

# CONSTITUTION & RULES OF THE WAYLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

*Incorporating Amending Resolutions up to the AGM 20 11*

1. The name of the association is the Wayland Chamber of Commerce. Hereunder it is referred to as the Chamber.

## **Objects**

2. The objects for which the Chamber is established are to:

- a. Enable traders, merchants, manufacturers, professional persons and others jointly to consider, and to promote by all such lawful means, plans and schemes as may be deemed to further, improve and secure the trading, commercial and other business interests of the town of Watton and its neighbourhood.
- b. Collect, collate, and circulate statistical and other information relating to any business activity for members as may assist them in their business pursuits.
- c. Advance and promote commercial, technical business education, and to print, publish and distribute circulars, bulletins, journals and such other papers as may be necessary to disseminate information.
- d. Borrow money or raise finance required for the purposes of the Chamber, upon such securities as may be determined.
- e. Purchase, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire, any real or personal property, and any rights or privileges which the Chamber may deem necessary or convenient for the purpose of its function.
- f. Sell, improve, manage, develop, lease, mortgage, dispose of or otherwise deal with all or part of the property of the Chamber.
- g. Support, and diffuse information on, the fair principles of trading and discourage all forms of unfair competition.
- h. Create and foster a spirit of goodwill, friendship and unity of purpose amongst members through meetings, discussions, seminars and such other functions that enable members to meet in both business and social circumstances.
- i. Subscribe to and support from Chamber funds such local charities, organizations and institutions as may be deemed worthy and in the interest of the membership as a whole.
- j. Undertake all such lawful activities connected with the attainment of the above objects, provided that the Chamber shall not support with its funds or endeavour to procure the observance by its members or others any restriction or regulation which if an object of the Chamber would make it a Trade Union.

## **Affiliation**

3. The Chamber shall be affiliated, by means of being a single business member to the County Chamber or similar body associated with the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC). Other affiliations may be undertaken in pursuance of the objects of the Chamber and which are not prejudicial to the policies of the BCC.

## **Membership**

4. a. Membership of the Chamber shall be open to all individual persons, companies and firms interested or actively engaged in business in Watton and District upon application. The Executive Secretary may accept new members subject to confirmation of acceptance of applications at a Committee or general meeting.
- b. A membership shall be defined as one business paying one membership fee.
- c. The Committee shall have the power to refuse an application for membership without assigning a reason.

d. Any member whose actions may injure or discredit the Chamber may be expelled from the Chamber by a resolution of the majority of members. Appeals against such expulsion may be heard by a special meeting of the Chamber.

## **Subscriptions**

5. Every member shall pay an annual subscription of an amount to be determined by an Annual General Meeting (AGM) in advance of each year. For subscription purposes there shall be no distinction between businesses in terms of size, turnover or number of employees, and all members of the Chamber shall be treated equally on all Chamber matters.

6. All subscriptions shall become due on the last day of December each year for the following calendar year. No member shall be entitled to vote at any meeting of the Chamber unless the subscription has been paid.

## **Officers and Committee**

7. The Officers of the Chamber shall be a Chairman and Vice-Chairman and either an Executive Secretary or a Secretary and treasurer. The Committee shall consist of at least 9 members, including the immediate past chairman if willing to serve. It shall be elected at the AGM and shall be eligible for re-election every year.

8. The Chairman and Vice-chairman shall be elected at an Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting to take office at the start of the year. The Chairman shall not serve more than two consecutive years in office, and the Vice-chairman shall be an automatic nominee for the office of chairman unless specifically declined.

9. The Executive Secretary shall be appointed by the Committee to carry out the functions of secretary and treasurer, and the Committee shall determine such remuneration as may be required. The Executive Secretary need not be a member of the Chamber. At the discretion of the Committee, an Honorary Treasurer may be appointed at any time, subject to confirmation at a general meeting of the Chamber.

10. The Executive Secretary shall keep:

- a. a record of attendance of members of the Committee, and of members at general meetings.
- b. a record of proceedings of the Chamber.
- c. an up-to-date membership roll.
- d. an account of all monies received and paid by, for and on behalf of the Chamber, and shall present to members at the AGM an audited statement of accounts made up to 31st December each year.

11. The records of the Chamber shall be open, on due notice, for inspection by members at reasonable hours.

12. An independent scrutineer for the annual accounts shall be appointed, normally by election at the AGM.

13. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt additional committee members and to appoint such sub-committees as may be deemed necessary.

14. The AGM shall be held in February each year. An AGM or EGM shall be quorate when at least five voting members are present.

15. There shall be at least 4 meetings of the Committee of the Chamber annually but normally the Committee will meet monthly on the 3rd Wednesday (except August). A Committee Meeting shall be quorate when at least 3 Committee members are present.

16. Any member may attend any Committee meeting of the Chamber by notification to, or at the invitation of, a Committee member. Non-committee members shall not vote at meetings of the Committee; voting rights (see below) apply only to general meetings, for which every member has the right to attend. An extraordinary or special general meeting shall be convened within 14 days of receipt by the Executive Secretary of a requisition in writing from at least six paid-up members of the Chamber.

17. Each member shall have one vote at general meetings of the Chamber, which may be exercised by a show of hands. Before such a vote is taken members may require that it shall be determined by ballot. When a ballot is taken two persons shall be appointed by the meeting to be scrutineers who shall count the number of votes and report to the Chairman who shall declare the result to the meeting. In all cases of an equality of vote, by show of hands or ballot, the Chairman shall have the casting vote.

18. In the absence of the Chairman and the Vice-chairman, members present shall elect a Chairman to preside over the meeting in question.

### **Notices of Motion**

19. Every fully paid-up member has the right to submit a notice of motion in writing to the Executive Secretary, which shall be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

20. Ten or more members who may desire to form a section together with a view to presenting more effectually their particular interests may request the Committee to authorise the formation of a specific Trade Section of the Chamber. Such an authorised Trade Section shall appoint a Chairman who shall report to the Committee. The Committee shall retain full powers and control over any Trade Section so authorised. Any appeal against a decision of the Committee may be made to a general meeting of the Chamber under rules 16 or 19.

21. Members of the Chamber may by notice in writing to the Executive Secretary require the Committee by itself or by the appointment of a Referee or Arbitrators, to undertake the settlement of a dispute between members of the Chamber arising out of any commercial transaction. Any such reference to arbitration shall be conducted under such rules of procedure as the Committee may adopt to secure the settlement of a dispute.

22. No alteration to the Constitution and Rules of the Chamber shall be made except by a resolution duly passed by two-thirds of the members present and voting at a general meeting. Fourteen days written notice of any proposed alterations shall be given to every member.

### **Trade Sections**

23. A notice may be served by the Chamber upon any member either in person or by post in a prepaid letter to the last given address. Postal notices shall be deemed to have been served four days following posting and it shall be sufficient to show that a notice was properly addressed and put into the postal system in a suitable form.

### **Emblems & Copyright**

24. The right to display emblems or insignia of the Chamber is dependent on the business responsible for the point of display being in current, paid-up, membership of the Chamber. Window emblems are issued free to all new members, and, when changes occur, to all members at the discretion of the Committee. Additional and replacement copies are available to members 'at cost'. These emblems remain the property of the Chamber in all circumstances, and shall be returned in case of resignation or lapsed membership. It can be an offence to misrepresent any business; misrepresentation can include falsely displaying membership emblems.