



# Board of Trustees

## Election Procedures

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. These procedures apply to membership elections to the CIEH Board of Trustees (Board).
- 1.2. Participation in Board elections is vital for the success of CIEH. To ensure this, the election systems used need to be accessible to, and trusted by, members.
- 1.3. The core principles to be followed are:
  - 1.3.1 That all systems for voting should be secure and accurate. Only people entitled to vote should vote and votes must be recorded and counted accurately
  - 1.3.2 That the election process is objective. Procedures should be applied impartially and consistently
  - 1.3.3 That all members (regardless of grade of membership) should be encouraged to participate in elections, both as candidates and voters.
  - 1.3.4 That elections are well publicised and that it is easy to vote
  - 1.3.5 That the administration of the election is transparent. Procedures and criteria will be written in clear English and available to all. The results of the election will be announced promptly.

These principles are listed in order of priority; where there is any conflict between them they will be applied in that order.

### 2. Responsibilities

- 2.1. The Board has directed that the Chief Executive is responsible for the conduct of the elections. The Chief Executive shall either act as Returning Officer, or appoint a Deputy Returning Officer to act on their behalf. In this procedure, the term Returning Officer includes the Deputy Returning Officer.
- 2.2. The Returning Officer is responsible for the conduct of a particular election. It is the job of the Returning Officer to apply and interpret these procedures, to ensure the veracity of vote counting and to announce the results.
- 2.3. In the event of any dispute concerning these procedures, the ballot or the validity of votes, the decision of the Returning Officer shall be final and not subject to any right of appeal.
- 2.4. The Returning Officer may appoint agents for the purposes of assisting with an election.

- 2.5. The Returning Officer and their agents must not be CIEH members. If the Chief Executive is a CIEH member, an alternative Returning Officer shall be appointed by the Board from within the CIEH’s paid staff. They must not be a member of CIEH.

**3. Equal access**

- 3.1. All members should be able to participate equally in elections. To help ensure this:

3.1.1 Election materials will be made available, on request, in formats that are accessible for all members. For example, materials will be made available in print, large type, audio files or Braille. Alternative methods of voting will be made available to members who may not be able to vote digitally, as a result of a disability or for some other substantial reason. The Returning Officer is authorised to agree special voting arrangements, providing that the core principles set out above are met.

3.1.2 The language used in election materials will be gender neutral.

**4. Timetable for elections**

- 4.1. Elections will be held between May and September each year; the exact timetable for each election will be determined by the Returning Officer.

- 4.2. All elections will follow the order of events listed below:

Set the timetable	See section 4
Publish notice of elections	See section 7
Closing date for nominations and statements	See section 9
Voting opens	See section 15
Closing of voting	See section 15
Counting of votes	See section 16
Announcement of results	See section 19

**5. Voting systems**

- 5.1. CIEH intends all elections to take place on a ‘digital by default’ basis. The Returning Officer must (in accordance with clause 3.1.1 of these procedures) make alternative arrangements for those who are unable to vote or to make or to second nominations online.

- 5.2. Digital voting will be the default mechanism for elections. The following procedures must be followed:

5.2.1. A unique identification number will be required to register a vote online.

5.2.2. Voting must be via a secure website, with appropriate encryption to ensure that the vote is not traceable in any way.

5.2.3. Adequate safeguards against fraud must be in place to maintain the security of the ballot

## **6. Voting privacy**

- 6.1. The Returning Officer will make such arrangements as they think appropriate and proportionate to ensure that members' votes remain confidential.

## **7. Notice of elections**

- 7.1. Adequate notice must be given of all elections. This will normally mean a notification sent directly, by e-mail, to all members entitled to vote. Notice of an election will also be placed on the CIEH website.
- 7.2. Notice of the election will be given at least one month before the closing date for nominations.
- 7.3. The notice of the election will include:
- What the election is for
  - The number of vacancies to be filled
  - How to nominate or be nominated
  - Who is eligible to be a candidate
  - Who is eligible to nominate a candidate
  - The closing date for nominations and the timetable for the elections
  - Any other information considered by the Returning Officer to be necessary in order to facilitate the election.
- 7.4. Nomination forms will be made available to members via the website and will also be e-mailed to members on request.

## **8. Eligibility to be a candidate**

- 8.1. To be a candidate a person must be a current member of CIEH.

## **9. Process for Nominations**

- 9.1. Any nomination must be proposed by a CEIH member and seconded by another CIEH member. All nominations must be received by the deadline specified.
- 9.2. The Returning Officer will specify the format for any nomination, which will normally include:
- 9.2.1. The name of the candidate
  - 9.2.2. The membership number of the candidate
  - 9.2.3. The address of the candidate
  - 9.2.4. Any other information considered necessary by the Returning Officer
  - 9.2.5. The candidate's digital signature indicating that they are willing and eligible to stand for election
  - 9.2.6. Names of the persons proposing and seconding (the nominators), along with their membership numbers, addresses and digital signatures.
- 9.3. A nomination will be invalid if:
- 9.3.1. The completed form has not been received by the closing date for nominations
  - 9.3.2. The candidate has not signed the form or otherwise consented
  - 9.3.3. The nominators have not signed the form or otherwise consented

- 9.3.4. The candidate is not eligible for election
  - 9.3.5. The nominators are not eligible to nominate
  - 9.3.6. The particulars of the candidate or the persons nominating the candidate are (in the opinion of the Returning Officer) incomplete, untruthful or inaccurate
  - 9.3.7. A nominator has proposed or seconded more than one candidate. In this instance, the Returning Officer will try to contact the nominator (if this is possible before the deadline, in order that they may choose one preferred candidate and withdraw any other nominations). If the Returning Officer is unable to contact the nominator, the nomination received first by the Returning Officer will stand and any subsequent nominations proposed or seconded by that nominator will be invalid.
- 9.4. The Returning Officer’s decision that a nomination is invalid is final. The candidate will be immediately withdrawn from the election, if the Returning Officer holds that a nomination is invalid.
- 9.5. Details of how nominations are to be made, along with the deadline for the receipt of nominations, will be included in the invitation to nominate.

**10. Publication of nominations**

- 10.1. All nominations received shall be confidential prior to the closing date for the nominations. The names of the candidates or potential candidates shall not be disclosed to anyone, including Board members. (However, the Returning Officer may disclose – to Board members alone and in confidence - how many nominations have been received to date.)
- 10.2. At the closing date for nominations, the names of the candidates will be made public. A complete list of candidates will be published on the website.

**11. Process for withdrawal by candidates**

- 11.1. A candidate may withdraw from an election by submitting a notice of withdrawal. This must be signed digitally by the candidate and delivered to the Returning Officer. Any withdrawal must be received no later than the closing date for nominations.
- 11.2. A nominator may withdraw their nomination at any time before the closing date for nominations, by submitting a notice of withdrawal. A nominator cannot withdraw their nomination following the close of nominations.
- 11.3. If a candidate withdraws, the election proceeds with the remaining candidates.
- 11.4. If a candidate dies at any time between the closing date for nominations and the announcement of the election result, the election will continue. If election materials have already been distributed, CIEH will attempt to notify members, via the website and any other general means of publication, of the death of the candidate. Any votes received for the deceased candidate will be discounted.

## **12. Uncontested Elections**

- 12.1. If an election is uncontested (i.e. the number of candidates is equal to or fewer than the number of vacancies) a statement of the candidates will be posted on the website no later than one week after the close of nominations and the candidates shall be declared elected unopposed.

## **13. Supporting statements and election materials**

- 13.1. Candidates will be asked to prepare a short personal statement supporting their candidacy and including details of their proposed contribution to the Board. In addition, candidates will be asked to supply brief biographical details. The content will be as determined by the Returning Officer, but may include details such as qualifications, membership grade, CIEH experience, current employment, industry sector expertise and place of residence. Supporting statements and biographical details must be submitted by the deadline for the receipt of nominations. Failure to submit a supporting statement or biographical details by the deadline will not invalidate a nomination, but no supporting statement or biographical details will be published if received after the deadline.
- 13.2. The supporting statement and biographical details must be no longer than 500 words in total. Submissions exceeding 500 words may be returned to the candidates for editing (if this is possible before the deadline) or simply cut down to the limit. This may mean that only the first 500 words are published. The Returning Officer or their agents shall not edit supporting statements or biographical details on behalf of candidates.
- 13.3. The Returning Officer or their agent shall review the content of the supporting statements and biographical details. They will be published at the Returning Officer's discretion and CIEH will not publish any that the Returning Officer believes:
  - 13.3.1. To contain inaccurate or untruthful information
  - 13.3.2. To be potentially libellous
  - 13.3.3. Could subject CIEH to legal action or discredit it in any way.
- 13.4. The supporting statements, biographical details and name of nominators will be provided to all members eligible to vote, along with voting instructions.
- 13.5. In the election materials published by the Returning Officer the candidates will be listed alphabetically in order of their family names. If there are two or more candidates with the same family name, they will be listed in order of their other names.
- 13.6. If a candidate has more nominations than are required, only sufficient names will be published. Where possible the Returning Officer will give the candidates the opportunity to select the names, but if not, these will be the first received by the Returning Officer.

## **14. Canvassing**

- 14.1. CIEH recognises that some candidates will engage in canvassing and does not intend to prevent this activity. However, there are some restrictions that are placed on canvassing activities:

- 14.1.1. No statement, remarks or details of any kind shall be published in any form whatsoever by CIEH itself in respect of candidates and in connection with elections, without the prior written consent of the Returning Officer
  - 14.1.2. CIEH staff, whether or not members, must not canvass on behalf of any candidate, or be involved in any such activities
  - 14.1.3. Candidates and their supporters must not make use of CIEH resources, including membership details or mailing lists for the purposes of canvassing. In particular UK data protection legislation (and, additionally, similar legislative provisions in other jurisdictions) must be complied with. Where a candidate has access to membership details in another CIEH volunteer role they must not use those details for canvassing.
- 14.2. CIEH may, at its discretion, facilitate the use of its own social media fora to give candidates the opportunity to interact with members.

## **15. Voting**

- 15.1. Voting instructions will always be e-mailed at least four weeks before the date set for the close of voting. They must be sent to all members entitled to vote, and will include:
- The names of the candidates and the names of those nominating the candidates
  - The supporting statements and biographical details for candidates
  - Details of the voting procedure, including the date for the close of voting
- 15.2. It shall be at the discretion of the Returning Officer how the information is provided to members. In addition to providing the information to individual members, the supporting statements and biographies) will be published on the CIEH website.
- 15.3. Whatever form the voting instructions take, they must:
- Contain the names of all the candidates
  - Contain clear instructions on how to vote.
- 15.4. The Returning Officer is responsible for ensuring that voting papers, or details of how to vote, are dispatched to members at their notified e-mail address. Papers are dispatched in good faith. However, the non-receipt of voting instructions, or any other election materials, by any member or members shall not invalidate an election. Notified e-mail address means that of the member on the membership database held by CIEH at the time that mailing details are compiled. It is the responsibility of the member to ensure that CIEH is notified of their e-mail address and any changes to it.
- 15.5. To be eligible to vote a person must, at the time of the dispatch of the voting papers, be a CIEH member.
- 15.6. Each member entitled to vote shall be allocated as many votes as there are vacancies for which an election is being held. Each vote has equal weight and only one vote may be used for any one candidate. Members shall be free to use as many or as few of their votes as they choose.

## **16. Counting of votes**

- 16.1 The Returning Officer, or agents appointed by them, is responsible for collating all votes, included those submitted via non-digital means, to accommodate a reasonable adjustment. No other person will have access to voting records.
- 16.2 Counting should be finalised as soon as possible after the close of voting.
- 16.3 The Returning Officer, or agents, are responsible for verifying each voting record and counting all votes.
- 16.4 The Returning Officer is responsible for determining if a recount is necessary for any votes. A recount shall only take place if the Returning Officer believes that there may have been an error in the counting or if a candidate has been elected by four votes or fewer.
- 16.5 Any such recounts shall only take place during the Count. Once the Returning Officer has announced the results they shall be regarded as final, in the absence of manifest error.
- 16.6 Only the Returning Officer and their agents, candidates in person and an independent scrutineer have a right to be present at any count of the votes.

## **17. Validity of votes**

- 17.1 The decision of the Returning Officer on the validity of a vote, or any question arising in respect to a vote, will be final.
- 17.2 A vote will be invalid if:
  - 17.2.1 It is not received by the Returning Officer before the deadline for the close of voting
  - 17.2.2 It is not in the required format
  - 17.2.3 The person who voted was not entitled to vote
  - 17.2.4 There is no clear indication of voting intention
- 17.3 If a ballot paper is used it will not normally be invalid if:
  - 17.3.1 The vote is marked in the wrong place, but with a clear indication of which candidate or candidates are preferred
  - 17.3.2 The vote is marked otherwise than with a cross
  - 17.3.3 There is more than one mark but with a clear indication of which candidate, or candidates, is preferred
  - 17.3.4 The member has not used all of their votes.
- 17.4 Only the Returning Officer, or their agent can determine whether a voting record, is invalid. All invalid records should be recorded as such and that record retained with all other voting records.
- 17.5 In announcing the results, the Returning Officer shall also announce the number of invalid votes.

**18. Tied votes**

18.1 If there is a tie between any two or more candidates, and the addition of one vote to any of the candidates would have enabled that candidate to be elected, the Returning Officer will decide between the candidates by drawing lots.

**19. Announcement of results**

19.1 The Returning Officer is responsible for announcing the results of an election.

19.2 All candidates will be notified of the results as soon as possible after the count has concluded and no later than four days after that time; at the same time the results will be published on the CIEH website.

19.3 The election results shall be published in the numerical order of votes received along with the number of total votes that each candidate received.

**20. Retention of voting records**

20.1 All voting records shall be retained for a period of at least six months, after which they should be destroyed. Only the Returning Officer, their agents, or another person acting on the explicit authority of the Returning Officer will have access to the voting records.

**Agreed** by the Board of Trustees on 26 January 2023

**To be reviewed** before 31 December 2024