

FACT SHEET 3 – AN EXAMPLE CONSTITUTION

This is a basic guideline constitution which can be adapted to suit the needs of your group. The different sections need to be included but what goes in there is down to the discretion of your group.

CONSTITUTION OF

- 1. Name**

The name of the Organisation shall be (hereinafter called 'the organisation').

- 2. Aims**

The aims of the Organisation are to:

 - a) *eg advance education to ... to relieve their poverty and disadvantage ... to promote any other charitable purpose for the benefit in the Poole area.*
 - b)

- 3. Membership**
 - a) Membership shall be open to anyone who supports the aims of the organisation, subject to agreement by the management committee.
 - b) Every member shall have one vote.
 - c) Members must actively seek to represent the various needs of the area, and must not discriminate on the grounds of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin or because of their gender, disability or health (including HIV+ status), sensory or speech impairment, age, sexual orientation, religion, political party or marital status.

- 4. Finance**

All financial business must be carried out constitutionally.

 - a) All money raised by or on behalf of the Organisation is to be used only to further the aims of the Organisation.
 - b) The Treasurer shall open a bank account in the name of the Organisation.
 - c) Cheque signatories will be nominated by the Committee (one to be the Treasurer).
 - d) All cheques and instructions to the Organisation bankers shall require two of the agreed signatures.
 - e) The Treasurer shall have the accounts checked annually by an independent auditor.
 - f) The Organisation will not lend money to members.

5. The Committee

This is the body that manages the day to day affairs of your group, and is elected by the members of the Organisation. It is responsible to the membership.

- a) The Committee shall be elected to carry out the business of the Organisation.
- b) The Committee shall be made up of a Secretary, Chairperson, Treasurer and general members.
- c) The Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting.
- d) Officers shall carry out the duties given to them by General Meetings.
- e) The Committee shall meet no less than ? times a year.
- f) Minutes of the Committee meetings shall be available to all members.
- g) The Committee may introduce or appoint new members as required.
- h) No two members from the same household shall be Officers of the Committee.

6. Annual General Meeting

This is the meeting where the Committee reports on the activities of the previous year, then resigns. The new Committee is then elected.

- a) There shall be an Annual General Meeting held every 12 months at which the Committee reports on its work, presents a statement of accounts, then resigns.
- b) The AGM shall elect a new Committee, vote on recommendations and any amendments to the constitution.
- c) The Secretary will notify all members of the date of the meeting not less than fourteen days before the AGM.

7. Other General Meetings

- a) A special or extraordinary general meeting open to all members will be held if ?? or more members submit in writing a request for such a meeting to the Secretary. The Secretary shall arrange for the meeting to take place within fourteen days.
- b) The Secretary will publicise all general meetings at least five days in advance.

8. Quorum

This means the number of members required for the meeting to go ahead and make decisions.

- a) No general meeting or annual general meeting shall take place if less than ?? members are present.

- b) No committee meeting shall take place if less than half of the committee are present.

9. Changes to the Constitution

- a) The constitution can only be altered at an AGM.
- b) Any suggested changes to the constitution must be handed to the Secretary fourteen days before the AGM.
- c) Changes to the constitution must be agreed by a simple majority of the members present at the meeting.
- d) The Chair shall have the casting vote, should the original vote be tied.
- e) None of the aims of the organisation listed in section two may be deleted.

10. Dissolution

The organisation may only be dissolved at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose and must be advertised fourteen days before the meeting.

- a) A proposal to dissolve the organisation shall only be accepted only if signed by two thirds of the members. The decision shall be agreed by a simple majority of eligible voters present.
- b) Funds and possessions will be disposed of by a gift for charitable purposes in the area or to a charity having substantially similar objects to the organisation and in each case as agreed by a simple majority of the members present in person or by proxy at the meeting.
- c) No members of the organisation shall receive any benefit either in cash or in kind from any disposal of the organisation's assets.

11. Standing Orders

Members shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a reasonable manner at meetings or in the premises used by the organisation, and be excluded if they contravene the objectives of the organisation. This will be done by a majority of those present and voting at any committee or general meeting.

- a) Any members may make a proposal. In order for it to be voted on by other members it must be seconded (or supported) by someone else.
- b) Only members present at the meeting may vote.
- c) The only exception to the above rule will be that members whose disabilities or medical condition make it impossible to attend a meeting. In these circumstances such members may empower the chairperson or secretary to vote on their behalf.
- d) Before voting any member may propose an amendment which must also be seconded.

e) The chairperson shall have the casting vote when there is equal voting.

This constitution was adopted by the on

Signed Full name

Signed Full name

Signed Full name

Signed Full name

For and on behalf of

If you would like more information and assistance, please contact the Community Development Team on 01202 633430 or 01202 633045.

Email: community.development@poole.gov.uk

Fax: 01202 633824

Write to: Housing and Community Services, Borough of Poole, Civic Centre, Poole, Dorset, BH15 2RU