

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE OTLEY CHAMBER

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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE OTLEY CHAMBER

1. NAME

The Chamber shall be called “The Otley Chamber of Trade, Industry & Commerce” (hereinafter called “Otley Chamber”).

2. MISSION STATEMENT/OBJECTIVES

- a) The objectives of the Otley Chamber shall be to promote and represent all business interests in Otley.
- b) The mission is to provide a credible and effective platform for encouraging businesses in the town to flourish.
- c) The aim is to act as a forum for the exchange of ideas, networking, and relevant discussion of information, news and legislation, which will impact on all businesses.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- a) Ordinary membership of Otley Chamber is open to traders, merchants, professional men and women in practice in Otley. It is also open to property owners, companies, firms (sole traders and partnerships), having business, or trading, interests in the town.
- b) Applications for membership shall be considered by the Executive Committee, which may, in its absolute discretion, admit or reject the applicant. The membership secretary will then be requested to amend the members list and database accordingly.
- c) Honorary membership may, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, be offered to long-standing active members on their retirement from their business, trade or profession.

4. SUBSCRIPTIONS

- a) The annual subscription for Otley Chamber shall become due on the 31st January.
- b) If the subscription due for the year has not been paid by the start of the AGM in March, any business in default in this regard will be deemed to be no longer a member.
- c) When a business is accepted as a new member after 1st July, the initial membership subscription payable by that business shall be one half the annual subscription.

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5. MANAGEMENT, OFFICERS/SUB-COMMITTEE(S)

- a) The management and finance function of the Otley Chamber will be entrusted to an Executive (Steering??) Committee.

The composition of that committee shall be:

- President
 - President Elect
 - Deputy President Elect
 - Treasurer
 - 4 other elected members who will take on responsibility for any key functions of Otley Chamber, as and when it is deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee to do so.
- b) All members except the President will from time to time chair sub-committees formed as and when issues and policies demand. The President is an ex-officio member of all sub-committees, but will chair the Executive Committee meetings.
- c) Examples of functions which could require formal sub-committees are website development, marketing, publicity, inter-action with other key organisations and social events.
- d) All committee members will be elected at the Annual General Meeting to be held each March. They will all be elected to serve for one year, but at the end of the term, the President Elect and the Deputy President Elect will be expected to fulfil the roles of President and President Elect respectively in the subsequent year.
- e) Election for all posts will be by Postal Ballot.
- f) A membership secretary will be appointed from the Otley Chamber members by the Executive Committee.
- g) A minute and correspondence secretary will be co-opted by the Executive Committee. The appointment can be either a member or non-member of the Otley Chamber.
- h) Nominations for the Executive Committee appointments should be sent to the secretary by 1 January prior to the AGM. Nominations should be in writing, signed by a fully subscribed member, and should contain a consent acknowledgement by the nominated member.
- i) The Executive Committee may at any time co-opt other members to fill casual vacancies. Co-opted Executive Committee members shall serve until the next elections at the AGM of the Otley Chamber.

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- j) The Executive Committee shall meet as soon as may be practicable after the conclusion of the AGM in each year and thereafter as often as the members may determine between themselves. The quorum of the Executive Committee shall be five members.
- k) Any elected member of the Executive Committee, who fails to attend three successive meetings without good reason, will be expelled from the Executive Committee on the vote of a clear majority of the remaining members.
- l) The Executive Committee shall make regular reports on its activities, and those of any sub-committees, to the members of the Otley Chamber at members' General Business Meetings.

6. MEETINGS

- a) A minimum of four General Business Meetings will be held annually. The meetings will normally be held on the third Tuesday of each selected month, but will not be convened in August and December.
- b) Additional Meetings may be convened provided there is at least one calendar month's notice given to all members.
- c) The Annual General Meeting shall be held in March, and will be followed immediately by a General Business Meeting.
- d) Special Meetings can be held if local circumstances dictate. A minimum of ten working days notice of such meetings must be given to all members.
- e) The President and Secretary will draw up agendas for meetings, in consultation with the Executive Committee. The Agendas will be circulated along with the minutes of the previous meeting at least two full weeks before the meeting to which they refer.

7. VOTING

- a) Every paid up member shall be entitled to one vote. Voting will be by a show of hands. There will, however, be only one eligible vote for each business, even if there is more than one representative from a particular business present.
- b) The President will adjudicate in the event of a dispute over voting eligibility and when a situation arises where numbers of votes are tied, the President will have the casting vote.
- c) Honorary members are not eligible to vote.

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8. ACCOUNTS AND USE OF FUNDS

- a) No money, membership fees, or any gain arising from the work of Otley Chamber shall be applied otherwise than for the benefit of Otley Chamber as a whole or for some charitable or benevolent purposes chosen by resolution of a members' meeting.
- b) Full accounts of the financial affairs of Otley Chamber shall be maintained by the Treasurer and shall be verified (not audited) in every year by an independent accountant qualified as an auditor and appointed by the Executive Committee.
- c) A full audit can be requested through members via a Special Meeting. A copy of the Annual Accounts shall be delivered to every member with the notice convening the Annual General Meeting.
- d) The Executive Committee shall approve all expenditure and any cheques should be signed by any two of three approved signatories appointed and mandated by the Executive Committee.

9. DISSOLUTION

- a) The Otley Chamber may be dissolved by resolution passed at an Annual General Meeting or any Special General Meeting provided that at least 28 days notice in writing of the proposal to dissolve has been given by the Secretary to each ordinary member whose membership is current and their subscription up to date.
- b) Any funds held at dissolution may be donated to another organisation whose aims and objectives are considered by the members to be compatible with those of the Otley Chamber.
- c) Failing 9(b) above, the funds should be awarded to one or more local charities.