

# CITIZENS ASSEMBLY SOUTH TYNESIDE CONSTITUTION

## 1. Name

The name of the group shall be the Citizens Assembly South Tyneside (hereafter **CAST**).

## 2. Aims

- To represent the diverse views of the community of South Tyneside, supporting campaigns. to protect services, amenities and the environment.
- To hold to account the work of all local authority, health and other public bodies.
- To learn from and respond to the community's concerns about pressing issues.
- To develop, propose, advocate and campaign for policies that enhance the well-being of the community as a whole.

## 3. **CAST shall not affiliate to any political party or organisation.**

## 4. Powers

**CAST** shall have the powers to:

- a) raise funds and apply for, invite, obtain, collect and receive contributions, grants, subscriptions, fees & otherwise;
- b) employ any paid worker to assist in the attainment of the aims of the group;
- c) rent or own property and equipment necessary to achieve the aims;
- d) affiliate to any local or national group or association that the Planning Group decides is appropriate and disaffiliate from any group or organisation if continued affiliation is, in the Planning Group's view, against the interests of the group. All such decisions are subject to confirmation by **CAST** members as a whole; and
- e) do all such other lawful things as shall further the attainment of the aims.

## 5. Membership and **CAST** general meetings

- a) Membership of **CAST** shall be open to all campaigns and individuals who support its work and aims.
- b) Membership shall be subject to approval by the Planning Group.
- c) All members may attend and vote at **CAST** general meetings which shall be held on a regular basis and convened by the Planning Group.
- d) **CAST** general meetings are the ultimate decision-making body of the organisation.
- e) Members shall be eligible for election to the Planning Group at an annual meeting.
- f) The Planning Group may terminate any membership of any member bringing the group into disrepute. The member concerned shall have the right to appeal to a panel of three members outside of the Planning Group before a final decision is made.
- g) Working Groups on policy areas created by general meetings will report on their work to **CAST** members as a whole.

## 6. Planning Group

- a) A Planning Group consisting of Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer and not less than two other members shall be elected to manage the affairs of **CAST**.
- b) All officers and members of the Planning Group shall be elected annually at the AGM.
- c) The Officers and Planning Group Members shall serve until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting after their election and are eligible for re-election.
- d) The Planning Group may fill any casual vacancy on the Planning Group, including vacancies among the Officers and any person appointed shall serve until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting.
- e) The Planning Group may co-opt up to three persons on to the Planning Group and they shall have full voting rights.
- f) The Planning Group may appoint such people as it thinks fit as advisers. Advisers shall not have voting rights.
- g) The Planning Group shall meet a minimum of four times per year.
- h) The Planning Group can establish such sub-groups that the Planning Group feel is necessary to

achieve the aims of **CAST**. Any such groups shall not enter into legal or financial agreement without the prior authority of the Planning Group.

- i) The Planning Group is accountable to the **CAST** membership and shall circulate its minutes to all members.

### **7. Annual General Meetings**

The Annual General Meeting of the group shall be held once a year. This shall be held not more than fifteen months after the holding of the preceding AGM. At least 21 days notice shall be given to all members.

The purpose of the Annual General Meeting is to:

- a) receive and adopt the Annual Accounts;
- b) receive the Annual Report from the Planning Group;
- c) elect members and officers for the Planning Group;
- d) consider any motion before the meeting;
- e) appoint an appropriate person to independently examine the books and determine their remuneration (if any) for the following year; and
- f) consider any amendments to the constitution.

### **8. Special/Emergency General Meetings**

- a) Special/Emergency General Meetings may be called by the Planning Group whenever they feel it is necessary for the organisation and all members will have at least 14 days notice of the meeting. The notice of the meeting shall give details of the business to be discussed at the meeting.
- b) The chair shall call a Special General Meeting within 14 days of receiving a written request to do so by at least one-third of the registered membership.
- c) The notice of the meeting shall give details of the business to be discussed at the meeting.
- d) Only the business specified in the notice for the meeting shall be discussed at the Special/Emergency meeting.

### **9. Rules of proceedings at all meetings**

A quorum (the minimum number of members needed for a meeting to go ahead) at:

- a) a general meeting shall be five;
- b) a Planning Group shall be three;
- c) all questions at any meeting shall be decided by consensus if possible or by a simple majority if not. In the event of a tie the chair shall have a casting vote (a second vote); and
- d) members will treat each other with respect in meetings, allowing for free and open debate. Members who directly attack or threaten other people on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, religious affiliation, age or disability will have their membership of **CAST** terminated.

### **10. Funds and Finance**

- a) All funds shall be devoted to the aims and objects of **CAST**.
- b) A bank account shall be opened in the name of the group.
- c) All cheques shall be signed by 2 of signatories authorised by the Planning Group none of whom shall be related or live at the same address.
- d) The financial year shall run from April 1 to March 31.

### **11. Dissolution**

A resolution to dissolve **CAST** must be passed at a Special General Meeting and carried by a two-thirds majority of Registered Members. Any assets held by the organisation after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to an organisation with similar aims.

This constitution was adopted on: 18<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Signed: D Haynes

Chair, **CAST**