

## **SIDMOUTH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CONSTITUTION**

**1.** The name of the Association shall be the Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce (hereinafter called "The Chamber"). Its aim and objectives shall be to promote and protect the trading and commercial interests of the town and immediately surrounding area, defined as the Sid Valley, and to take such action (whether Local, Parliamentary or otherwise) as may be conducive to the welfare of the members, residents and visitors. Any reference to Sidmouth in the Constitution includes the area known as the Sid Valley.

The income of the Chamber shall be applied towards the promotion of its aims and objectives, payment of the cost of affiliation to such local and national bodies as may be approved by the members and the discharge of the Chambers liabilities.

### **2. Aims and Objectives**

- To promote, enhance and protect the commercial, professional and general business interests of Sidmouth and foster friendship and unity amongst its members and residents in the area.
- To provide a support function for members, including business related advice, communication, the opportunity to network and business interaction.
- To be a conduit for the provision of information to members.
- To discuss, promote and where applicable act upon matters to benefit the business interests of Sidmouth.
- To promote the commercial advantages of Sidmouth as a business centre, residential seaside town and tourist area.
- To discuss and where applicable act upon issues that might arise, or already exist, in relation to local business affairs, on behalf of its members.

### **3. Membership**

#### Full Membership Status

Any Proprietor, Firm or Company engaged in the professional or commercial life of the town or its immediately surrounding area shall be eligible to apply for membership. For the purpose of membership the establishment concerned shall be regarded as the member and through the medium of a duly accredited representative shall be entitled to all the privileges of membership.

In the event that the Proprietor, Firm or Company ceases to be engaged in the professional or commercial life of the town then the Proprietor, Firm or Company together with all duly accredited representatives shall officially cease to be a member at the end of the latest subscription period subscribed.

Any application for membership shall require the approval of the Executive Committee before membership is confirmed. By a majority vote the Executive Committee may reject any membership application or cancel any existing membership if it is felt appropriate due to any cause which the Executive Committee deem to be a just and sufficient reason. The Executive Committee are not obliged to assign a reason for its decision, which will be final.

#### Retired Membership (Individual Status)

Any individual formerly engaged in business as Proprietor or duly accredited representative of a Firm or Company in any location (whether in the Sidmouth area

or anywhere else in the United Kingdom) shall be eligible to apply for Individual Membership status if the conditions for Full Membership status are not met.

Individual Membership status can only be applied to an individual. For the avoidance of doubt, that individual is not entitled to appoint duly accredited representatives.

Any application for Individual Membership shall require the approval of the Executive Committee, under the same conditions as outlined in Full Membership above.

Consent to hold contact details

All members, whether they are Full or Retired members, agree to their business or contact particulars being held on the Chambers' database for the purpose of Chamber Membership and consent to their email address being used for the forwarding of Chamber information and communication.

#### **4. Subscriptions**

Full Membership

The amount of the subscription for the year that commences 1 January following the Annual General Meeting shall be determined by the membership at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and shall be due on 1 January in each year. A) New Members joining between 1 January and 31 May pay a full year's membership fee B) New members joining between 1 June and 30 September pay half of the annual membership fee to take them to 31 December C) New Members joining after 30 September pay a full years membership fee which takes them up to 31 December of the following year. If a subscription has not been paid by 31 March in the year it falls due the Executive Committee may in its absolute discretion terminate the membership of that proprietor, firm or company, one reminder will be sent.

Retired Membership

The amount of the subscription for the year that commences 1 January following the Annual General Meeting shall be determined by the membership at the Annual General Meeting and shall be due on 1 January in each year. The subscription will be a nominal amount and as such shall not be offered on a pro rata basis. If a subscription has not been paid within three months of falling due, the Executive Committee may in its absolute discretion terminate the membership of that individual.

#### **5. Benefits of Membership**

The main benefit of Chamber membership is to provide members with a focal point within which to provide an opportunity to network, share business ideas with other members, advertise their business via the Chamber website and to receive communication on Sidmouth and surrounding area matters that might have an effect on their business.

#### **6. Executive Committee**

- a. Responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the Chamber is to be vested in an elected committee consisting of the President, a Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and not less than six or more than ten committee members.

- b. The elected committee members must be fully paid up members at the commencement of their period of office.
- c. Any elected committee member who ceases to be an active member (either Full or Retired) during their tenure shall remain a committee member until the date of the following AGM.
- d. With the exclusion of the role of President which may be held by either a Full or Retired Member the remaining Executive Committee members must consist of no more than three Retired Members at any time at the date of election.
- e. With the exception of the President, the officers and members are to be elected for a period of two years. The President shall be elected for a period of five years.
- f. Officers and members may offer themselves for re-election upon completion of two years service, the President upon completion of five years service.
- g. The Committee may co-opt other Chamber Members onto the Executive Committee. Any co-opted member must offer themselves for election at the next Annual General Meeting.
- h. The Committee may in its absolute discretion dismiss from the Committee any member of the Committee who is absent from three consecutive executive meetings.
- i. The Committee is empowered to appoint such sub-committees as may be necessary to carry out the objects of the Chamber but the Committee shall have power to overrule any decision of a sub-committee.
- j. Not less than five members of the Executive Committee from time to time shall form a quorum; each member of the Committee including the President shall have one vote, in the event of equal voting the Chair shall have an extra vote.
- k. All nominations for service on the Committee signed by the proposer and seconder must be sent by mail or email to the secretary or Chairman 15 clear days before the Annual General Meeting. It will be within the discretion of the Chairman or Executive Committee as to whether a nomination is accepted if the time limit of 15 days is not observed. Details of the nominations will be contained in the Agenda for the Annual General meeting.
- l. By agreeing to be a member of the Committee, each Committee Member acknowledges that they might be called upon to take on a specific role within the works of the Chamber, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, or at any time during the year their assistance might be required to enable the Chamber to fulfil its aims and objective.

## **7. The President**

The President of the Chamber will act as Chair in the event of the indisposition of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

The election of a new President within their FIVE year term may only be made following the resignation of, or the inability of the incumbent to continue as a result of illness or otherwise, and may only take place at the Annual General Meeting of the Chamber.

## **8. The Secretary**

The appointment, remuneration, reimbursement of agreed expenses, terms of reference and termination of employment shall be the responsibility of the Executive Committee.

## **9. Meetings**

A General Meeting of the Chamber Members shall be held not later than 31 March in each year and shall be referred to as THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING when the following business shall be transacted:

- i. Presentation of Reports for the previous year by the Chair the Treasurer and the Secretary including the Chair's of Sub-Committees.
- ii. Adoption of Accounts and setting of rate of subscription.
- iii. The election of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and account examiners.
- iv. The election of Committee Members
- v. Any other business permitted by the Chair.

Every paid-up member of the Chamber shall have the right to submit a notice of motion, in writing, to be in the hands of the Secretary fourteen days before the next General Meeting. All notices of motion shall be placed on the agenda which will be sent to all members with the notice of the meeting. Any business raised at a General Meeting of which previous notice has not been given may be discussed or deferred at the discretion of the Chair.

In addition to the Annual General Meeting the Chamber shall meet on such occasions as the Executive shall determine to consider the report of the Executive and any other committees. A summary of such reports may also be made to members by post, email or announcement at Breakfast Club meetings.

On the written request to the Secretary of not less than ten members, a Special General Meeting of the Chamber shall be convened within fourteen days of such request; notice of such meeting to be conveyed by the Secretary to all the members.

At the Annual General Meeting, General and Special General Meetings a total of ten members shall form a quorum. Every paid-up member through its duly accredited representative has one vote which may be used in relation to each motion before the meeting. In the case of equal voting the Chair shall have an extra vote.

Not later than seven days prior to each meeting the Minutes of the preceding meeting shall be circulated and, if approved, signed by the Chair at the meeting. All communications received by the Secretary shall be read immediately after the confirmation of the Minutes. Speeches prior to a vote on a motion shall be at the discretion of the Chair and all members shall comply with the Chair's directions as to the conduct of all meetings.

## **10. Appointing a Proxy**

If a member of the Chamber is unable to attend a General Meeting that member may appoint another member to act as a proxy for voting purposes. Notification of the appointment of a proxy must be given to the Chairman or secretary prior to the commencement of the meeting in question.

## **11. Constitution**

Alterations or Additions to the Constitution may be made at the Annual General Meeting or any Special Meeting of the Chamber called for that purpose provided that notice in writing of any proposed addition to or alteration of the Constitution shall have been delivered to the Secretary at least one calendar month before the date of such meeting and the Secretary shall have given fourteen days notice

thereof to all members. It shall be within the power of the Meeting to accept any amendment relative to the proposed alterations or addition. No such alteration or addition shall be adopted unless carried by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.

Should the Chamber cease to operate, on the winding up of the Chamber the net assets or liabilities shall be divided equally between all members who, at the date of such winding up, hold Full Membership Status and who have paid their subscription for the current year.

**MARCH 2026**