

# WATFORD AND THREE RIVERS REFUGEE PARTNERSHIP

## CONSTITUTION

**A. Name:** The name of the group is Watford and Three Rivers Refugee Partnership (hereafter referred to as the Partnership)

**B. Administration:** Subject to the matters set out below, the Partnership and its property shall be administered and managed in accordance with this constitution by the members of the Executive Committee, constituted by clause G of this constitution.

**C. Aims:** The Partnership is a non-political, voluntary organisation. It is established for the benefit of refugees and asylum seekers in and around the Borough of Watford and the Three Rivers District, to assist in the relief of poverty, hardship or distress.

**D. Objectives:** To support and assist refugees and asylum seekers in all appropriate ways and to raise awareness of their needs in the wider community. The Partnership will seek to supplement the work already being carried out by official and non-statutory organisations in Hertfordshire.

**E. Powers:** In furtherance of its aims, but not otherwise, the Executive Committee may exercise the following powers:

- (i) power to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions, provided that, in raising funds, the Executive Committee shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities and shall conform to any relevant requirements of the law;
- (ii) power to buy, take on lease or in exchange any property necessary for the achievement of the aims and to maintain and equip it for use;
- (iii) power, subject to any consents required by law, to sell lease or dispose of all or any part of the property of the Partnership;
- (iv) power, subject to any consents required by law, to borrow money and to charge all or any part of the property of the Partnership with repayment of the money so borrowed;
- (v) power to employ such staff (who shall not be members of the Executive Committee) as are necessary for the proper pursuit of the aims and to make all reasonable and necessary provision for the payment of pensions and superannuation for staff and their dependants;
- (vi) power to co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities operating in furtherance of the aims or of similar charitable purposes and to exchange information and advice with them;
- (vii) power to establish or support any charitable trusts, associations or institutions formed for all or any of the aims;
- (viii) power to appoint and constitute such advisory committees as the Executive Committee may think fit;
- (ix) power to appoint Trustees of the Partnership, normally from within the Executive Committee;
- (x) power to do all such other things as are necessary for the achievement of the aims.

### **F Membership**

1. Membership of the Partnership shall be open to any person over the age of 18 interested in furthering the aims and who has paid the annual subscription, if any, laid down from time to time by the Executive Committee and

2. any body, corporate or unincorporated association which is interested in furthering the Partnership's work and has paid the annual subscription, if any, (any such body being called in this constitution a "member organisation").
3. Each member organisation shall appoint an individual to represent it and to vote on its behalf at meetings of the Partnership and may appoint an alternate to replace its appointed representative at any meeting of the Partnership if the appointed representative is unable to attend.
4. Each member organisation shall notify the name of the representative appointed by it and of any alternate to the secretary. If the representative or alternate resigns from or otherwise leaves the member organisation, (s)he shall forthwith cease to be the representative of the member organisation.
5. Every member shall have one vote.
6. The Executive Committee may by unanimous vote and for good reason terminate the membership of any individual or member organisation, provided that the individual concerned or the appointed representative of the member organisation concerned shall have the right, accompanied by a friend, to be heard by the Executive Committee before a final decision is made.

**G. Honorary Officers** At the Annual General Meeting of the Partnership the members shall elect from among themselves a chair, secretary and treasurer who shall hold office from the conclusion of that meeting.

**H. Executive Committee.**

1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the honorary officers specified in the preceding clause and up to nine other members who shall hold office from the conclusion of that meeting.
2. The Executive Committee may in addition appoint co-opted members but no-one may be appointed as a co-opted member if, as a result, more than one third of the Executive Committee would be co-opted members.
3. The Executive Committee may in addition appoint representatives from the various ethnic or language groups figuring among the refugees and asylum seekers.
4. All the members of the Executive Committee shall retire from office together at the end of the annual general meeting next after the date on which they came into office but they may be re-elected or re-appointed.

**I. Executive Committee members not to be personally interested.**

No member of the Executive Committee shall acquire any interest in property belonging to the Partnership (otherwise than as a trustee for the Partnership) or receive remuneration or be interested (otherwise than as a member of the Executive Committee) in any contract entered into by the Executive Committee.

**J. Meetings and proceedings of the Executive Committee**

1. The Executive Committee shall hold at least two ordinary meetings each year. A special meeting may be called at any time by the chair or by any two members of the Executive Committee upon not less than 4 days' notice being given to the other members of the Executive Committee.
2. The chair shall chair meetings of the Executive Committee. If the chair is absent, the members present shall choose one of their number to chair the meeting before any other business is transacted.
3. There shall be a quorum when at least three members or one third of members of the Executive Committee, whichever is the greater, are present at a meeting.

4. Every matter shall be determined by a majority of votes of the members of the Executive Committee present, but in the case of equality of votes the chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
5. The Executive Committee shall keep minutes of all proceedings and of all general meetings.
6. The Executive Committee may from time to time make and alter rules for the conduct of their business. No rule shall be inconsistent with the constitution.
7. The Executive Committee may appoint sub-committees for any function or duty, provided that all proceedings are fully reported to the Executive Committee.

#### **K. Receipts and expenditure**

1. The funds of the Partnership shall be paid into an account operated by the Executive Committee in the name of the Partnership. All cheques drawn on the account must be signed by two members of the Executive Committee.
2. The funds belonging to the Partnership shall be applied only in furthering the aims.

#### **L. Accounts**

The Executive Committee shall comply with their obligations under the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to;

1. the keeping of accounting records for the Partnership;
2. the preparation of annual statements of account for the Partnership;
3. the auditing or independent examination of the statements of account of the Partnership;
4. when required, the transmission of the statements of account of the Partnership to the Charities Commission.

#### **M. Annual Report**

The Executive Committee shall comply with their obligations under the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to the preparation of an annual report and, when required, its transmission to the Commission.

#### **N. Annual Return.**

The Executive Committee shall comply with their obligations under the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to the preparation of an annual return and its transmission to the Commission.

#### **O. Annual General Meeting.**

1. There shall be an annual general meeting of the Partnership which shall be held in the month of January in each year or as soon as practicable thereafter.
2. Every annual general meeting shall be called by the Executive Committee. The secretary shall give at least 21 days' notice of the annual general meeting to all members of the Partnership. All members of the Partnership shall be entitled to attend and vote.
3. The Executive Committee shall present to each annual general meeting the report and accounts of the Partnership for the preceding year.
4. Nominations for election to the Executive Committee must be made by members of the Partnership in writing and must be in the hands of the secretary at least 14 days before the annual general meeting. Should nominations exceed vacancies, election shall be by ballot.



## Revision history

July 2007	Original Constitution and Standing Orders
July 2012	Fully revised Constitution, first draft distributed to all members
October 2013	Minor amendments, prior to adoption at February 2014 AGM
February 2015	Change of name from 'Project' to 'Partnership'; signatures added