



**ELECTIONS TO THE RFU COUNCIL:
GUIDANCE NOTE FOR CONSTITUENT BODIES (CBs) AND
NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE BODIES (NRBs)**

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Background

- 1.1 Since 2018, Council members have been elected for terms of three years, up to an aggregate maximum of nine years (with some limited exemptions). Appendix 2 sets out how term limits apply.
- 1.2 This Guidance Note sets out how clubs in Constituent Bodies (CBs) and National Representative Bodies (NRBs) will need to run elections for Council members, and some guidance as to best practice for holding elections.

2. Role of the Council Member

- 2.1 The member clubs and referee societies of the RFU are represented on the RFU Council. Council Members have two principal roles:
 - a. to represent the views of their constituents, and to be a conduit of information from the clubs to the RFU and vice versa; and
 - b. to make certain decisions on behalf of the RFU, primarily to provide monitoring and oversight of the Board on behalf of the members, and to put in place regulations and policies relating to the game. When making decisions, to act in the best interests of the RFU and its members as a whole (i.e. not just a Council Member's constituents).
- 2.2 A fuller role description for Council members is set out in Appendix 1.

3. Mandatory requirements vs best practice

- 3.1 This Guidance Note includes both mandatory requirements under the Rules, and best practice. Where this note states that a CB, NRB or an individual **must** do something, this is mandatory under the Rules. Where it states that a CB, NRB or individual **should** do something, this is not mandatory, but it is strongly recommended.
- 3.2 This Guidance Note refers to CBs electing Council Members. Of course, to be precise it is the CB and the clubs within that CB that elect the Council members, but for ease of reference this note simply refers to CBs who are responsible for the elections.



PART 2: ELECTION GUIDANCE FOR GEOGRAPHIC CBS, THE RFRU, THE CHAMPIONSHIP CLUBS COMMITTEE AND THE NATIONAL CLUBS ASSOCIATION

1. Who This Applies To

- 1.1 In this Part 2, references to CBs include references to the Championship Clubs Committee, and the National Clubs Association, and references to clubs include references to referee societies in the case of the Rugby Football Referees Union.

2. Before the Elections

2.1 Giving notice to potential candidates

- a. In order to maximise the pool of talent available, CBs and NRBs should give their voting members advance notice of the elections, so potential candidates can have sufficient time to put themselves forward. There are no qualification criteria for a candidate – for example, candidates do not need to be members of a CB committee, or even a club member. A CB may consider a candidate unsuitable, but it cannot prevent a candidate standing, and must allow the candidate to stand if they are properly proposed and seconded as set out below.
- b. There will no longer be annual elections, and therefore there will be more limited opportunities for individuals to stand for election. Therefore, it is now more important that potential candidates should be given sufficient time to consider whether to stand.
- c. In addition to long-term notice, CBs also should give a reminder nearer the time for elections.
- d. It is important that the RFU Council has a diverse range of talent available to it. It is also important that the RFU Council is representative of the game as a whole, and the wider rugby community. CBs should consider effective ways of notifying clubs, and individuals within clubs, of the elections so as to allow a wider range of candidates to put themselves forward. As CBs can also nominate candidates, CBs should also consider putting forward candidates from different backgrounds, and especially female candidates or candidates from ethnically diverse communities. When sending out notices to clubs or individuals (and on the CB's website or social media sites), some CBs have included wording such as "We encourage applications from female candidates and from members of under-represented groups".

2.2 Proposal of candidates

- a. Candidates must be proposed by one full voting member club and seconded by another full voting member club. A CB itself can propose or second a candidate (or where a CB elects two Council members, the CB or a club may propose or second two candidates).
- b. Under Rule 18.7, to be eligible for election, the CB must have received the nomination in writing from both the proposer and the seconder no later than 1 March.
 - i. If either is received after this deadline, the CB cannot accept the candidate.



- ii. Even if a CB assumes that a club will be a proposer or seconder, unless it has this in writing from the club, it is not valid and the candidate cannot be included in the election process.

2.3 *Who can vote*

- a. Only clubs which are full voting member clubs of the RFU may vote in elections for Council members.
- b. The following may not vote in such an election:
 - i. clubs which are members of that CB but which are not voting members of the RFU; and
 - ii. clubs which are members of that CB but which have been allocated to another CB by the RFU Council (and they are members of the RFU through that other CB – for example many university clubs are voting members of the Students RFU, but are also members of Geographic CBs, but are only voting members through their membership of the Students RFU and therefore cannot vote in CB elections).
 - iii. Note that those clubs cannot vote in these elections even if they are able to vote on other CB matters. If a CB is in any doubt as to whether a club is eligible to vote, please contact the RFU Executive Director of Legal and Governance (angusbujalski@rfu.com).
- c. The CB itself may vote. How the CB chooses to vote will be down to the CB as set out in its constitution – this would usually be a decision of the CB Management Board (or equivalent). If a member of the CB Management Board is standing for election, they should not be present when the Management Board discusses and decides who to vote for.

3. **Election Process**

3.1 *Choosing between an election by post/email and an election at a hustings meeting*

- a. CBs could choose to hold an election by post/email, or to hold an election meeting where each candidate can put their case, and then the election would take place at that meeting. Alternatively, a CB may want to have a hybrid process where a hustings evening is held or, perhaps for larger CBs, several hustings evenings, and then a postal/email election is held following that meeting.
- b. Online meetings are now more commonplace than previously, and have led to greater attendance than physical meetings. On that basis, a CB may want to hold one or more virtual hustings meetings where all candidates can put their cases forward. We suggest that CBs consider that if a hustings meeting is held, it may be done virtually (such as using Zoom or Microsoft Teams) in order to get the best attendance. It may also be possible to record the meeting and make this available on demand if there are any clubs who are unable to attend the meeting.
- c. The Rules refer to a postal ballot, but this may be conducted by email instead. While this is a matter for the CB committee, we suggest that any ballot is conducted by email rather than by post.
- d. Some pros and cons of a ballot and hustings are set out below:



	Election by post/email	Election by hustings meeting	Virtual hustings meeting followed by email election
Pros	Potentially cleaner process – no meeting required All clubs will get equal information from the CB/NRB	Clubs get the opportunity to quiz each candidate	Allows all clubs to attend virtual meeting.
Cons	Clubs only have written information to rely on. No opportunity to meet or challenge candidates	Not all clubs may be able to attend Logistics of a meeting is required. Physical meeting may be more difficult for larger CBs	Not all clubs may attend virtual hustings meeting and so some may not have access to all information.

3.2 *Steps to take before the election*

- a. Under Rule 18.8, once the CB has received candidates, it must send out the candidates' details to voting members not later than 15 March. This can be by post or by email. We recommend this is done by email.
- b. Whatever process the CB chooses, the most important point is to give each candidate a fair and equal opportunity. We recommend that each candidate provides the same sort and amount of information, which can then be distributed to clubs. This could be, for example a maximum two-page manifesto, setting out the candidate's background, experience, motivation for the role and an explanation of how they would fulfil the role. We recommend that candidates should focus on themselves and not refer to or criticise other candidates. The CB can distribute this centrally, and also set out guidance for how candidates may campaign. For example, it would be inappropriate for one candidate with access to GMS to send out campaign materials when other candidates cannot.
- c. The CB itself can propose or second a candidate. How the CB chooses this candidate is up to the CB, and the CB should follow any process set out in its own rules in order to do that. Most likely, it would be the CB's management committee who would decide which candidate to propose or second. If one or more members of the CB's management committee wish to put themselves forward, it would be good practice for them not to take part in that decision. A CB may want to put in place a nominations committee in order either to decide which candidate to propose, or to make a recommendation to the CB's management committee.

3.3 *The election process*

- a. The process for an election meeting is set out in Rule 18.8, and the process for a ballot is set out in Rule 18.9.
- b. If an email ballot is conducted, an email from the club to the CB must come from a duly authorised officer of the club.



c. Under Rule 18.1, whether a ballot is conducted by post or email, responses must be received by 28 March.

d. The table below sets out some guidance for CBs on the election process:

A. Elections by post/email	B. Election at a hustings meeting	C. Virtual hustings meeting followed by election by email
<p>1. The process should be made very clear to voting clubs. In short, we would recommend sending out one email with an election pack, which would include the Council member role description, the manifestos of each candidate and a voting form.</p> <p>2. If the election is to be done by email, and only one candidate is to be elected, then it may be simpler to ask clubs to reply with the name of the candidate the club wishes to vote for.</p> <p>3. For a postal form, it must be signed by an officer of the club. Similarly, for an email ballot, the CB should ensure that an email is sent by an officer of the club.</p> <p>4. The election ballot must be supervised by the chair (or president if there is no chair) of the CB.</p>	<p>1. Below is some best practice guidance if the CB wants to hold hustings. These are based on the Electoral Commission’s guidance, but made more appropriate for a rugby environment:</p> <p>2. <i>Before the meeting:</i></p> <p>a. If the election is to be at meeting, the CB must give at least seven days’ notice for the meeting (Rule 18.9).</p> <p>b. An online meeting would likely be better than a physical meeting. If a CB wishes to organise a physical hustings meeting, this should be in a location which will give the best chance for all clubs to attend.</p> <p>c. It is open to the clubs attending to choose the chair of the meeting, but we recommend that the CB proposes a chair who will be seen to be independent.</p> <p>d. Ensure you invite all candidates, giving all candidate sufficient notice and a fair opportunity to attend.</p> <p>3. <i>At the meeting</i></p> <p>a. Inform the audience at the meeting of any candidates who are not attending</p> <p>b. The process for the meeting is up to the CB to decide, but all candidates should be given the equal opportunity to speak. This may be one speech each, or a Q&A. If it is a Q&A, then the CB should do its best to ensure all candidates get equal time.</p> <p>c. Allow each candidate attending a fair chance to answer questions and, where appropriate, a reasonable opportunity to respond to points made against them by other candidates.</p>	<p>1. <i>In advance of the meeting:</i></p> <p>a. Set out process to clubs at the outset.</p> <p>b. Choose a time which most clubs would be likely to attend a virtual meeting.</p> <p>c. Give good notice for the virtual meeting.</p> <p>d. Send out any materials from candidates to clubs in advance of the virtual meeting so that clubs can ask questions based on that information.</p> <p>2. <i>At the meeting:</i></p> <p>a. Record the meeting so that any clubs unable to attend can get access to it.</p> <p>b. Ensure that whoever chairs the online meeting has experience of chairing virtual meetings.</p> <p>c. Consider using any “chat” function on the online platform to allow clubs to put questions.</p> <p>d. Follow the process marked “at the meeting” for a hustings meeting in the centre column.</p>



3.4 *What to do following the vote*

- a. If there is a tie, then the CB's committee must decide the election. The process for this is set out in Rule 18.12.
- b. The CB must then inform the RFU of the successful candidate by 1 April. The CB should inform its members at that point.



PART 3: ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

1. Casual vacancies

- 1.1 There are occasions when there will be a casual vacancy for a Council Member. This may be the death, retirement or resignation of a Council Member part-way through their term or, having been elected, the individual being unable to take up their post before the term begins.
- 1.2 In this case, the CB will have 60 days to run an election process. We recommend that this follows the same sort of process as for normal elections. Under Rule 18.4, any election process must be approved by the RFU Legal & Governance Director.

2. CBs with two representatives

- 2.1 A number of CBs have two representatives, which may make the election process more complex. The Rules allow flexibility for CBs to decide whether to stagger the election of the representatives or not.
- 2.2 If a CB does not wish to stagger the election of the representatives (meaning they are to be elected at the same time, for the same period), then the CB should run the election in the same way as if there were only one representative, save that the two candidates with the most votes would be elected.
- 2.3 The Rules offer flexibility if a CB wishes to stagger the elections. Any process must be approved by the RFU Legal and Governance Director (angusbujalski@rfu.com). There are two suggested ways this could happen:
 - a. the CB runs one process: all eligible candidates go onto the same ballot form, and the candidate with most votes is elected for three years, and the candidate with the second most votes is elected for a shorter term; or
 - b. the CB runs two processes, with one vacancy for a three-year term and one for a shorter term, and each club may vote once in each process. Candidates may put themselves forward for one option only. The candidate with the most votes in each of the separate processes will be elected.
 - c. Where a CB has two representatives, the CB itself or a club may propose or second two candidates, and may also vote for two candidates. A CB may want to use that flexibility to ensure that at least one of the two candidates comes from a more diverse background.
 - d. See Appendix 4 for suggested ballot papers for different alternatives.

3. All other CBs and NRBs

- 3.1 Under Rule 18.13, representatives to the Council for the following CBs or NRBs shall be appointed by their respective committees/boards in the way set out in that CB/NRB's constitution:
 - a. Premier Rugby Limited;
 - b. the Army Rugby Union;
 - c. the Royal Air Force Rugby Union;
 - d. the Royal Navy Rugby Union;
 - e. the Students Rugby Football Union;



- f. the England Rugby Football Schools Union;
 - g. the England Colleges Rugby Football Union; and
 - h. the Rugby Players' Association.
- 3.2 The CB/NRB must inform the RFU of the successful candidate by 1 April.



APPENDIX 1:
RFU COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE
ROLE DESCRIPTION

Background

This document sets out the roles and responsibilities of a Council member who represents clubs, schools, colleges, universities, referee societies or other rugby bodies on the RFU Council. It is not exhaustive, and should be read together with the RFU Rules, RFU Regulations and other documents which relate to the RFU Council.

The Rugby Football Union is the national governing body for Rugby Union in England. Authority within the RFU is split between the Council, the Board of Directors and the Executive Staff. The Council has a number of responsibilities, principally monitoring and oversight of the Board on behalf of the members, and acting as a conduit for information to and from the game as a whole.

Council members are also full voting members of the RFU (alongside clubs, Constituent Bodies, National Representative Bodies and Referee Societies) and are entitled to vote at the RFU's Annual General Meeting and Special General Meetings.

Balancing representation the RFU and Clubs/Constituent Body (CB)

It is important to acknowledge that members of the Council have a responsibility to represent the clubs and CBs that elected them, and would be expected to represent those issues and views as appropriate within the RFU. This is a vital role.

However, members of the Council have a primary duty to act in what they consider to be in the best interests of the RFU and the game *as a whole*. This means that when they act as a member of the Council, such as voting in Council meetings, they must only consider the interests of the RFU and the game as a whole and not those of the clubs and/or CB they represent.

Key responsibilities

The key responsibilities of a Council member are set out below.

Decision-making and Governance

1. Act as a member of the Council to:
 - a. hold the Board to account on behalf of the members of the RFU.
 - b. determine policies and regulations relating to the Game under the Rules;
 - c. make appointments as set out in the Rules; and
 - d. fulfil any other responsibilities set out in the Rules.
2. Attend and contribute to Council Meetings across all areas of the game.
3. Serve on the Committees/sub-Committees/Task Groups/Panels of the RFU as agreed. It is not a requirement for a Council member to serve on any group, but Council members are encouraged to use their experience within and outside rugby where time allows.



Representation of CB and clubs

4. Represent and communicate the interests of both their CB and its clubs to the RFU both at Council meetings and more generally.
5. Act as an ambassador for their CB and clubs.
6. Provide a focal point for their CB and its clubs on guidance and specialist contacts at Twickenham.

Communication to clubs and CB

7. Provide regular reports and give guidance to their CB and clubs on all relevant RFU business.
8. Consult with their CB and clubs on relevant matters for discussion within the RFU.

Ambassadorial duties

9. Act as an ambassador and advocate for RFU policies and regulations.
10. Attend and act as a host on behalf of the Rugby Football Union at “value the volunteer” events including men’s and women’s senior internationals, and other representative matches.
11. Host CB guests at international matches held at Twickenham and elsewhere.
12. Attend, speak or present at CB and club functions.
13. Uphold and advocate the Core Values of Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship, and to comply with the Council Members’ Code of Conduct.

What skills are expected

So that a Council representative can fulfil their role, they would be expected to have the following skills and experience:

1. To have an understanding of the rugby environment in England, and a love of the sport.
2. To be a good communicator, both able to translate policies and decisions from the Council to their CB and member clubs, and to communicate club and CB issues to the centre.
3. To have sufficient gravitas to represent the RFU in club, CB or external events.
4. To be able to grasp complex issues and be able to make decisions in an informed and clear manner.

Time commitment

There are currently five Council meetings per season, and Council members are also expected to attend England home representative matches, and away matches on rotation. With attendance at committee meetings, and meetings and functions at clubs and CBs will require additional time. Depending on the extent of a Council member’s involvement in these, they would be expected to commit to a minimum of 25 days per annum, including weekends in addition to any club or CB duties.

Note: references to “Clubs” also include references to schools, colleges, universities and referee societies who also elect representatives to the Council.



APPENDIX 2: TERMS AND TERM LIMITS FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS

The Rules allow for an aggregate maximum term on Council of nine years. There are certain exemptions (for Council members elected to the Board, President, international representatives) and some transitional provisions. For details on how long incumbent Council members may serve, please contact Angus Bujalski, the RFU Executive Director of Legal and Governance (angusbujalski@rfu.com).

Generally, elections should be held for three-year terms. In exceptional circumstances a candidate could stand for a shorter period.¹ Examples of exceptional circumstances may be:

- an incumbent Council member only having a shorter time left to serve on Council (i.e. he or she would be timed out within three years);
- if the CB elects two Council members, and the CB wishes to stagger the appointments (meaning for example that one Council member would serve initially for a three year term, and another for a two year term – once that staggering is established, then each Council member can revert to three year terms); or
- the election is for a casual vacancy mid-year.

Note that this may result in candidates standing for different terms, for example an incumbent Council member standing for a one- or two-year term, and a potential new Council member standing for a three-year term. This is perfectly permissible. Suggested ballot forms are set out in Appendix 4. A CB or NRB need not use these forms; they are suggested but are not mandatory. If votes are to be entirely by email, then these can be adapted as necessary.

¹ Rule 18.2



APPENDIX 3: SUGGESTED TIMELINE

Time	Action for CB/NRB	Mandatory or recommended
December/January	Remind member clubs of election and ask for candidates	Recommended
1 March	Deadline for candidates to be proposed and seconded	Mandatory
Early March	Ask candidates for CVs and/or manifestos (if not already supplied)	Recommended
15 March	Deadline for CB/NRB to send out candidates' details to members	Mandatory
Before 28 March	Hold election by post/email or by hustings meeting	Mandatory
28 March	Deadline for responses for post/email ballot	Mandatory
1 April	Deadline for informing RFU of elected representative	Mandatory
1 April	CB/NRB to inform its members of the result	Recommended
1 August	Council terms begin	Mandatory



APPENDIX 4: EXAMPLE BALLOT FORMS

Please note that these are suggestions only – they may make it easier for CBs/NRBs to run the election process, particularly where different candidates wish to stand for different terms, or for CBs with more than one Council member.

Example 1: All candidates are eligible for a three-year term, with one incumbent Council Member. Two other candidates stand.

Xshire RFU

Election of Council Representative

Please mark one box

Name	Term	Proposer	Seconders	Vote
J Smith	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2027	Xshire RFU (CB)	ABC RFC	
F Jones	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2027	DEF RFC	GHI RFC	
A Patel	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2027	JKL RFC	MNO RFC	

The candidate with the highest number of votes will be elected.

Example 2: incumbent candidate (J Smith) has served for eight years and is eligible only to serve for one more year. Two other candidates stand.

Xshire RFU

Election of Council Representative

Please mark one box

Name	Term	Proposer	Seconders	Vote
J Smith	1 August 2024– 31 July 2025	Xshire RFU (CB)	ABC RFC	
F Jones	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2027	DEF RFC	GHI RFC	
A Patel	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2027	JKL RFC	MNO RFC	

The candidate with the highest number of votes will be elected.



Example 3: The CB elects two Council Members, and the CB wishes to stagger the elections. The two incumbents have served for seven years, but one incumbent (J Smith) has agreed only to stand for a term of one year. Two other candidates stand.

Xshire RFU:

Election of Council Representatives

Please mark two boxes

Name	Term	Proposer	Seconded	Vote
J Smith	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2026	Xshire RFU (CB)	ABC RFC	
F Jones	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2025	Xshire RFU (CB)	DEF RFC	
A Patel	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2027	GHI RFC	JKL RFC	
A Challenger	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2027	MNO RFC	PQR RFC	

The two candidates with the highest number of votes will be elected. If A Patel and A Challenger are the two candidates elected, the individual with the highest number of votes will serve for a three-year term, and the individual with the second highest number of votes will serve for a two-year term.



Example 4: The CB elects two Council Members, and the CB wishes to stagger the elections. Both incumbents can serve for another three-year term, but one incumbent (J Smith) has agreed only to stand for a term of one year. The CB wishes to conduct two separate processes, one election for a three-year term, and one for a shorter term. Three other candidates stand, two for a three-year term and one for a one-year term.

Xshire RFU:

Election of Council Representatives

Please mark two boxes, one in each position:

Position one: Three-year term

Name	Term	Proposer	Second	Vote
F Jones	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2027	Xshire RFU (CB)	DEF RFC	
A Patel	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2027	GHI RFC	JKL RFC	
A Challenger	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2027	MNO RFC	PQR RFC	

The candidate with the highest number of votes will be elected to serve a three-year term.

Position two: shorter term

Name	Term	Proposer	Second	Vote
J Smith	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2025	Xshire RFU (CB)	ABC RFC	
C Williams	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2025	XYZ RFC	DEF RFC	

The candidate with the highest number of votes will be elected for a one-year terms.



APPENDIX 5: EXTRACT OF RFU RULES

18. Election and Removal of Council Members

Elections - General

- 18.1 Save in the case of an election to fill a casual vacancy:
- a. the election of Representatives to the Council shall be made on or before the 31 March of the year in which each Representative is to take office; and
 - b. a Representative elected to the Council shall assume office on the 1 August immediately following their election.
- 18.2 Where a Constituent Body or National Representative Body elects a Representative (or which organises elections of a Representative on behalf of Corporate Members, as the case may be), it shall determine the length of time for which Representatives are to be elected, provided that:
- a. the term for which a Representative shall be elected shall be for three years save in exceptional circumstances (which shall include a candidate only capable of election for a shorter period of time due to an individual's term limits on the Council, or for a Constituent Body with two Representatives to ensure that those Representatives' terms do not end on the same date) provided that a Representative, when first elected, shall be elected for a term of not less than two years; and
 - b. subject to removal under these Rules, a Representative's term on the Council shall end on 31 July.
- 18.3 If a relevant body or bodies is or are unable to appoint a Representative, the relevant vacancy shall be filled in such a manner as the Legal and Governance Director shall approve.
- 18.4 In the event of any vacancy arising, the relevant body or bodies concerned shall forthwith elect another Representative to the Council within sixty days in the manner set out in this Rule 18 or in such other manner as the Legal and Governance Director shall approve. In default, the relevant vacancy shall be filled in such a manner as the Legal and Governance Director shall approve.

Elections – Geographic Constituent Bodies, certain National Constituent Bodies, the National Clubs Association and the Championship Clubs Committee

Explanatory Note: in elections for Representatives to the Council conducted by Geographic Constituent Bodies, the only rugby clubs entitled to vote are clubs which are voting members of the RFU. The following may not vote in such an election:

- a. *clubs which are members of that Geographic Constituent Body but which are not voting members of the RFU; and*
- b. *clubs which are members of that Geographic Constituent Body but which have been allocated to another Constituent Body by the RFU Council (and through that other Constituent Body they are members of the RFU).*

Note that they cannot vote in these elections even if they are able to vote on other Constituent Body matters.



- 18.5 For the purposes of Rules 18.6 to 18.12 inclusive only, references to a Geographic Constituent Body shall be deemed to include references to:
- a. the Rugby Football Referees Union (where references to Clubs shall refer to Corporate Members who are members of the Rugby Football Referees Union); and
 - b. the Championship Clubs Committee and the National Clubs Association. Notwithstanding that a Club may be permitted to vote in an election for a Representative of the Geographic Constituent Body of which it is a member, a Club which is also a member of the Championship Clubs Committee or the National Clubs Association shall also be permitted to vote in the election for such a Representative to the Council.
- 18.6 Representatives to the Council shall be elected by each Geographic Constituent Body and the Clubs allocated to it. The Geographic Constituent Body and each Club allocated to it shall each be entitled to one vote. In the case of a Geographic Constituent Body entitled to two Representatives on the Council, and where two Representatives are to be elected, the Geographic Constituent Body concerned and its Clubs shall be entitled to vote for two persons. Election shall be by a simple majority of the votes recorded.
- 18.7 All candidates for election or re-election must be proposed by one and seconded by another Club allocated to the relevant Geographic Constituent Body. The Geographic Constituent Body itself may also propose or second a candidate. In the case of a Geographic Constituent Body with two Representatives, and where two Representatives are to be elected, the Geographic Constituent Body or any Club allocated to it may propose or second two candidates. Every nomination (which shall mean both the proposal and second) must be in writing and must be received by the secretary of the Geographic Constituent Body concerned by not later than 1 March.
- 18.8 Where more candidates are nominated than the number of Representatives to the Council to which a Geographic Constituent Body and the Clubs allocated to it are entitled the names of all candidates for election shall be sent by it to its allocated Clubs not later than 15 March, and such election shall be made either at a meeting of representatives from the Clubs concerned or by a postal ballot as the committee of the Geographic Constituent Body may decide. For the avoidance of doubt, subject to Rule 18.2, each candidate need not be proposed for the same length of term. By way of example, a candidate who will have served for eight years on the Council may be proposed for a term of one year, while another candidate may be proposed for a term of three years. Where a Constituent Body with two Representatives wishes to conduct an election where the Representatives are elected for different terms to allow for staggering of terms, it shall use such process as the Legal and Governance Director shall approve.
- 18.9 Where the election is made at a meeting not less than seven days' notice shall be given to each Club concerned of the date, time and place of such meeting. The representatives of the Clubs attending such a meeting shall choose their own chairman who shall not have a second or casting vote. Subject to the provisions of this Rule 18, the procedure for and at such a meeting shall be determined by the committee of the Geographic Constituent Body concerned as it shall consider appropriate.



- 18.10 Where the election is made by postal ballot the election shall be supervised by the chairman (or the president if there is no chairman) of the Geographic Constituent Body concerned assisted by two scrutineers appointed by its committee. In this case a ballot paper shall be sent with the notification of candidates' names made in accordance with Rule 18.6. The vote of the Club having been recorded on the ballot paper it shall be signed by an officer of the Club on its behalf and sent to the secretary of the Geographic Constituent Body to arrive not later than 28 March. The ballot papers received shall then be examined by the chairman (or the president if there is no chairman) and scrutineers who shall personally certify the votes cast for each of the candidates.
- 18.11 The Chief Executive shall be informed of the results of all such elections by 1 April or such later date as specified in Rule 18.12.
- 18.12 If any election shall result in a tie, the Representative shall be appointed by the executive or management Committee (or equivalent body) of the Geographic Constituent Body, from the candidates who shall have received the equal number of votes, at a meeting or by electronic vote to be held within 14 days of the date of the declaration of the tie.

Elections – other National Constituent Bodies and National Representative Bodies

- 18.13 The Representatives to the Council for Premier Rugby Limited, the Army Rugby Union, the Royal Air Force Rugby Union, the Royal Navy Rugby Union, the SRFU, the ERFSU, the England Colleges Rugby Football Union and the Rugby Players' Association shall be elected by their respective committees.

Elections – National Members and Women and Girls' Representative

- 18.14 The National Members shall be elected by the Council against such criteria as the Council shall decide.
- 18.15 The Women and Girls' Representative shall be elected by the Council against such criteria and following such process as the Board shall decide.

Angus Bujalski, RFU Executive Director of Legal and Governance

1 December 2023