Shortlands &amp; Park Langley. PPCs have been selected for the new seats of Beckenham &amp; Penge and Bromley &amp; Biggin Hill; Eltham &amp; Orpington will follow before Christmas. MC queried the strong effort we were making in the Hayes by-election, fearing it could allow the Tory to retain the seat. A discussion followed and no change in our plans was proposed.</p>
5	<p><b>Treasurer's report.</b> SG read IC's report, which expanded on the attached accounts. MC had independently reviewed these. These accounts (for 2022) were approved.</p>
6	<p><b>Reports of other Officers (if applicable)</b> SG provided the meeting with a Diversity update, noting how well our councillors had done on this aspect of their duties. SG also explained that they will be sending round an email requesting members supply their demographic details so we have a better picture of our local party. This will all be anonymised, and stored with the central party, not locally. This will enable us to see where, as a party we need to be working harder to be more representative of Bromley as a whole. SS provided a verbal update on the current membership, consisting of 443 members and 148 supporters. She also reminded the AGM of the many social and fundraising activities that had happened through the year. TV gave a verbal report of the Young Liberals' group. Some of their activities included inviting the London Young Liberals to an action day in Beckenham Town. This was very successful and showed us how valuable the extra help from the youth wing can be. We plan on calling for their support in the upcoming Hayes and Coney Hall by-election. In addition, we were successful in putting pressure on Bromley Council over their handling of the closure and relocation of Streetwise Youth Centre, highlighting the lack of transparency from officers and the portfolio holder on the issue. We also called for £75,000 in extra funding for the Bromley Youth Support Programme, as well as 5 new youth</p>

	<p>workers, at Bromley Council's annual budget meeting.</p> <p>Also, we are sure to be careful reporting on sensitive issues such as knife crime, which is why we have taken the approach to treat knife crime among young people as a social/public health issue rather than a criminal issue, with the hopes of making the topic less threatening to talk about.</p> <p>CJR reported on how the councillors group is doing. London HQ is impressed with our progress this year. She outlined some of the issues that the team raised on the council, such as digital exclusion, the lack of public toilets in the borough and how it can lead to social exclusion and prevent some people from going out and the neglect of parks and public buildings. The group has got over 5,000 signatures on its petition to keep the Churchill theatre.</p>
7	<p><b>Changes to local party constitution</b></p> <p>SG proposed the modification to the constitution that had been insisted upon by the federal party – ie that members within parliamentary constituency boundaries are only allowed to vote for PPC candidates within those constituencies. This was proposed by JI, seconded TG and passed. <i>(Previously, members had been free to vote in any or all of the borough constituencies.)</i></p>
8	<p><b>Election of Officers and members of the Executive Committee for 2020</b></p> <p><b>Chair</b> Suraj Gandecha (not elected: Stephen Wells)</p> <p><b>Vice Chair</b> Dave Marshall</p> <p><b>Treasurer</b> Ian Catchpole</p> <p><b>Secretary</b> Mike Jones</p> <p><b>Elections &amp; Campaigns Officer</b> Julie Ireland (not elected: Carol Denyer)</p> <p><b>Membership &amp; Development Officer</b> Sandy Stern</p> <p><b>Fundraising Officer</b> David Young</p> <p><b>Equality &amp; Diversity Officer</b> Rob Carrick</p> <p><b>Youth &amp; Student Rep</b> Tommy Velvick</p> <p><b>Councillors' Rep</b> Sam Webber</p> <p><b>Orpington Rep</b> Graeme Casey (not elected: Andrew Stotesbury)</p> <p><b>Beckenham Rep</b> Gita Bapat</p> <p><b>Lewisham &amp; Penge Rep</b> Andy Coleman</p> <p><b>Bromley Rep</b> Steve Gosling</p> <p><b>Ordinary Members:</b> Rick Das and Alan Twedde (not elected: Tina Fatcher-Smith)</p>
9	<p><b>Appointment of Independent Reviewer for the party's accounts.</b></p> <p>Martin Cooper agreed to continue in this role.</p>
10	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>There was none.</p>

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

**Mike Jones (Secretary)**  
**8 November 2023**

**Following the meeting,** the Secretary suggested the following dates for 2023:

Monday, January 15; Tuesday March 12; Wednesday May 22; Thursday July 4; Monday September 16; Tuesday November 12 (AGM).