

CONSTITUTION – CHILD (Children’s Network Northern Ireland)

1. NAME

The name of the Association is Child – Children’s Network Northern Ireland (hereinafter called the Association).

2. ADMINISTRATION

Subject to the matters set out below the Association and its property shall be administered and managed in accordance with this constitution by the members of the Council of Management, constituted by clause 5 of this constitution (hereinafter called the Council).

3. OBJECTS

3.1. The Association is established for the advancement of education among young people in need in Northern Ireland, Eire and Great Britain and in conjunction, if the occasion arises, with school children from other countries (hereinafter referred to as the area of benefit) irrespective of race, gender, physical disability, sexuality, political, religious or other opinion by:

3.1.1. organising programmes designed to advance the social, education, personal development and welfare of young people under the age of twenty–five so that they may achieve their full potential as individuals;

3.1.2. providing communal residential holidays and follow–up projects for children in need so that their conditions of life may be improved.

3.1.3. providing training and personal development opportunities for young adult volunteers so that they may improve the conditions of their own life and the lives of the children and young people they encounter as part of their volunteer work.

3.2. In furtherance of these objects, but no further or otherwise, the Association may:

3.2.1. recruit a network of volunteers drawn from any part of Northern Ireland and beyond irrespective of religion, social group, ethnic group or physical disability, and to provide training and professional development opportunities for said volunteers enabling them to work on communal residential holidays and follow–up projects of an educational nature, and to facilitate the professional, social and personal development of said volunteers through the design, implementation and development of a structured volunteer development programme.

3.2.2. encourage and advise other bodies wishing to organise similar ventures and to assist charitable foundations in such organisations;

3.2.3. establish and maintain adequate standards for the conduct of and the accommodation for the community holidays and follow–up projects and to secure the proper control and inspection of these matters by such means and through such agencies as appear to be available from time to time;

3.2.4. establish and maintain a Training Group responsible for the formulation, administration and delivery of appropriate training and other courses, discussion and study groups for the purposes of providing an adequate number of trained directors, administrators, leaders and volunteers for the

community holidays and follow-up programme and of furthering the aims and interests of the Association generally;

3.2.5. establish and maintain a Volunteer Forum and Volunteer Regional Groups aimed at the furthering of the aims and interests of the Association generally by the dissemination of information amongst volunteers; the discussion of issues; the representation of volunteer views and the formulation of recommendations on matters relating to the proper running of the Association.

3.2.6. maintain a high standard of Council Members, administrators and volunteers by the institution of suitable schemes of training and assessment;

3.2.7. promote and carry out research, surveys and investigations into any matter which properly arises under the stated objects of the Association and to organise meetings, lectures, classes and exhibitions, and publish or assist in the publishing and distributing of results of such research and of any relevant material or work;

3.2.8. co-operate with Government Departments, Local Education and Library Boards, educational institutions, youth organisations, community groups, statutory and voluntary social services, schools and other educational institutions and other similar bodies in the furtherance of the stated objectives of the Association, and to join with any other charitable foundations having objects altogether or in part similar to those of the Association;

3.2.9. subject to any consents as may be required by law to seek and accept endowments, donations, grants, bequests, legacies and funds from any other organisations or sources in order to further the stated objects of the Association; provided that the Association shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities and shall conform to any relevant requirements of the law;

3.2.10. purchase, lease or otherwise acquire any real and personal property and any rights and privileges necessary for the promotion of the above objects and construct, equip, alter, regulate and maintain any such property required for the purposes of the Association and to sell, improve, develop, lease mortgage, exchange, dispose of or turn to account or otherwise deal with all or any part of such property or any estate or interest therein or right or easement thereon with any consent required by law;

3.2.11. subject to any consents as may be required by law, receive money on deposit or loan and borrow or raise money in such a manner as the Association shall think fit and charge all or any part of the property of the Association with repayment of money so borrowed;

3.2.12. invest the monies of the Association not immediately required for the furtherance of the said objects in or upon such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit, subject nevertheless to such conditions (if any) as may from the time being be imposed or required by law;

3.2.13 employ and pay any person or persons, not being a member of the Council to supervise, organise and carry on the work of the Association and make all reasonable and necessary provision for the payment of remuneration to employees;

3.2.14. to do all such other lawful things as may be necessary for the attainment of the above objectives or any one or more of them.

4 MEMBERSHIP

4.1. Membership of the Association shall be open to the following irrespective of race, gender, physical disability, sexuality, political, religious or other opinion:

4.1.1. people aged sixteen years or over living within the area of benefit who subscribe to the objects of the Association and whose applications for membership are accepted by the Council; such members shall be called Individual members and shall be entitled to vote at meetings of the Association;

4.1.2. organisations within the area of benefit, whether voluntary or statutory may upon application to and with the approval of the Council be admitted as Affiliated Members, and such approval shall not be unreasonably withheld;

4.1.3. well wishers anywhere or persons who, in the opinion of the Council, have special knowledge or experience to offer to the Association; such persons may upon application to and with the approval of the Council be admitted as Associate Members and shall have the right to vote at meetings of the Association;

4.2. Affiliated Members shall each be entitled to be represented at meetings of the Association by a duly authorised representative with power to vote on behalf of the Affiliated Member.

5. COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT

5.1. The Council shall meet at least once in every year and shall consist of not less than six members of the Association, elected at an Annual General Meeting.

5.2. Nominations from full members of the Association for members of the Council must be made in writing, and must be in the hands of the Honorary Secretary of the Association at least 7 days before the Annual General Meeting hereinafter mentioned.

5.3. The Training Group will have the right to nominate one member of the training group to serve on the Council as an individual member; the Volunteer Forum will have the right to nominate one member of the Volunteer Forum to serve on the Council as an individual member.

5.4. Should the number of nominations exceed the number of vacancies, election shall be by secret ballot of the members of the Association present and voting at an Annual General Meeting.

5.5. Should the number of nominations be less than the number of vacancies, further oral nominations may with the approval of the Annual General Meeting be invited from members present and voting at the said Annual General Meeting.

5.6. The Council elected at an Annual General Meeting shall have the power to co-opt further members, who shall be Individual Members, or representatives of Affiliated Members and who shall serve until the conclusion of the next following AGM PROVIDED THAT the number of co-opted members shall not exceed one-third of the total membership of the Council. Co-opted members shall have the right to vote.

5.7. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, who shall be Honorary Officers of the Association, shall be full Individual Members, Affiliate Members, Associate Members or representatives of Affiliate Members of the Association, and shall be elected annually by and from the members of the Council at their first meeting following the Annual General Meeting. The office of Chairperson shall not be held by any one person for more than four consecutive years.

5.8. Any member of the Council who fails to attend 3 consecutive Council meetings without reasonable excuse shall lose his/her place on the Council which may be filled by a co-option in accordance with Clause 5.6. above.

5.9. Every vacancy or resignation on the Council shall as soon as possible be notified to the Honorary Secretary. Any vacancy however arising may be filled by a co-option in accordance with Clause 5.6. above.

5.10. A person appointed to serve as a member of the Council shall be elected for a term of three years. At the end of the term of three years the members shall retire from the Council. The retiring member shall be immediately eligible for re-election to the Council for a further term.

5.11. The Trustees (if appointed) shall be notified of and shall be entitled to attend all meetings of the Council but without the power to vote.

6. FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

6.1. The Council may make such regulations as they consider appropriate for the efficient conduct of the business of the Council and the Association.

6.2. The Council may appoint such staff as they consider necessary on such terms and conditions as they may determine.

6.3. The Council may appoint such sub-Councils, advisory groups or working parties of their own members and other persons as they may from time to time decide necessary for the carrying out of their work, and may determine their terms of reference, duration and composition. All such sub-Councils shall make regular reports on their work to the Council.

6.4. The proceedings of the Council shall not be invalidated by any failure to elect or any defect in the election, appointment, co-options or qualification of any member.

6.5. In its administration of the Association, the Council shall have such powers (not inconsistent with these Rules) as are necessary for it to comply with any conditions of grant made by any Minister of the Crown or Government and may receive any additional funds, grants, donations, or other endowments from any other source for the general purposes of the Association or for any specified object connected with the Association. Such additional funds may be received on conditions which allow or require them to be applied as income or require their investment with a view to the application of the resulting income.

7. CHAIRING MEETINGS

All meetings of the Association or of any of the Council or of any of its sub-Councils shall be presided over by its Chairperson failing whom its Vice-Chairperson, if one has been appointed. If neither the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson are present, those present may elect one of their own number to take the Chair. Only those members present in person shall be entitled to vote and each shall have one vote, and when the votes are equal the Chairperson shall have an additional or casting vote.

8. FINANCE

8.1. All monies raised by or on behalf of the Association shall be applied to further the objects of the Association and for no other purpose PROVIDED THAT nothing herein contained shall prevent the payment of legitimate out-of-pocket expenses to members of the Association engaged upon the approved business of the Association.

8.1.2. Insofar as the Council undertakes direct responsibility for any activity connected with the stated objects of the Association it may charge to the persons or bodies making use of those activities such

fees as may be thought fit. Any moneys so charged shall be applied solely to the purposes of the Association.

8.2. The Honorary Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the Association.

8.3. The financial year of the Association shall run from 1 April to 31st March.

8.4. The accounts shall be audited at least once a year by an auditor or auditors who shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting.

8.5. An audited statement of accounts for the last financial year shall be submitted by the Council to the Annual General Meeting.

8.6. A bank account shall be opened in the name of the Association with First Trust Bank Ltd, or with such bank as the Council shall from time to time decide. The Council shall authorise in writing the Honorary Treasurer, the Chairperson of the Council and 1 other member of the Council to sign cheques on behalf of the Association. All cheques must be signed by not less than 2 of the authorised signatories. One of the authorised signatories must be the Honorary Treasurer. The Council have the power to secure the proper control and inspection of this account by such means and through such agencies as appear to be necessary.

9. TRUST PROPERTY

The Association may appoint and terminate the appointment of not less than 3 people to act as Trustees for the purpose of holding any monies or property belonging to the Association. The title to all or any such real and /or personal property which may be required for the purposes of the Association shall be vested in the Trustees who shall hold such property in trust for the Association. The Trustees shall act under the instructions of the Council who shall, subject to the approval and consent of the Association as determined by a General Meeting, have the power to fill vacancies among the Trustees.

10 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

10.1. An annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held at such place and time (not being any more than 15 months after the holding of the preceding Annual General Meeting) as the Council shall determine.

10.2. At such Annual General Meeting the business shall include the following;

10.2.1. the elections of members to serve on the Council;

10.2.2. the appointment of an auditor or auditors;

10.2.3. the consideration of an Annual Report of the work done by or under the auspices of the Council;

10.2.4. the consideration of the audited accounts;

10.2.5. the transaction of such other matters as may from time to time be considered necessary.

11 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

The Council may at any time at its discretion and shall upon a requisition signed by not less than 12 members having the power to vote and giving reasons for the request, call a Special General Meeting of the Association for the purposes of altering the Constitution in accordance with clause 13 hereof or of considering any matter which may be referred to them by the Council or for any other purpose.

12 RULES OF PROCEDURES AT ALL MEETINGS

Voting

12.1. Subject to the provisions of Clause 13 and Clause 12.1.2. hereof all questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote. In case of an equality of votes the Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote.

12.1.2. Where members of the Association are unable to attend any ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OR SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING ONLY they are entitled to register their vote on resolutions previously advised to them in writing by the Honorary Secretary by use of a postal vote. Postal votes must be received by the Honorary Secretary on/before the day the Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting is to take place. Postal votes shall be counted in exactly the same way as votes cast by members of the Association present at an ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OR SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING.

Minutes

12.2. Minute books shall be kept by the Council and all other sub-committees and the appropriate Secretary shall enter therein a record of all proceedings and resolutions.

Quorum

12.3. The quorum at General Meetings of the Association shall be 12 and at meetings of the Council shall be when at least one half of the number of its members are present or any other number as the Council may from time to time determine.

13 ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

13.1 Any alterations to this Constitution shall receive the assent of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Association present and voting at the Annual General Meeting or a meeting specially called for that purpose PROVIDED THAT notice of any such alteration shall have been received by the Honorary Secretary in writing not less than 21 clear days before the meeting at which the alteration is to be brought forward.

13.2 At least 14 clear days notice in writing of the meeting setting forth the terms of the alteration to be proposed shall be sent by the Honorary Secretary to each member of the Association PROVIDED FURTHER THAT no alteration shall be made which would cause the Association to cease to be a charity at law.

14 DISSOLUTION

14.1. If the Council by a simple majority decide at any time that on the grounds of expense or otherwise it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Association they shall call a meeting of all members of the Association who have the power to vote of which meeting not less than 21 days notice (stating the

terms of the Resolution to be proposed thereat) shall be given.

14.2. Subject to the provisions of Clause 12.1.2. hereof, if such decision shall be confirmed by a simple majority of those voting the Council shall have the power, subject to any consents as may be required by law, to dispose of any assets held by or in the name of the Association.

14.3. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of the Association as the Council may decide.

15 INDEMNITY

The Association shall indemnify and keep indemnified every officer, member, volunteer, and employee of the Association from and against all claims, demands, actions, and proceedings (and all costs and expenses in connection therewith or arising therefrom) made or brought against the Association in connection with its activities, the actions of its officers, members, volunteers, or employees, or in connection with its property and equipment but this indemnity shall not extend to liabilities arising from wilful and individual fraud, wrongdoing, or wrongful omission on the part of the officer, member, volunteer or employee sought to be made liable. The Treasurer shall effect a policy of insurance in respect of this indemnity.

16 INTERPRETATION

Any matter not covered by these Rules or any question as to their interpretation shall be dealt with by the Council.

AUGUST 1996.

Child Constitution – August 1996

