

CONSTITUTION OF THE LEWISHAM PENSIONERS' FORUM

1. NAME:

The name of the organisation is the LEWISHAM PENSIONERS' FORUM hereinafter called the Forum.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The Forum is established to:

- (a) Promote the welfare of people over retirement age and people who have retired early because of sickness or unemployment ("retired people") who live within or visit the London Borough of Lewisham ("the Borough")
- (b) Provide facilities and opportunities in the Borough for retired people to meet, discuss matters of common interest and undertake action to advance their well being, ensuring that so far as is reasonable all such facilities and opportunities are open to all retired people irrespective of matters referred to in sub-clause (d)(1) below, reflecting the cultural and ethnic diversity of the Borough.
- (c) Disseminate information on and seek support for campaigns in the interests of retired people in the Borough, London or nationwide.
- (d) In furtherance of the said objectives, the Forum shall:
 - (1) Proactively engage with retired people in the Borough whatever their age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnic origin, culture, religion, means, background or abilities.
 - (2) Work with other groups and organisations in the Borough having similar objectives, especially those serving or working with individuals who may suffer discrimination for any reason.
- (e) In furtherance of the said objectives, the Forum may:-
 - (1) Employ and pay any person or persons to supervise, organise and carry on the work of the Forum and make reasonable provision for the payment of pensions.
 - (2) Establish where necessary local sub-groups.
 - (3) Bring together in conference and otherwise representatives of voluntary organisations, local and national government departments, statutory authorities and individuals.
 - (4) Promote and carry out or assist in promoting and carrying out research, surveys and investigations and publish the results thereof.
 - (5) Arrange and provide for or join in arranging and providing for the holding of exhibitions, meetings, lectures, classes, seminars and training courses.

- (6) Collect and disseminate information on all matters relating to the said objectives and exchange such information with other bodies having similar objectives.
- (7) Undertake, execute, manage or assist any charitable trusts which may lawfully be undertaken, executed, managed or assisted by the Forum.
- (8) Cause to be written and printed or otherwise reproduced and circulated (in hard copy or electronically) e-mails, newsletters, or other documents or recordings .
- (9) Purchase, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any property or other rights or assets and construct, maintain and alter any buildings or erections necessary for the work of the Forum.
- (10) Make regulations for any property, rights or assets which may be so acquired.
- (11) Sell, let, mortgage, dispose of or turn to account all or any of the property, rights or assets of the Forum.
- (12) Borrow or raise money and accept gifts on such terms and on such security as shall be deemed to be necessary.
- (13) Raise funds and invite and receive grants and contributions
- (14) Invest moneys not immediately required for the said objectives in such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit.
- (15) Provide indemnity insurance to cover the liability of the Management Committee members which by virtue of any rule of law would otherwise attach to them in respect of any negligence, default, breach of trust or breach of duty of which they may be guilty in relating to the Forum PROVIDED THAT any such insurance shall not extend to any claim arising from any act or omission which the Management Committee members knew to be a breach of trust or breach of duty or which was committed by them in reckless disregard to whether it was a breach of trust or breach of duty or not
- (16) Do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said objectives.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- (a) Membership of the Forum shall be open too
 - (1) retired people resident in or regularly visiting the Borough who are interested in supporting the objectives or furthering the work of the Forum.

- (2) Groups of or organisations working with retired people in the Borough which for the purposes of Clauses 4 and 7 may appoint an individual to be a representative member.
- (b) The Management Committee shall have the right
- (1) to reject an application for membership, and
 - (2) for good and sufficient reason to terminate the membership of any individual or organisation

PROVIDED THAT the individual concerned or an individual representing the group or organisation shall have the right to be heard by the said Management Committee before a final decision is made.

4. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- (a) The policy and general management of the affairs of the Forum shall be directed by a Management Committee (“the Committee”) which shall meet not less than nine times a year and shall consist of
- (1) not less than twelve or more than twenty elected members
 - (2) one or two elected Councillors (who are members of the Forum) delegated by Lewisham Council to the Committee as appointed members (such appointed member(s) being entitled to vote)
 - (3) in addition to the elected or appointed members up to five further co-opted members being members of the Forum (whether individual or representative of a member group or organisation or a combination of both) who shall serve until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting after co-option (not being entitled to vote) PROVIDED THAT the number of co-opted members shall not exceed one-third of the total membership of the Committee at the time of co-option.
- (b) The elected members of the Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting in accordance with Clause 7 hereof.
- (c) Any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the Committee and who does not give the Committee a reasonable explanation for their absence, shall cease to be a member of the Committee.
- (d) The Forum may (at an Extraordinary General Meeting called on 10 days clear notice for the purpose) elect a member of the Forum to fill any casual vacancy in the Committee and any person so elected shall be a member of the Committee with full voting rights until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting and shall be eligible for re-election at that meeting.

- (e) The proceedings of the Committee shall not be invalidated by any failure to elect or any defect in the election, appointment, co-option or qualification of any member.
- (f) The Committee may appoint such special or standing committees as may be deemed necessary by the Committee and shall determine their terms of reference, powers, duration and composition. All acts and proceedings of such special or standing committees shall be reported back to the Committee as soon as possible.

5. HONORARY OFFICERS

- (a) In the first or second meeting of the Committee following the Annual General Meeting, the Committee shall appoint from their number a Chair, two Vice-Chairs, a Treasurer, a Secretary and/or such other Honorary Officers of the Forum as the Committee shall from time to time decide.
- (b) If a serving Honorary Officer has not stood for re-election to the Committee or has not been re-elected the Committee shall appoint from their number a member to fill that vacant post immediately after the Annual General Meeting.
- (c) To be eligible for appointment as an Honorary Officer a person must have been a co-opted or elected member of the Committee for at least one year PROVIDED THAT this requirement may be waived if such waiver is authorised by a two thirds majority of members of the Committee present and voting on the issue.
- (d) The Chair and the Honorary Officers of the Forum shall hold office until the conclusion of the second meeting of the Committee after the Annual General Meeting after their appointment, or their replacement or re-appointment (whichever is the sooner) but shall be eligible for re-appointment.
- (e) Should the Chair cease to be able to carry out his or her duties at any time one of the Vice-Chairs shall be appointed by the Committee to take on that role. Any other casual vacancy among Honorary Officers arising during the year shall be filled by appointment by the Committee, subject to the requirements of Clause 5(c) above.
- (f) The Chair and the Honorary Officers shall be ex officio members of any special or standing committees established under Clause 4(i).

6. REPRESENTATION ON COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEES

The Committee shall appoint representatives of the Forum to serve on committees, sub-committees, or working parties of Lewisham Council, as appropriate where the Forum has been invited to appoint such representatives.

7. NOMINATIONS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- (a) Only persons who have been members of the Forum for at least one year whether individual or appointed representatives of a group or organisation shall be eligible to serve as members of the Committee.
- (b) Nominations to serve on the Committee must be made by two members of the Forum in writing and bear the signature of the nominee indicating a willingness to serve and should be in hands of the Secretary at least twenty eight days before the Annual General Meeting.
- (c) Should there be insufficient nominations to fill all vacancies on the Committee by the date of the Annual General Meeting further nominations may be called for at that meeting.
- (d) Should nominations exceed vacancies, elections shall be by ballot to be conducted as directed by the Chair of the Meeting..

8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE FORUM

- (a) Once in each calendar year an Annual General Meeting of the Forum shall be held at such time (not being more than 15 months after the holding of the preceding Annual General Meeting) and place as the Committee shall determine.
- (b) At least 21 clear days notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given in writing by the Secretary to each member.
- (c) At such Annual General Meeting, the business shall include:
 - (1) the election of members to serve on the Committee;
 - (2) the appointment of an individual or partnership or company appropriately qualified to review or audit the accounts as required.
 - (3) the consideration of an annual report of the work done by or under the auspices of the Committee and of the accounts (reviewed or audited as appropriate); and
 - (4) the transaction of such other matters as may from time to time be necessary.

9. RULES OF PROCEDURE AT ALL MEETINGS

- (a) Quorum The quorum at a meeting of the Forum shall be twenty. The quorum for meetings of the Committee or any committee appointed under Clause 4(f) hereof shall be one-third of the membership of the Committee or committee (as the case may be) or such other number as the Forum may in General Meeting from time to time determine.

- (b) Voting Save as otherwise specified, all questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote. No person shall exercise more than one vote, but in cases of an equality of votes the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
- (c) Minutes Minute books shall be kept by the Committee and all special or standing committees, and a record kept of all proceedings and resolutions.
- (d) Chair Meetings shall be chaired by the Chair for the time being of the Forum or by such other person appointed for the occasion by the Committee or by one of the Vice-chairs or by any member of the Committee nominated by the meeting in question.

10. FINANCE

- (a) All moneys raised by or on behalf of the Forum shall be applied to further the objectives of the Forum and for no other purpose PROVIDED THAT nothing herein contained shall prevent the payment in good faith of reasonable and proper remuneration to any employee of the Forum or the repayment to members of the Committee or of any committee appointed under Clause 4(f) hereof of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.
- (b) The Honorary Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the Forum.
- (c) Accounts shall be reviewed or audited as appropriate at least once a year by the individual or partnership or company nominated by the Committee and appointed at the Annual General Meeting.
- (d) An statement of the accounts so reviewed or audited for the last financial year shall be submitted by the Committee to the Annual General Meeting as aforesaid.
- (e) A bank account shall be kept in the name of the Forum with Co-operative Bank PLC, of Lewisham High Street, London SE13, or with such other bank as the Committee shall from time to time decide. The Committee shall authorise in writing the Treasurer, the Secretary and two members of the Committee to sign cheques on behalf of the Forum. All bank and payment instructions (including but not limited to cheques) must be signed by not less than two out of the four authorised signatories.

11. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Any alteration of this Constitution shall require approval of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Forum, present and voting at a meeting specially called for the purpose PROVIDED THAT notice of any such alteration shall have been received by

the Secretary in writing not less than 21 clear days before the meeting at which the alteration is to be proposed. At least 14 clear days' notice in writing of such a meeting, setting forth the terms of the alterations, shall be sent by the Secretary to each member of the Forum.

12. DISSOLUTION

- (a) If the Committee by a simple majority decide at any time that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Forum, it shall call a meeting at a customary time and place of all members of the Forum ("the Dissolution Meeting"), giving not less than 21 days' notice and stating the terms of the resolution for dissolution to be proposed..
- (b) If such resolution shall be approved by a simple majority of the members of the Forum present and voting at the Dissolution Meeting the Committee shall, subject to sub-clauses 12(b)(1) and 12(b)(2) below, have the power to dispose of any cash and tangible assets held by or on behalf of the Forum.
 - (1) Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other institutions having objects similar to the objectives of the Forum as the Committee may determine within parameters agreed by simple majority at the Dissolution Meeting.
 - (2) If it has not been possible for the Dissolution Meeting to determine agreed parameters under sub-clause (1) the remaining assets shall be disposed of at the direction of the relevant committee or officers of the London Borough of Lewisham.
- (c) On dissolution of the Forum all copies of the database of members and any personal data held on them shall be deleted and all hard paper copies of this data shall be destroyed.
- (d) If such resolution for dissolution is not approved by the Dissolution Meeting in accordance with sub-clause (b):
 - (1) the Committee shall be deemed to have resigned *en bloc* but shall be eligible for re-election at the Dissolution Meeting, together with any nominations from the floor;
 - (2) the Chair for the further conduct of the Dissolution Meeting shall be appointed by the Dissolution Meeting, the person with the greatest number of votes (even if not a majority) being appointed Chair; and
 - (3) the Dissolution Meeting shall elect a new Committee in accordance with Clause 7 hereof (save that there shall be no restriction on the number of nominations taken from the floor).

13. NOTICES

Any notice may be served by the Secretary on any member either personally or on its appointed representative as the case may be, or by sending it through the post in a prepaid letter addressed to such member at his, her or its last known address in the United Kingdom, and any letter so sent shall be deemed to have been received within five days of posting.

14. INTERPRETATION

For the interpretation of this Constitution, the Interpretation Act 1978, shall apply as it applies to the interpretation of an Act of Parliament.