



Election of the Chair of the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

1. This note describes the practical arrangements for the election for the Chair of the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee. In accordance with Standing Order No. 122C, the Speaker has declared the Chair vacant following the resignation of Dr Andrew Murrison. The Order of the House of 4 July 2017 allocated the Chair of the Committee to the Conservative Party.
6. 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.

Nominations

2. The Speaker has declared that the ballot will take place on Wednesday 12 June between 10am and 1.30pm. Nominations will close at 5pm on Monday 10 June. Nominations are to be submitted to the Table Office or Procedural Hub.
3. In accordance with the Order of the House of 4 July 2017, only a Member of the Conservative Party may be a candidate for the chair of the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee.
4. Nomination forms are available from the Table Office and the Vote Office but need not be used, provided that in all respects nominations meet the provisions of the Standing Order. 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 Conservative Party. In the event that more than 15 signatures are collected from the same party as the candidate, only the first 15 valid signatures will be printed.
5. Nominations may be accompanied by the signatures of up to five Members elected to the House as members of any party other than the Conservative Party or of no party.
7. Candidates should declare any relevant interests with their nomination. Candidates may wish to consult the Registrar of Members' Financial Interests. Candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with Chapters 2 and 3 of the Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members.
8. Candidates have the option of providing a 500-word supporting statement.
9. Valid nominations received each day will be printed in the next day's House's business papers. They will also be published on the Parliament website, along with the candidate's supporting signatures, any declared interests and any supporting statement.
10. As soon as possible after the close of nominations, if there is more than one candidate, the list of candidates and their sponsors will be placed in the Vote Office in Members' Lobby, and will be made available on the website. A booklet will also be published containing a photograph of each candidate, any declared interests and any supporting statement. If there is only one candidate, an announcement will be made that he or she has been elected unopposed.

Ballot

11. If there is more than one candidate, the ballot will be held between 10am and 1.30pm in Committee Room 16. Members will have their names recorded at temporary division desks before being issued with a ballot paper.

12. Any Member who is on the Parliamentary Estate but is incapacitated from voting in the lobbies may ask for a Clerk to obtain a ballot paper on their behalf, bring it to the Member, 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 by 9am on Wednesday 12 June at the latest.
13. Members who have proxy votes in operation must ask their nominated proxy to cast their vote on their behalf.
14. The ballot paper will give the names of candidates in alphabetical order. 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. 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.
15. At 1.30pm the ballot will be closed and the entrance to the room will be locked. All Members in the room when the doors are locked will be allowed to vote.

Count and further stages

16. The ballot will be counted under the Alternative Vote system. Any candidate who receives more than half the first preferences shall be elected. If no candidate is so elected, the candidate or candidates with the lowest number of first preference votes is eliminated 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 elimination and distribution is repeated, until one candidate has more than half the votes.
17. As soon as practicable after the closing of the ballot, the result will be published under the direction of the Speaker. The Member so elected will take up his / her position as chair of the committee with immediate effect.
18. Chairs are elected to serve until the end of the Parliament.

Contacts

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