



## **Constitution of New Horizon – Athlone Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group**

### **Article 1** Name of the Society

The name of the Society shall be the New Horizon, Athlone Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group, hereinafter referred to as ‘the Society’.

### **Article 2** Aims of the Society

- The aims of the Society shall be to assist those who seek asylum and refuge in our midst by welcoming them, caring for them and giving them guidance, advice and assistance during their stay.
- To provide support to individuals and families who having entered the country through the asylum process, become long-term residents of the country
- To inform and involve the local community as we deal with the issues of asylum seekers, multi-culturalism and racism.
- To work with the statutory and voluntary bodies in planning and implementing programmes to support asylum seekers and refugees.
- To keep ourselves informed of Government policy and to try to influence and/or initiate measures that are compassionate and transparent.

**Article 3 . Powers.** To the extent that the same are essential or ancillary to the promotion of the main object of the body as heretofore set out the body may exercise the following powers:

- a) to raise funds and help raise funds further to the aims of the society and for any other charitable purpose.
- b) To purchase or hire equipment or other items which will facilitate meeting the aims of the society
- c) To engage the services of individuals or groups to carry out activities in line with the aims of the society

## 4 Membership

- 4.1 All persons who are interested in furthering the aims of the society shall be eligible to become members of the Society.
- 4.2 Any eligible person shall become a member of the Society on signing their name to the official membership list of the Society.

## **Article 5** The Committee

- 5.1 A committee shall conduct the business of the Society.
- 5.2 The committee of the Society shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting, or, if necessary, at an Extraordinary General Meeting.
- 5.3 The committee shall consist of the following members:- the Chairperson; the Vice-Chairperson; the Treasurer; the Secretary; the Public Relations Officer; [etc.] All members of the committee shall be required to be members of the Society. Additional members may be appointed as necessary to the committee at a General Meeting.
- 5.4 **Chairperson**  
The Chairperson shall have overall responsibility for the affairs of the Society. He/She shall chair all meetings of the Society, save where decided otherwise by the committee or where otherwise provided for in this constitution.
- 5.5 **Vice-Chairperson**  
The Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Chairperson should the Chairperson be absent or unable to fulfill his/her duties.
- 5.6 **Treasurer**  
The Treasurer will manage the financial affairs of the Society, in consultation with the Chairperson. He/She will maintain the financial records of the Society. He/She will prepare and present to the Society the end of year accounts and treasurers report for the Society.
- 5.7 **Secretary**  
The Secretary shall keep the non-financial records of the Society, including the official membership list, and manage the correspondence of the Society and submitting the end of year report..
- 5.8 **Public Relations Officer**  
The Public Relations Officer shall be responsible for advertising the meetings and events of the Society.

## 5.10 **Committee Meetings**

5.10.1 Meetings of the committee shall be held at least fortnightly. All members of the committee shall be entitled to attend and vote at such meetings.

5.10.2 The quorum for a meeting of the committee shall be [four] committee members.

5.10.3 Meetings of the committee shall be convened by the Chairperson or Secretary. At least [two] days notice of a committee meeting shall be given by the Chairperson or Secretary to the members of the committee.

## 5.11 **Term of Office of the Committee**

The committee shall hold office from the [first day of July] subsequent to their election until the [first day of July] of the following year.

## **Article 6** General Meetings

### 6.1 **Annual General Meeting**

6.1.1 The Annual General Meeting of the Society shall take place at a time to be determined by the committee of the Society.

6.1.2 No less than [seven] days notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given. The date and time of the A.G.M. shall be advertised by public notice.

### 6.2 **Extraordinary General Meetings**

6.2.1 An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society may be convened to:

- (i) Hold an election to fill a vacancy on the committee, should one arise;
- (ii) Consider a proposal to amend this constitution or any other governing instrument of the Society;
- (iii) Address any other circumstance not provided for in this constitution.

6.2.2. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be convened:

- (i) By majority decision of the committee; or
- (ii) On foot of a submission to the committee of the Society of a petition signed by not less than [ten] members of the Society.

6.2.3 No less than [seven] days notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be given. The date and time of the E.G.M. shall be advertised by public notice.

## **Article 7** Election of the Committee

7.1 The committee of the Society shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting.

- 7.2 The Chairperson shall act as returning officer for the elections. Where the Chairperson intends to be a candidate in any election, a returning officer, who is not a candidate in any election, shall be appointed by the committee.
- 7.3 All members of the Society shall be eligible for election to the committee.
- 7.4 Candidates for each position on the committee of the Society must be proposed and seconded by members of the Society at the A.G.M.
- 7.5 All members of the Society shall be entitled to vote in the election of the committee.
- 7.6 The election of members of the committee shall take place by secret ballot at the A.G.M. Where the votes obtained by any candidate exceed the votes obtained by any other candidate for that position, he/she shall be deemed elected to that position.

#### **Article 8 Resignations from the Committee**

- 8.1 The resignation of any member of the committee shall be instituted by a letter of resignation to the Secretary of the Society. In the case of the resignation of the Secretary, resignation may be instituted by a letter of resignation to the Chairperson.

#### **Article 9 Management of Finance**

- 9.1 The finances of the Society shall be managed by the Chairperson and Treasurer and of the Society.
- 9.2 Annual audited accounts shall be kept and made available to the Revenue Commissioners on request.

#### **Article 10 Amendments to the Constitution**

- 10.1 Amendments to this constitution may be made at an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society subject to conditions set out in 9.2.
- 10.2 No addition, alteration or amendment shall be made to or in the provisions of this Constitution for the time being in force unless the same shall have been previously approved in writing by the Revenue Commissioners

#### **Article 11 Dissolution of the Society**

- 11.1 The Society may be dissolved by a [two-thirds] majority vote of its membership at a General Meeting. The Society shall fall into abeyance should it fail to validly elect a committee for [two] successive years.

- 11.2 If upon the winding up or dissolution of the society there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, it shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the society. Instead, such property shall be given or transferred to some other charitable institution or institutions having main objects similar to the main objects of the society. The institution or institutions to which the property is to be given or transferred shall prohibit the distribution of its or their income and property among its or their members to an extent at least as great as is imposed on the society under or by virtue of Clause 11 hereof. Members of the society shall select the relevant institution or institutions at or before the time of dissolution, and if and so far as effect cannot be given to such provisions, then the property shall be given or transferred to some charitable object.

## **12. Income and Property**

- 12.1 The income and property of the society, shall be applied solely towards the promotion of its main object as set forth in this Constitution.
- 12.2 No portion of the society's income and property shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit, to the members of the society.
- 12.3 No Officer shall be appointed to any office of the society paid by salary or fees, or receive any remuneration or other benefit in money or money's worth from the society. However, nothing shall prevent any payment in good faith by the society of:
- a) reasonable and proper remuneration to any member of the society (not being an Officer) for any services rendered to the society;
  - b) interest at a rate not exceeding 5% per annum on money lent by Officers or other members of the society to the society;
  - c) reasonable and proper rent for premises demised and let by any member of the society (including any Officer) to the society;
  - d) reasonable and proper out-of-pocket expenses incurred by any Officer in connection with their attendance to any matter affecting the society;
  - e) fees, remuneration or other benefit in money or money's worth to any Company of which an Officer may be a member holding not more than one hundredth part of the issued capital of such Company.