

YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

REGIONAL CANDIDATES' CHAIR REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024

General Election

The announcement of the General Election came quite suddenly; most analysts had expected the Government to wait until the early autumn. Although, given the uncertainty of the situation, I had for several months been asking local party chairs to arrange selections as a matter of urgency, many LPs had been reluctant to do this, and we were left with the necessity of appointing candidates. Some appointments were straightforward and not difficult to make, but others were more difficult, with LPs having no local candidates from whom to choose. I contacted all approved candidates in the Region; although most were ready to help the Party, it was disappointing that some were not, and several did not give a reason for their reluctance. This meant that we had to ask other regional candidates' chairs for assistance, and I am grateful to London and Devon and Cornwall in particular for lending us people whom they could not place. In the end we were able to stand a candidate in each of our 54 seats, and I particularly appreciate the efforts of Hannah Kitching and John Lawson in persuading people to come forward. Also, Sarah Crooks and Brendan Stubbs were very helpful in the last few crucial days by ensuring that nomination papers were submitted in time.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that we again have a Liberal Democrat MP in Yorkshire and the Humber (Tom Gordon, Harrogate and Knaresborough).

Several LPs had difficulty in raising the election deposit. As the next General Election is very unlikely to take place for five years, they should be encouraged to begin putting money aside for this now.

Post-General Election Reviews

All candidates, both standers and non-standers, have been required to complete a post-GE review, as have their agents and LP chairs. The Regional Candidates' Committee is looking at these and, when all the reviews in England have been received and considered, a new list of approved candidates will be drawn up.

Mayoral Elections

We stood a candidate in each of the Region's Mayoral elections; the Hull and East Yorkshire selection is ongoing and the result should be declared on 12 November. I am grateful to the Returning Officer, Dave Crowther, the E-Ballot Administrator, Derek Wann, and Tony McCobb for their efforts in ensuring the smooth running of this selection.

Returning Officers and Assistant Returning Officers

The Candidates' Office is contacting all ROs and AROs to ask if they wish to continue in the role. I know that some wish to stand down; I am grateful to them for their efforts over the past years, which have been of immense help. We shall need more people to come forward to train for these roles, and also to be E-Ballot Administrators.

Assessment Days

Some in-person candidate assessment days are now being held, but the majority are taking place on line. We shall need more people to be approved, as LPs are being encouraged to select their candidates as soon as possible, to enable them to be embedded in the constituency and become known. Anyone interested in knowing about the approval process is very welcome to contact me at

penny.rcc@gmail.com

Thanks

A difficult year has been made less stressful by the assistance of the other members of the Regional Candidates' Committee, Stephen Fenton, Alan Luckraft and Tony McCobb, by the Candidates' Officers, Rachel Minshull and Julie McLennan, and by my husband, Douglas, who helps me to keep a sense of proportion.

Penny Robinson

11 November 2024