

CONSTITUTION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND PLANNING LAW ASSOCIATION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Name:

- 1.** The Association shall be called ‘The Environmental and Planning Law Association for Northern Ireland’ (‘the Association’).

Objects:

2.1 The Association is an independent association whose objects are to promote for the benefit of the public generally the understanding of environmental and planning law and policy in Northern Ireland and in particular to advance the education of the public in all matters relating to the development, teaching, application and practice of environmental and planning law and policy.

2.2 In furtherance of the above objects the Association may:

- 2.2.1** encourage collaboration between all those interested and concerned with environmental and planning law;
- 2.2.2** collate and disseminate information relating to environmental and planning law;
- 2.2.3** identify, review, advise and comment on issues of environmental and planning law and its application;
- 2.2.4** promote, organise, sponsor, conduct (or co-operate with any other persons, association or organisation in so doing) lectures, seminars, meetings, conferences and other educational events;
- 2.2.5** publish, print, distribute and issue books, literature and information;
- 2.2.6** organise, arrange and run functions, outings, meetings and events of a social, sporting or leisure nature, designed to promote social intercourse among persons interested in the objects of the Association in general and among the members of the Association in particular;
- 2.2.7** maintain contact with other similar associations;
- 2.2.8** make submissions and recommendations to government and other relevant bodies in connection with the objects of the Association;
- 2.2.9** make donations to such charitable objects in connection with the environment as may be approved at any annual or special general meeting.

Membership:

3.1 Membership of the Association shall be open to all persons who are interested in the objects of the Association. Membership may be individual or corporate.

3.2 The annual subscription for membership shall be decided by the Committee referred to in clause 4.2 at the first committee meeting after the annual general meeting and such subscription shall be payable in advance immediately the same shall have been demanded or upon any member joining the Association. Any person who has failed to pay the annual subscription within three months of the same being demanded shall not be entitled to the rights, benefits and privileges of membership, including the right to vote.

3.3 Corporate members shall be entitled to no more than 3 votes on any resolution of the Association provided that at least 3 members attend the meeting.

Office Bearers:

4.1 The Association shall have a Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer ('the office bearers') who shall be members of the Association. Election for such offices shall be by ballot of the members of the Association present and voting at the annual general meeting provided however that in the event of any such offices not being filled or in the event of a vacancy in any such office occurring during the course of any year the Committee referred to in Clause 4.2 may appoint from amongst its number an appropriate person to hold such office until the next following annual general meeting. The Committee shall have the power to appoint from its members such other officer or officers as it shall deem fit.

4.2 The affairs of the Association shall be managed and directed by a Committee which shall operate at all times in accordance with the objects of the Association and which shall consist of the office bearers and six other Committee members all of whom shall be elected at the annual general meeting of the Association by ballot of the members present and voting.

4.3 The Committee may appoint sub-committees and advisory groups or working parties from amongst its own members or from such other persons as it may from time to time decide for the carrying out of its work and may determine the terms of reference, composition and the duration of the activities of such bodies. All such bodies shall make regular reports on their activities to the Committee.

4.4 The quorum at a meeting of the Committee shall be five.

4.5 The Committee shall have the power to approve or reject applications for membership, to fix the amount of all subscriptions, and, for good and sufficient reason, to terminate the membership of any member of the Association provided that any member shall have the right to be heard by the Committee before any decision to terminate membership shall be confirmed.

Meetings:

5.1 An annual general meeting of the Association shall be held at such time (not being more than fifteen months after the holding of the preceding annual general meeting) and place as the Committee shall determine. At such annual general meeting the business shall include the consideration of reports on the work done by or under the auspices of the Committee and of the accounts of the Association, the election of the office bearers, the election of members of the Committee and the transaction of such other matters as may from time to time be considered necessary or which may be considered by the Committee to be desirable.

5.2 The Committee may at any time at its discretion or, upon the request in writing of not less than 20 members giving reasons for the request, call a special general meeting of the Association either for the purpose of altering the Constitution in accordance with Clause 7 hereof or of considering any matter which may be referred to the meeting by the Committee or the requesting members.

5.3 All annual or special general meetings of the Association shall be presided over by its Chair or failing the Chair the most immediate past Chair present or failing such person those present may elect one of their number to take the chair.

5.4 Subject to Clause 7 all questions arising at any annual or special meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote. In the case of an equality of votes the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

5.5 Minutes of the annual or special general meetings shall be kept by the Committee and the Secretary or any acting Secretary shall record in the minutes a record of all proceedings and resolutions.

5.6 The quorum at any annual general meeting or special general meeting of the Association shall be 20 members.

5.7 At least ten working days notice (exclusive of the date on which the notice is served and inclusive of the day for which notice is given) specifying the place, day and hour of any annual or special general meeting and the business to be considered shall be given to each member. A notice of any annual or special general meeting sent by post (or where applicable through the DX system) shall be deemed to have been served at the expiration of 24 hours after the notice has been posted (or delivered to the DX office). The accidental omission to give notice of a meeting to, or the failure of normal receipt of notice of a meeting by any member shall not invalidate proceedings at the meeting PROVIDED THAT this does not apply to more than 10 per centum of the membership at any one time.

5.8 If any case of irregularity shall occur in the convening or holding of any annual or special general meeting, or in any election or other proceeding at such meeting, and the same shall not be publicly noted and objected to at such meeting, the elections or proceedings at such meeting shall be of the same force and validity as if no irregularity had occurred: but if any irregularity shall be at such meeting publicly noted and objected to, the meeting shall decide thereon in accordance with Clause 5.4, and such decision shall be final and conclusive.

Finance:

6.1 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.

6.2 The treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the Association.

6.3 An audited Statement of Accounts for the last financial year shall be submitted by the Treasurer to the annual general meeting.

6.4 The Association's bank account shall be maintained at such bank as the Committee shall from time to time decide. The Association's office bearers shall be the authorised signatories to cheques and all cheques shall be signed by not less than two of the office bearers.

Amendments:

7 Any alteration to this Constitution shall receive the assent of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Association present and voting at an annual or special general meeting provided that notice of any such alteration shall have been received by the Secretary in writing not less than 15 working days before the Meeting at which the alteration is to be brought forward. The notice of the meeting shall set forth the terms of the alteration to be proposed and shall be sent by the Secretary to each member of the Association in accordance with Clause 5.7. No amendment may be made to the Constitution which would cause the Association to cease to be a charity in law.

Service of Notices:

8 The name and professional address (being either a postal address or a DX address) of every member of the Association shall be entered in records to be kept by the Treasurer. It shall be the duty of every member to inform the Treasurer of any change of address. A member shall be deemed to have received all notices addressed to such member and posted or delivered to such member at the member's registered address.

Construction:

9.1 Wherever the context requires or admits words importing the singular shall be deemed to include the plural and words importing the masculine shall be deemed to include the feminine.

9.2. The expression ‘working days’ shall mean Monday to Friday inclusive except any day which is a bank or public holiday.

Dissolution:

10.1 If the members resolve to dissolve the Association the office bearers will remain in office and be responsible for winding up the affairs of the Association in accordance with this clause.

10.2 The office bearers must collect in all the assets of the Association and must pay or make provision for all liabilities of the Association.

10.3 The office bearers must apply any remaining property or money:

- (a) directly for the objects;
- (b) by transfer to a charity or charities for purposes the same or similar to the Association.

10.4 The members may pass a resolution before or at the same time as the resolution to dissolve the Association specifying the manner in which the office bearers are to apply the remaining property or assets of the Association and the office bearers must comply with the resolution if it is consistent with paragraphs (a) – (b) inclusive in sub clause 10.3.

10.5 In no circumstances shall the assets of the Association be paid to or distributed among the members of the association (except to a member that is itself a Charity).