



# **Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils CONSTITUTION**

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# Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils

## CONSTITUTION

### 1. CONSTITUTION AND NAME

The Association draws its membership from Parish, Town, Neighbourhood, Community or Village Councils in the two unitary authority areas (Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council) within the County of Dorset. It will be known as the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (hereinafter abbreviated to DAPTC).

### 2. DEFINITIONS

- a. Parish Council means a council of a town, parish or of a group of parishes (and includes the parish meeting of a rural parish not entitled to elect a parish council).
- b. Member Council means any such council, which at the relevant time has paid its subscription for the current year.

### 3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

All DAPTC meetings shall be conducted by members in accordance with its published Code of Conduct

### 4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the DAPTC are to support and foster the interests of parish and town councils consistent with the objectives of the National Association of Local Councils.

The listed objectives are equally important and the listing does not indicate any hierarchy.

The DAPTC objectives are:-

- a. To promote good local government
- b. To promote a widespread and well-informed interest in local government
- c. To assist members in the performance of their duties and to promote and develop the social, cultural and recreational life of parishes.
- d. To protect and promote the rights, functions, and privileges of members
- e. To represent the interests and views of member councils
- f. To promote and support networking and shared learning

### 5. MEMBERSHIP

Every council as defined in para. 1 is eligible for membership of the DAPTC.

## **6. SUBSCRIPTIONS**

- a. Each member council is to pay to the DAPTC on, or before, 1st July in each financial year a subscription, which will be based upon the product of the number of electors in that council multiplied by a rate. The rate is to be reviewed annually at a special meeting of the Executive Committee, usually in October, as soon as practicable after the NALC AGM. At that meeting, the Executive Committee will make a recommendation as to the proposed subscription for the next Financial Year to be agreed at the AGM.
- b. A proportion of the DAPTC subscription will be paid to NALC, by the required date(s) in each financial year in accordance with the fees as fixed by NALC at their Annual General Meeting.

## **7. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (NALC)**

The Executive Committee will elect from its membership a NALC representative and two deputies. The election will take place at the same time as the election of the Chair and Vice Chair, this being the first meeting in each year after the DAPTC AGM.

## **8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

- a. There is to be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) held when the Executive Committee directs; this will normally be at the beginning of November. The Chief Executive shall give each member council, every ex officio and co-opted member of the Association not less than 4 weeks' notice of the date, time and place of the meeting and shall send with such notice a copy of the annual report and of the accounts for the preceding financial year. The President shall preside at the AGM or in their absence a Vice-President.
- b. The President, Vice-Presidents and Honorary Treasurer are to be elected at the Annual General Meeting each year and will be respectively eligible for re-election.
- c. Nominations for the offices of President and Vice-President are to be sent to the Chief Executive 4 weeks before the Annual General Meeting. No person shall be eligible to be elected President for more than five years consecutively. Any person who has served five consecutive years as President will again be eligible for election as President after the passage of one year.
- d. The AGM shall consider:
  - i. The election of the President, Vice Presidents and Hon Treasurer.
  - ii. The appointment of an Auditor
  - iii. The adoption of the annual report
  - iv. Agreement of the level of subscription for the following year.
  - v. Motions requiring external actions by the Association which have been submitted and presented in accordance with para. e below.
- e. Motions for resolution at the AGM must be submitted in advance according to a timetable provided by the Chief Executive. The sponsoring council's representative must propose its motion at the AGM. In the event of the sponsoring council's

representative not being able to attend, the Chairman shall ask members present to vote as to whether the motion should be put. If the motion is to be put, the Chairman shall ask for an alternative proposer.

f. Every member council shall be entitled to two representatives, but to only one vote on any particular motion (see item 18a). In addition, the President, Vice-Presidents and Past Presidents shall be members of the AGM but not entitled to vote unless they are also representing a member council and nominated by it to vote.

g. Past Presidents may attend the Annual General Meeting and will, on request, be informed of matters concerning the Executive Committee.

h. The quorum at an AGM shall be ten percent of the membership of the DAPTC. If, at an AGM, no quorum is present after half an hour of the time appointed for the commencement of business, the meeting shall stand adjourned, to the same place, day and time in the next week, when the quorum shall be five voting representatives of member councils.

## **9. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS**

Extraordinary General Meetings may be requested at any time by a two thirds majority of the County Executive Committee or shall be called by the Chief Executive after the receipt of a requisition in writing signed by not less than ten member councils of DAPTC. Not less than 14 days notice shall be given to each member council and to every ex officio and co-opted member of the general meeting stating the reasons and agenda for the meeting. The AGM quorum requirement shall apply

## **10. COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

a. The County Executive Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Executive Committee) will comprise of voting members as follows: -

i. The President, by virtue of such office,

ii. The Chair, by virtue of such office (see paragraph 11 below)

iii. Two full members elected annually by each Area Committee Meeting. Each Area Committee Meeting will also elect one reserve member who will attend if a full member is unable to do so. At least two of the three so elected must, at the date of election to the Executive Committee, be councillors of member councils.

iv. Two further full members elected annually by the North Dorset Area, who must, at the date of election to the Executive Committee, be councillors of member councils.

v. One further full member elected annually by the Central Area, who must, at the date of election to the Executive Committee, be a councillor of a member council.

vi. Four full members elected annually by the Towns and Larger Parish Councils Committee.

b. The Chief Executive and Treasurer shall attend meetings of the Executive Committee; neither will have the power to vote. A member or members of the DAPTC office staff may also attend to solely to assist with the administration of the meeting.

c. Vice Presidents may attend Executive meetings. They shall not have the power to vote.

d. Casual vacancies on the Executive Committee are to be filled by representatives from the respective Area Meeting where the reserve is unable to fill the vacancy; or from the Towns and Larger Parish Councils Committee where the vacancy arises amongst those elected by that committee.

e. An elected member of the Executive Committee remains a member until the Area Meeting, or Towns and Larger Parish Councils Committee, which elected them, completes its next election of its representatives to the Executive Committee or they cease to be a councillor.

## **11. CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

At its first meeting in each year after the AGM, the Executive Committee shall elect from its membership a Chair and a Vice-Chair. Once elected, the Chair's position on the Executive Committee is not dependant on membership of any DAPTC Area Committee. No person shall be eligible to be elected Chair for more than three years consecutively. Any person who has served three consecutive years as Chair will again be eligible for election as Chair after the passage of one year. The Vice-Chair will perform the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence. If at any meeting the Chair and the Vice-Chair are both absent, the Committee will elect a Chair from among their number for that meeting.

## **12. FUNCTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

a. Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the Executive Committee will provide for the conduct, management, control and administration of the affairs of the DAPTC and may take such steps, incur such commitments or arrangements and employ such staff or agents as may be suitable for carrying the policy of the DAPTC into effect.

b. The Executive Committee will be responsible for overseeing the banking and investment of DAPTC funds. No money shall be borrowed by, or on behalf of the DAPTC, without the Executive Committee's consent

c. The Executive Committee, at their meeting before the Annual General Meeting, shall make nominations for the posts of Hon.Treasurer and appointed Auditor.

d. Appointments to fill casual vacancies in any of the Association offices or honorary positions may be made by the Executive Committee.

e. The Executive Committee shall recommend the level of annual subscription for the following year for agreement at the AGM.

f. The Executive Committee shall present an annual report and submit an audit of accounts and the governance arrangements for the last Financial Year to the AGM.

## **13. SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

a. The Executive Committee will establish a staffing sub-committee as part of the DAPTC Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures. This sub-committee can also advise the Executive Committee on all staffing and recruitment issues in relation to DAPTC staff.

b. The Executive Committee will also have power as follows:-

- To appoint sub-committees; which may include members from outside of the Executive Committee (see d. below)
- To make rules for the transaction of the business of any sub-committee.
- To delegate any of its functions to such sub-committees.

c. Except where The Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee are appointed as members of any sub-committee, they will be ex-officio members of every such sub-committee but will have no vote at its meetings.

d. Any such sub-committee will be made up of appointed Executive Committee members (excluding ex-officio members) but may co-opt persons other than members of the Executive Committee as non-voting members.

#### **14. PLACE AND NOTICE OF MEETINGS**

a. The Chief Executive shall give to every entitled person, not less than seven clear days notice in writing (or electronically) of the time and place of meetings of the Executive Committee, or of any sub-committee, specifying in such notice the business to be transacted.

#### **15. OMISSION TO GIVE NOTICE OF MEETING**

The accidental omission, or failure to give notice of any meeting, to any member council or person entitled to receive the same, shall not invalidate the proceedings at any such meeting. Similarly, the non-receipt of any such notice by persons entitled to receive it shall not invalidate the proceedings at any such meeting.

#### **16. AREA COMMITTEES**

a. Area Committees consist of towns and parishes as defined at Annex A. Every DAPTC member council in the area will be entitled to membership of the appropriate Area Committee. Each member council may appoint up to two representatives and reserves, one of whom may be an officer, to its Area Committee.

b. Each Area Committee may arrange its own business and procedure in accordance with its constitution. A copy of the minutes of the proceedings of an Area Committee meeting is to be forwarded to the Chief Executive.

c. Area Committee administration will be undertaken by an Area Secretary who may be paid travelling expenses and awarded an annual honorarium from DAPTC funds. The award and amount of an honorarium will be reviewed annually to coincide with the staff pay reviews. Subject to sufficient funds being available, the cost of other ancillary expenses relating to Area Committees will be considered by the Executive Committee on a case by case basis. The duties of the Area Secretary are at Annex C.

## **17. TOWNS AND LARGER PARISH COUNCILS COMMITTEE**

There is to be a Towns and Larger Parish Councils Committee composed of two representatives of each of the member councils listed at Annex B. The list is to be reviewed periodically by the Executive Committee. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee are ex-officio members of the Committee but will have no vote at its meetings.

## **18. VOTING**

- a. At all meetings, except the AGM, every resolution will be determined by a show of hands. If not less than three of the people present request a ballot, the voting on that question shall be by ballot. At the AGM there will be card votes.
- b. When the votes on any matter are tied, the person presiding at that meeting will have a second casting vote.

## **19. EXPENSES OF REPRESENTATIVES AND MEMBERS**

Subject to sufficient funds being available for the purpose, the necessary travelling, subsistence and other incidental expenses may be met wholly, or partly, from the funds of the DAPTC for representatives or members of the Executive attending meetings:-

- a. Of the National Association Assembly; any committee thereof; and the National Association Conference, but only where such expenses are not met by the National Association.
- b. Of the Executive Committee and of any sub-committees thereof.

## **20. RESIGNATION FROM MEMBERSHIP**

Any member council wishing to terminate its membership of the DAPTC is required to do so by sending its resignation in writing to the Chief Executive before 31 January in any year, and the notice shall become effective on 31 March of that year. Any such council shall continue to be liable for the payment of its subscription up to and including the date on which a notice becomes effective.

## **21. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Any alterations, amendment or addition to this constitution must be made at an AGM if approved by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the councils present and voting. No alteration, amendment or addition is to be made which is inconsistent with the constitution of the National Association.

Notice of any motion for such alteration, amendment, or addition, other than a notice given pursuant to a resolution of the Executive Committee, must be given in writing to the Chief Executive by a member council not less than three calendar months before the AGM. A copy of every such notice, including those given pursuant to a resolution of the Executive Committee, will then be sent to every member council and

to each ex officio and co-opted member of the AGM, at least two calendar months before the meeting at which it is to be considered.

**Annexes:**

- A. DAPTC Areas.
- B. Members of the Towns and Larger Parish Councils Committee.
- C. Duties of the Area Secretary

## DAPTC AREAS

The five DAPTC Areas referred to in sub-paragraph 16(a) of this Constitution are:-

1. **Central Area** comprising those towns and parishes which are in the former West Dorset District sub-areas based on the area around Dorchester and Sherborne, and of the town and any parishes in the Borough of Weymouth and Portland.
2. **Eastern Area** comprising all the towns and parishes in the former East Dorset District and parishes in the former Borough of Christchurch.
3. **North Dorset Area** comprising all the towns and parishes in the former North Dorset District.
4. **Purbeck Area** comprising all the towns and parishes in the former Purbeck District.
5. **Western Area** comprising those towns and parishes which are in the former West Dorset District sub-area based on the area around Bridport, Beaminster and Lyme Regis.

The Chief Executive will maintain lists of those towns and parishes eligible for membership of each Area.

# **MEMBERS OF THE TOWNS AND LARGER PARISH COUNCILS COMMITTEE**

BEAMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL

BURTON & WINKTON PARISH COUNCIL

CHICKERELL TOWN COUNCIL

CHRISTCHURCH TOWN COUNCIL

COLEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

HIGHCLIFFE & WALKFORD PARISH COUNCIL

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

LYTCHETT MINSTER & UPTON TOWN COUNCIL

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

ST LEONARDS & ST IVES PARISH COUNCIL

SHAFTESBURY TOWN COUNCIL

SHERBORNE TOWN COUNCIL

STALBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL

SWANAGE TOWN COUNCIL

VERWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

WAREHAM TOWN COUNCIL

WEST MOORS TOWN COUNCIL

WEYMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

WIMBORNE MINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

## **THE DUTIES OF THE AREA SECRETARY**

The Area Secretary provides support to the Area Chairman in the performance of their functions. This includes:

1. The production of agenda for Area Meetings.
2. Electronic distribution of agenda to parishes, representatives and the DAPTC office (for onward distribution to those not on email and posting on the DAPTC website).
3. Booking of venues and refreshments as agreed at meetings.
4. Liaison with speakers prior to meetings.
5. Production of minutes of meetings.
6. Electronic distribution of the minutes and papers from Area Meetings to parishes, representatives and the DAPTC office for onward distribution to those not on email and posting on the DAPTC website.
7. Distribution of electronic information from District councils and Partnerships.
8. Informing the District Council and Partnerships of changes to clerks details when notified.