

Developing the Voluntary Party

62% Proposal 5

Proposal 5

To provide the professional support needed

No Voluntary Organisation can thrive without professional guidance and support. A step jump in performance demands a significant reallocation of resources within Headquarters.

This paper proposes a new partnership with the professional campaigners and the creation of a Voluntary Party Office to build a large outward-looking Voluntary Party. At its heart would be a Senior Professional who will lead the programme to grow and develop an outward-looking voluntary organisation. A field force of campaigners would report to this senior professional.

The Campaign Centres need to be retained and new ones developed.

This professional team will need to work in partnership with senior volunteers throughout the country. This senior professional should work particularly closely with the Chairman of the National Convention to lead the programme of change that is needed. All staff should continue to report directly through their line management to the Chief Executive as currently. However, the Senior Professional should also report to the Chairman of the National Convention on a dotted line basis. Similarly Field Directors should also work closely with their allocated Regional Chairman.

This represents a new alignment in the **field force structure** based on senior volunteers and professionals working together to deliver a growing and more dynamic volunteer organisation, ultimately under the responsibility and direction of the Party Board.

In addition, the volunteer organisation in the country needs a new level of professional support **from the Centre** to focus on the most important objectives and to drive meaningful change. In practical terms, this requires professional support to lead national projects on best practice, recruitment, social and political action teams and fundraising.

 *read more on proposal 5*

1. **Best practice.** Performance will improve when volunteers in positions of authority know what is expected of them and when they have a common set of roles and responsibilities, and a common approach to setting objectives. Measuring performance and supplying management information is critical. A team of volunteers led by a professional and working closely with the Field Force can deliver this.

1. **Recruitment.** A very large number of people are willing to help our Party in one way or another. Many support our campaigns, many are known to Parliamentarians or Councillors. However, we do not currently always capture their contact details or persuade them to join us. This requires a focussed and joined up effort. A team of volunteers led by a professional is required to develop a database of volunteers from a wide range of sources and to upsell various levels of participation including membership. This will include supplying the advice, tools and motivation for Local Associations to communicate effectively with potential supporters and manage their membership.

1. **Social and Political Action Team.** Currently the content for the Policy Forum discussions and the ideas for Social Action Projects are initiated in headquarters but do not engage Associations. This Professional support should be transferred to the office of the Voluntary Party to initiate ideas and promote best practice and manage communications with the new Social Action and Policy Forum Teams throughout the country.

1. **Fundraising Team.** Currently headquarters only breaks out the budget for the Northern Regions. Professional support is required to ensure financial transparency and accountability through regional budgets and to work with the volunteers on the Association Board of Finance, to motivate and support local fundraising, and to support the financial value that can be delivered by 'additionality'.

This proposal does not assume any increase in costs – it does assume that staff and associated costs are reassigned to the Voluntary Party Office.

This is a serious financial commitment, but it is made with existing resources.

There is one proposal that is incremental, the creation of a **‘Campaign Action Fund’**. This will operate on the same lines as the incremental funds distributed to target seats who produce a credible plan – and ensures that the money is well spent. These funds might be used as pump priming to facilitate a reorganisation, to find new supporters, to start a branch or to mount a recruitment campaign. Importantly any plans would be initiated locally. The Campaign Action Fund is to help regenerate the Voluntary Party and funds will be generated by volunteers working closely with the Party Treasurers.

Your View On Proposal 5 *



I am in favour



I am neutral



I am against

Your Comments On Proposal 5