

# Limehouse Community Forum Constitution

## 1. Name, Coverage and Meanings

The name of the association shall be the "Limehouse Community Forum" (described below as the Forum or LCF). The LCF is composed of Associate Members, Members and Executive Members.

"Limehouse": means the Ward of Limehouse as of January 1st 2019, within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, plus such additional area(s) as may be agreed by the members of the Executive from time to time.

"Constitution": means the rules of the Forum as set out herein and as amended from time to time in accordance with paragraph 10 below.

"Membership": means anyone who (a.) lives, (b.) works or (c.) carries out a business in, or is (d.) an elected London Borough Council member within the neighbourhood area and over the age of 18 years old. Membership is open to (e.) constituted voluntary and community groups which operate in the neighbourhood area. Voluntary and community groups may nominate up to two people in their membership registration but they may only exercise one voting right at meetings. Membership shall be drawn from different places in the neighbourhood area and different sections of the community.

a) Membership is open to the above and the Executive shall have the power to accept members.

b) The Executive may refuse membership or may terminate or suspend the membership of any member by resolution at an Executive meeting where it is considered membership would be detrimental to the objectives and activities of the LCF.

c) The LCF shall have a minimum of 21 (twenty-one) members. The Secretary shall maintain a register of members at all times and abide by all General Data Protection Regulations.

"Member": means a person who has applied for and is on the register of members. Members are voting members and additionally are able to comment on matters of principle to the LCF as deemed as such by the Chair or as otherwise stated in this constitution. Three Members acting together may petition to discuss matters at General Meetings. Members may take part in discussions.

"Associate Member": means any (a.) individual person, (b.) business or on occasion a (c.) group, connected to or carrying on activities in Limehouse who have registered with the LCF, and have not met the criteria of Membership. Associate Members will receive communications from the LCF and be invited to General Meetings and take part in discussions. Associate Members are not able to vote on matters of principle to the LCF, unless deemed as such by the Chair in consultation with the Executive, or as otherwise stated in the Constitution. The register of Associate Members shall be reviewed from time to time and dormant names shall be removed from the list.

"Executive Member": means a member who has been elected or appointed to act as an Officer, or a Leader of an authorised or adopted Working Party, or both.

“Executive”: means the collective of Executive Members.

“Working Party”: A (a.) group, (b.) panel or (c.) organisation which has been authorised, formed or adopted formally by the Executive to carry out functions as set down in specific Terms of Reference. Each Working Party shall have a Leader who shall report the activities of the Working Party to the Executive, as required by the Chair, and in due course to the Forum. Matters of organisation, funding, press releases and other concerns will be decided by agreement between the Working Party Leader and the Executive. Working Parties may be formed, enhanced and disbanded at the discretion of the Executive.

## **2. Objectives**

The objectives of the Forum are:

- (a) To further the interests of its members collectively; those of Limehouse as a whole; protecting and promoting Limehouse and to use all reasonable and necessary actions to achieve this purpose.
- (b) To endeavour to maintain and improve Limehouse as a place in which to live, work or visit and to enjoy.
- (c) To represent the views of the Forum to Statutory bodies and others as needed or required.
- (d) To hold regular meetings for members of the Forum at which matters of interest to members and to Limehouse shall be discussed.
- (e) To host events within the Ward to promote community cohesion.

## **3. Constitution**

3.1 The Forum is unincorporated, but may at the unanimous decision of the Executive form or take on another identity.

## **4. Officers**

4.1 The Forum shall have the following Officers:

Chair  
Vice-Chair(s)  
Treasurer  
Secretary  
Digital Secretary

4.2 The position of Chair shall be decided by the Members annually, and shall be decided at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Nominations for Chair and self nominations for Chair shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary 21 days prior to the AGM. The nominee must have served as a member of the Executive for at least one year prior to a nomination. At the election for Chair, the Executive shall determine the election procedure.

4.3 The position(s) of the Vice-Chair(s) shall be by nomination of the Chair. The number of Vice Chairs shall be decided by need, ability and the requirements of the Chair.

4.4 Appointment to the positions of Treasurer and Secretary, Digital Secretary and any other Officers deemed necessary by the Executive shall be agreed by a simple majority vote of Members at the AGM following the election or appointment of the Chair. Appointees are required to have specific skill sets which are role appropriate.

4.5 Officers shall normally hold their positions until the next AGM, unless they resign, are removed or are replaced by the decision of a 2/3rd majority of the Executive. No person may hold more than one LCF office at any time, without the expressed permission of the Chair.

4.6 In the event that an elected or appointed Officer raises a written motion of "No Confidence" in another Officer, and that motion is seconded by another elected or appointed Officer, the Chair will be required to poll the Executive on the matter of the removal of the nominated Officer. If a qualified majority of 2/3rd of the Executive returns a vote of "No Confidence" the nominated Officer shall be removed from Office immediately. The Chair in partnership with the Executive shall make an appointment to complete the term of Office as soon as is practicable. In the event the Chair is nominated for removal the process shall be administered by a Vice Chair Office holder.

4.7 The Chair may only nominate or appoint a person to an Office if they have been a Member or Associate Member for at least six months. If the appointee or nominee has not been a Member for more than six months the Chair must seek the expressed approval of the Executive. Mid-term vacancy of any office will be filled by appointment from the Executive.

4.8 The arrangements in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.7 (inclusive) shall be modified as deemed necessary in practice and as agreed from time to time by a majority vote of the Executive. The Executive shall be free to determine a democratic and transparent procedure for any election.

4.9 The role of the Chair shall be to call and set the agenda for meetings, in consultation with the Executive and Members; to help facilitate discussion amongst the group and where possible reach decisions by consensus, or otherwise requesting a show of hands or written vote; where appropriate and agreed, to represent the views of members publicly in the press and with the public or other bodies etc; to act in the best interests of the LCF, its members and Limehouse as a whole.

4.10 The role of Vice-Chair(s) shall be to support the Chair in the performance of the above and to act as Chair in the absence of the official incumbent.

4.11 The role of Treasurer shall be to keep safe and record all expenditures and incomes of the Forum and any active Working Parties, and to report to the Forum any deviations to standard accounting practices.

4.12 The role of the Secretary is to distribute the meeting agenda, take minutes and notes when necessary and inform the Executive of correspondence and messages received.

4.13 The role of the Digital Secretary is to maintain the website and database or records of

Members, Associate Members, and Statutory Bodies; monitor any social media and publish notices, notifications and announcements, which would be of relevance as directed by the Executive; at all times complying with the General Data Protections Regulations,

4.14 The role of all Members, the Chair, and the Executive shall be to identify the issues for discussion and bring them to the attention of the Forum.

4.15 The Officers working together shall be entitled to appoint, form and/or adopt Working Parties, setting out Terms of Reference, regulating and leadership. Leaders of Working Parties and the Working Parties themselves shall serve the Forum at the discretion of the Executive.

4.16 The address for the Forum shall be the address of the Secretary from time to time or as so decided by the majority of the Executive.

## **5. Fees**

The Forum reserves the right to charge, or not charge, an annual fee to Associate Members and/or Members, to cover the costs of running the Forum and/or to provide funding for local initiatives. This topic, and the amount of any such fee, shall be considered year on year at the AGM. The Executive may, at its discretion, waive any individual fee if circumstances dictate; under no circumstances shall any fee be set at a level which restricts membership.

## **6. Annual General Meeting**

6.1 An Annual General Meeting (AMG), normally to be held in January, shall be held at least once every year or as directed by the Officers, on such a day as the Officers may appoint. The business to be conducted at the AMG shall be as directed by the Officers, together with any resolution of which notice in writing to the Secretary has been given not less than 7 days before the meeting. Any other matters may, at the discretion of the Chair, be raised without notice, for the purposes of discussion only.

6.2 The Secretary shall give not less than 21 days written notice including by email, where possible, of the date, time and place of the Annual General Meeting.

## **7 Meetings**

7.1 Meetings will be held at such intervals as the Officers decide and at such locations and times as the Officers decide. At least a week's prior notice of a meeting will normally be given to Members and Associate Members by email, unless pressing circumstances require a shorter period of notice. Where possible members will aim to take decisions on matters relating to the Forum by consensus but where this is not possible, decisions will be passed by a simple majority on a show of hands of Members who are entitled and authorised to vote in accordance with the constitution as their member status allows and who are present at the relevant meeting. Each such authorised Member will have one vote each. The Chair (or in their absence, the Vice-Chair or otherwise acting Chair as agreed by the Chair) may cast a vote in the event of a deadlock. However the Chair may choose not to vote and the matter can be left unresolved. Decisions may, at the discretion of the Chair and in accordance with direction, alternatively be taken by email or post by a simple majority of Members polled. In the event of a matter deemed of "great importance" to the community, at the

discretion of the Chair, upon consultation with the Executive, the Chair may choose to allow a poll of Associate Members, residents of Limehouse, or such grouping as is deemed necessary.

7.2 Where a decision has been passed under paragraph 7.1 the Chair will take advice and proceed on the matter as directed by the Executive. This action may be the drafting of a resolution, the drafting of a formal letter, the formation of a Working Party, further investigation, delegation or any other action. Once a decision is made under Paragraph 7.1 no Member may dissent publicly from the decision taken. This in no way prohibits a Member from requesting the reconsideration of the matter at a subsequent meeting or resigning from the Forum.

7.3 The business to be conducted at any meeting shall be such as shall be directed by the Chair. Additional items may be added to the agenda upon request by any member, supported by two other members provided prior notice of the item is provided to the Secretary not less than 10 days before the meeting, unless otherwise agreed by the Chair.

7.4 If a Member cannot attend a meeting at which a matter is to be considered, the Chair, at their discretion may authorise a replacement to attend and vote on the Members behalf, provided written authorisation is received and accepted by the Secretary 48 hours prior to the meeting. Proxy voting on any matter, including for an election, is at the discretion of the Executive, who will determine the procedure, if any.

7.5 The Secretary shall give to each Member not less than 10 (ten) days written notice, where possible, of any General Meeting, specifying the date, time and place of the meeting, and the business to be transacted.

7.6 An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) shall be held if convened by the Executive, or if requisitioned to the Secretary by 10 (ten) voting members of the Forum.

7.7 Minutes shall be kept by the Secretary or in their absence by someone deputised to take a note of the proceedings of all meetings.

## **8. Finance**

8.1 The Forum shall have the power to raise money for the purposes of the Forum. The Executive shall maintain an account at a bank and/or a building society to be selected from time to time by the Executive, into which all receipts of the Forum shall be paid with a mandate for withdrawal, including not less than 2 signatories. Money for the time being not required for the purposes of the Forum, may be placed on deposit account, or invested in any other manner approved by the Executive. The Treasurer shall be responsible (under the supervision of the Executive) for the management of the finances of the Forum, although other Officers may also be signatories of such bank accounts as agreed by the Executive from time to time. The Treasurer shall cause accounts to be prepared in respect of each year, and laid before the Annual General Meeting..

8.2 The Executive shall have the sole management of the incomes, funds and property of the Forum. It shall be entitled to apply for such funding and receive donations and sponsorship of any nature from third parties as it considers appropriate or may delegate this authority. It will be entitled to provide such funding to initiatives benefiting all or some of the Limehouse residents.

8.3 No contracts or other financial liabilities may be entered into / incurred on behalf of the Forum unless authorised by the Executive.

8.4 The financial year for the Forum shall be 1st January to 31st December.

## **9. Amendments**

This Constitution may be altered by a resolution passed at a General Meeting supported on a show of hands by at least 2/3rd of Members who as their status allows and who are present and voting at the relevant meeting. Notice of such a resolution shall be given to the Secretary not less than 21 (twenty-one) days before the Meeting, and the Secretary shall give to each member of the Forum, not less than 21 days written notice of such a resolution.

## **10. Media Relations**

No Member or Associate Member shall make any statement on behalf of the Forum and/or its Working Parties and its members, whether publicly or privately, without prior agreement of the Chair or the Executive as appropriate. Representations on behalf of the Forum or its Working Parties must be authorised and or signed (as appropriate) by a member of the Executive. Failing to sanction comments or corresponding illegitimately under the name of the Forum or its Working Parties may result in loss of Membership.

## **11. Working Parties**

11.1 Members may from time to time suggest Working Parties to be formed by the Chair with the permission of the Executive to investigate and/or report on matters of interest to the Forum. These Working Parties may vary in size, duration and make-up as needs and resources dictate.

11.2 Leadership of all Working Parties will be by agreement and consent from the Chair in partnership with the Executive. Working Parties shall have a degree of autonomy, while still abiding by this Constitution and Terms of Reference and should normally meet outside of any General Meetings in a less formal setting to conduct their business, but are at all times remain answerable to the Executive.

11.3 Working Parties will be required to report at all General Meetings.