

BRANCH COMMITTEES

Introduction

The Rules of the Pony Club which can be found in the Handbook and on the website [Rulebooks | The Pony Club \(pcuk.org\)](http://Rulebooks | The Pony Club (pcuk.org)) govern the operation of both the Pony Club national committees and local Branch Committees.

In relation to Branch Committees, Rule 9.17 is the starting point. This says:

Each Branch will be managed by a Branch Committee chaired by its District Commissioner.

This Document aims to explain what is expected, with regard to the election to a Branch Committee:-

1. It is the responsibility of the Branch Committee to appoint the District Commissioner (Rule 9.17), and other Branch Committee members (Rule 9.31).
2. The existing Committee will remain in position until their terms of office end at 31st December and unless any of the posts are vacant the newly appointed candidates will take up their new roles with effect from 1st January
3. Once in post the District Commissioner and all branch officers and Committee members hold office for a fixed term of 3 years. The appointment of all members of the Branch Committee (including the District Commissioner) will therefore come to an end automatically on the third 31st December after their appointment (Rule 9.31). Therefore, after the expiry of three years anyone who wishes to continue on the Branch Committee, including the District Commissioner, must be re-elected.

The Procedure

If there are any Committee members whose three-year term is due to end on 31st December, the Branch Committee must meet in the last 3 months of the year to assess and make appointments to any vacancy on the Branch Committee (Rule 9.35).

The Management Committee is strongly of the view that any vacancies on a Branch Committee (including for the District Commissioner) should be notified to all Branch parents and/or members (if over 18) via an email, by putting the details on the Branch website and the Facebook page or a combination of these. This notification should explain which positions will become vacant and invite individuals to apply.

It is suggested that this be done any time from September onwards, setting out who is standing down and setting out the position(s) available, with a suitable cut-off date to permit the Branch Committee to meet and appoint any new Committee members by 31st December.

The Management Committee commends the following as 'good practice' and encourages Branch Committees to adopt this process. At the Branch Committee meeting, anyone put forward should be proposed and seconded by someone on the Committee. If there is more than one candidate for a position the Committee should vote by secret ballot. A candidate must obtain a majority of the votes cast to be elected. If none of the candidates receives such a majority, with the candidate with the least number of votes will be eliminated and the Committee will vote again. This process continues until such time as a candidate obtains a majority of the votes cast.

The person appointed, the proposer and seconder should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Whilst it remains a decision for the Branch Committee as to who to appoint, the practice of simply re-electing the current Committee en bloc for a further term of office is not considered to be in the best interests of The Pony Club. Regular refreshing of the membership of the Branch Committee will ensure new ideas are given proper consideration.

Although the rules do not give members' parents any direct say in the appointment of the District Commissioner or any other member of the Committee, the Committee is required to hold an annual Parents Meeting and must give due regard to any views expressed at that meeting.

28th February 2023