



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF PLUS AREAS

MODEL AREA CONSTITUTION

Version of Document	Date Changed	Author
Corrected and amended following the November 2008 NEC Meeting	December 2008	The NEC
Amended to include Motion passed at the 2013 AGM	November 2013	The H.G.S.
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Model Area Constitution

Constitution of Area Plus

1. Article 1: Name of Area

1.1. The name of the Area shall be "The.....Area" (hereinafter referred to as "the Area".)

2. Article 2: Purposes

2.1. The Purposes of the Area shall be:

2.1.1. The Area is a voluntary organisation run by its members for its members, who want to participate in and organise a wide range of activities.

2.1.2. The Area shall not be affiliated to any party political organisation or religious body.

3. Article 3: Relationship to the Federation

3.1. The Area shall be a Member Area of The National Federation of Plus Areas (hereinafter: "the Federation").

3.2. The Area shall at all times abide by its obligations under Article 3.2 of the National Constitution of the Federation.

3.3. An addition to or revocation or amendment of the provisions of this Area Constitution or the Area Standing Orders may only be made if the conditions in Article 3 of the National Constitution of the Federation are met, and the Area has received all appropriate consents from the National Executive Committee ("NEC") of the Federation in writing.

3.4. The provisions of this Area Constitution and the Standing Orders shall have effect subject to the provisions of the National Constitution and Standing Orders of the Federation and to anything done according to such last- mentioned provisions.

4. Article 4: Area Committee

4.1. The affairs of the Area shall be managed by an Area Committee.

4.2. The Area Committee shall be responsible for so managing such affairs as to ensure that the policy of the Federation and, subject thereto, the policy of the Area as decided by the Area Conference, is carried out in the Area, so far as it reasonably can be.

4.3. The Area Committee may carry out such business as determined either by this Area Constitution or required by the Area Conference and included in the Area Standing Orders.

4.4. Meetings of the Area Committee shall be held at such times as the Area Chairman in their discretion may direct. Electronic discussion and electronic voting using an agreed system shall be recognised as having the same status as meetings held in person.

4.5. At meetings of the Area Committee:

4.5.1. A number of members of the Area Committee entitled to vote and present equal to half the total number entitled to vote plus one shall constitute a quorum;

4.5.2. If present, the Area Chairman or failing them, the Area Administrator, shall preside, and in their absence from any meeting the Area Committee shall appoint an acting chairman from among its members to preside at the meeting;

4.5.3. Any question to be decided by the Area Committee shall be decided by a majority of members present, entitled to vote and voting PROVIDED that the Area Chairman (or, in their absence, the Area Administrator or other acting Chairman of the meeting) shall be entitled to vote only in the event of a tie, when they shall have a casting vote.

4.6. Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph 4.6.2 of this clause, the Area Committee shall have the following powers:

4.6.1. Power from time to time to appoint from among the members of the Member Groups of the Area sub-committees to whom it may delegate such of its powers as it may from time to time think necessary or convenient for the better management of the affairs of the Area;

4.6.2. Subject to the provisions of the Area Constitution and Standing Orders, power to regulate its own procedure, including power to regulate the procedure of any sub-committee;

4.6.3. Power to act notwithstanding any vacancy in its membership.

5. Article 5: The Area Chairman

5.1. The Area Chairman shall be a full member of one of the Member Groups within the Area (hereinafter called "the Member Groups"). The term of office for the Area Chairman will be one year in duration, elections to take place at the Annual Conference of the Area and the term of office will start on the 1st day of the month following the National AGM.

5.2. It shall be the duty of the Area Chairman:

5.2.1. To preside at all meetings of the Area Committee;

5.2.2. To preside at all Area Conferences within their Area;

5.2.3. To represent the Area at all meetings of the NEC;

5.2.4. To ensure that the Area Membership details are accurate and kept up to date. Membership statistics to be provided at each NEC Meeting.

5.2.5. To ensure so far as lies in their power the proper management of the affairs of the Area; and to inform forthwith the NEC concerning any matter connected with such affairs;

5.2.5.1. Which may by reason of its importance to the Area or the Federation ought to be brought to the attention of the NEC; or

5.3.5.2. In respect of which the NEC requires them to furnish information.

5.3. The Area Chairman shall not hold any post on any Group Committee during their term of office.

5.4. If it shall appear to a majority of the voting members of the Area Committee or the Area Conference that the Area Chairman is failing to fulfil their duties it shall be cause to send to the Area Chairman a statement in writing of their failings and shall afford them a reasonable opportunity of giving an explanation in writing or orally; and if having considered such explanation (if any), the Area Committee or Area Conference is of opinion that the Area Chairman should be removed from office they may be so removed by resolution of the Area Committee or the Area Conference.

5.5. In the event of the death, resignation or removal from Office of the Area Chairman, the Area Committee shall:

5.5.1. Within 14 days notify in writing all Member Groups of such event and shall invite nominations in writing for any full member for the post of temporary Area Chairman to reach the Area Administrator within 21 days of the date of the notice of the Area Committee to Member Groups.

5.5.2. Upon receipt of such nominations the Area Administrator shall forthwith notify in writing each of the Member Groups of the names of those so nominated and invite each of the Member Groups to indicate in writing within 14 days of the date of such notification which of the candidates it would prefer.

5.5.3. For the purpose of deciding how many votes each candidate has received each of the Member Groups shall be regarded as having one vote, and the candidate who received the most votes shall be elected Area Chairman to hold office for the remainder of the term of the former Area Chairman.

5.5.4. In the event of a tie the Area Committee shall have a casting vote.

6. Article 6: Area Committee Officers

6.1. In addition to the Area Chairman, the Officers of the Area Committee shall be:

6.1.1. Administrator

6.1.2. EITHER

6.1.2.1. A Treasurer who has responsibility for both the Area's Finances and its Membership; OR

6.1.2.2. A Treasurer and a separate Memberships Officer.

6.1.3. Such additional officers as the Area Conference shall from time to time consider necessary.

6.2. Each member of the Area Committee shall be a member of one of the Member Groups of the Area with the exception that the NGA (if it exists) can be chaired by the National Chairman. The term of office for all members of the Area Committee will be one year in duration, elections to take place at the Annual Conference of the Area and the term of office will start on the 1st day of the month following the National AGM.

6.3. Eligibility For Election To An Area Committee Post

6.3.1. The holder of the post of Treasurer shall serve for no more than three consecutive years.

6.4. Co-Option

6.4.1. If any position on the Area Committee is left unfilled at the close of the Area Conference, the Area Committee may co-opt any member to the position.

6.4.2. Any position temporarily filled by co-option shall be placed on the Agenda for election at the next Area Conference.

6.4.3. Any member co-opted to the Area Committee shall not have the right to vote at meetings of the Area Committee until their election ratification at the next Area Conference.

6.5. The Area Chairman or a member of the Area Committee shall not hold the post of Group Chairman during their term of office.

6.6. It shall be the duty of each member of the Area Committee to carry out their respective functions as Area Officers as provided in this Area Constitution or the Area Standing Orders and as may from time to time be laid down by the Area Conference when appointing additional officers.

6.7. If it shall appear to the Area Committee that any member of the Area Committee has failed to fulfil their duties it shall cause to be sent to them a statement in writing of such failure and shall afford them a reasonable opportunity of giving an explanation in writing or orally, and if, having considered such explanation (if any), the Area Committee is of the opinion that such member of the Area Committee should be removed from office, they may be so removed by resolution of the Area Committee or Area Conference.

6.8. Death, Resignation, Removal From Office, Etc

6.8.1. In the event of the death, resignation or removal from Office of any member of the Area Committee, the remaining members of the Area Committee shall:

6.8.1.1. Within 14 days notify in writing all the Member Groups of such event and shall invite nominations in writing for any full member to fill the office thereby vacated for the remainder of the term of such former member of the Area Committee, such nominations to be received within 21 days of such notification.

6.8.1.2. A new member of the Area Committee shall be elected by the Area Committee to fill such office as aforesaid from among those nominated, such election to be held by the Area Committee at its next meeting after the time for receipt of nominations shall have expired and in any event within 35 days of such office becoming vacant.

6.8.2. Area Committee members elected in this way shall have the power to vote following so long as Article 6.4 is followed.

6.8.3. The Area Committee may fill the position in accordance with the Co-option Article of this Area Constitution if no nominations are received.

6.9. The duties of the Area Officers are to be included in the Area Standing Orders.

6.10. The Area Chairman and all members of the Area Committee shall present reports to the Area Conference and all Area Committee meetings, the format of said reports to be determined by the Area Standing Orders.

6.11. All members of the Area Committee shall act in co-operation with each other and with the appropriate Officers of the Federation.

7. Article 7: Organisation of the Area

7.1. Member Groups

7.1.1. Each Area shall comprise Member Groups within a geographical or population region of such limits as shall seem to the Member Groups, in consultation with the Area Committee, appropriate and subject to its consent.

7.1.2. All Member Groups shall be regarded as separate financial entities to the Area.

7.1.3. The name of all Members Groups must include the local geographical location of that Group.

8. Article 8: Membership of the Area

8.1. Full Membership

8.1.1. Full membership of the Area is open to all persons over the age of 18 who agree with its Purposes. Persons under the age of 18 may not join the Area.

8.2. Membership And Groups

8.2.1. Full Membership shall be through a Member Group only.

8.2.2. All members shall pay an annual membership fee in accordance with Articles 9.1.1, 9.1.2 and 9.1.3.

Model Area Constitution

8.2.3. New members shall be asked to pay the annual membership fee on or before their 4th attendance, or leave the Member Group.

8.3. Life Membership

8.3.1. Full members may become "Life Members" and be exempt from paying the annual membership fee upon payment of a 'once and for all' fee in accordance with Article 9.1.4.

8.3.2. Life Membership terminates at the age of 80.

8.4. Refusal Of Membership

8.4.1. Membership may be refused by a Member Group (by a two thirds majority of the full members present and voting at a General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting of the Group) or the Area Committee in accordance with its internal procedures, on one or more of the following grounds:

8.4.1.1. Material disagreement, evidenced by conduct, with the fundamental values and objectives of the Federation.

8.4.1.2. The admission of the applicant would be likely to bring the Member Group or any part of the Area or Federation into disrepute.

8.4.1.3. The admission of the applicant would be seriously detrimental to the interests of the Member Group or any part of the Area or Federation.

8.4.1.4. The admission of the applicant would hinder the Member Group or any part of the Area or Federation from acting in pursuance of the said aims and policy of the Area or Federation.

8.4.2. Any person aggrieved by such refusal shall, subject to the relevant procedures of the Area Committee, have the right of appeal as provided by Article 16.

8.4.3. Details of any refusal shall be sent to the Area Committee.

9. Article 9: Finance

9.1. Annual Membership Fee

9.1.1. The annual membership fee for Full Members shall be determined by the NEC of the Federation from time to time.

9.1.2. Nothing in this Constitution shall prevent a Member Group from setting an annual membership fee which is higher than that agreed by the NEC under this Article.

9.1.3. The National Membership fee will be subject to an automatic raise of £1 at the beginning of the National Federations Financial year, without referral to the NEC.

9.1.4. A 'once and for all' payment of 6 times the current annual membership fee entitles a member to exemption from paying the annual membership fee.

9.1.5. Each Member Group shall submit an annual membership fee for each enrolled member to the Area Treasurer (or their representative) within seven days of receipt and in accordance with the internal procedures of the Area Committee.

9.1.6. Applications for renewals of membership will be processed on the basis of issuing the membership card as valid from the date of expiry of their previous membership, except when the period of lapsed membership is greater than 6 months.

9.2. General Finance

9.2.1. The bank mandate shall provide that the signatures of two signatories shall be required to authorise any payment. The National Chairman shall be included as a signatory to any Bank or Building Society account.

9.2.2. It shall be the duty of the Area Treasurer to ensure that the bank mandate is amended from time to time as may be necessary.

9.2.3. If the signatories mentioned in article 9.2.1 include two or more related persons the Area Chairman shall nominate such alternative signatories as they considers necessary so that no two signatories are related to one another.

9.2.4. The accounts of the Area shall be kept by the Area Treasurer under the supervision of the Area Committee and shall be Independently-Examined by a competent person appointed as Independent Examiner by the Area Conference in each year, as follows:

9.2.4.1. the annual accounts of the Area made up to 31st December of the year in which such Independent Examiner was appointed;

9.2.4.2. at any change of Area Treasurer;

9.2.4.3. in any other circumstances in which the Area Committee considers it necessary or desirable that the accounts should be Independently-Examined; PROVIDED THAT no serving member of the Area Committee or the National Executive Committee of the Federation shall be eligible for appointment as Independent Examiner.

9.2.5. The Area Chairman shall be a signatory to all Group Bank and Building Society accounts.

10. Article 10: Transfer of Membership

10.1. Transfer Of Membership Within The Area

10.1.1. An enrolled member of a Member Group shall have the right to transfer their membership to another Member Group, in the following circumstances:

10.1.1.1. The member's current Group has closed in accordance with the provisions of the Group Constitution PROVIDED THAT such application for transfer is made within one month of the date on which the Group closed. Any member who has not applied to transfer their membership within this time shall be deemed to have resigned.

10.1.1.2. The member's current Group has been closed in accordance with Article 12 of the Area Constitution,

10.1.1.3. The member has changed their permanent address such that attendance at their current Member Group is impractical,

10.1.1.4. There are other good reasons why such member should transfer their membership.

10.1.2. The transfer of membership from one Member Group to another shall require the approval of the Area Committee and may be refused by the receiving Member Group in accordance with Article 8.4 Refusal of Membership

10.1.3. An individual who transfers their membership in accordance with this Article shall not be required to pay the annual membership fee until the expiry of their current membership PROVIDED ALWAYS that the Area Committee shall have the right to collect a reasonable levy to cover the administrative costs associated with such transfer.

10.2. Transfer From Another Area

10.2.1. An individual who is a member of another Member Area of the Federation shall have the right to transfer their membership to a Member Group within the Area in the following circumstances:

10.2.1.1. The member's current Area has closed for whatever reason; or

10.2.1.2. The member has changed their permanent address such that attendance at a group within their current area is impractical; or

10.2.1.3. There are other good reasons why such member should transfer their membership.

10.2.2. The transfer of membership shall require the approval of the Area Committee and, except in the case of Article 10.2, of the area from which the member intends to transfer their membership.

10.2.3. The Member Group to which they transfer their membership may refuse the transfer in accordance with Article 8.4 Refusal of Membership.

10.2.4. An individual who transfers their membership in accordance with this Article shall not be required to pay the annual membership fee until the expiry of their current membership PROVIDED ALWAYS that the Area Committee shall have the right to collect a reasonable levy to cover the administrative costs associated with such transfer.

10.3. Transfer To Another Area

10.3.1. An enrolled member of a Member Group shall have the right to transfer their membership to another area which is also a Member Area of the Federation, in the following circumstances:

10.3.1.1. The member's current Group has closed in accordance with the provisions of the Group Constitution.

10.3.1.2. The member's current Group has been closed in accordance with Article 12 of the Area Constitution,

10.3.1.3. The member has changed their permanent address such that attendance at their current Member Group is impractical,

10.3.1.4. There are other good reasons why such member should transfer their membership.

10.3.2. The transfer of membership from one Member Group to another shall require the approval of the Area Committee and is subject to any condition laid down by the area to which the member intends to transfer their membership.

10.3.3. Once a member who transfers to another area under this article is accepted as a member thereof, they cease to have membership of this Area.

11. Article 11: Termination of Membership

11.1. Individual membership may be revoked by a Member Group (by a two thirds majority of the full members present and voting at a General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting of the Group) or the Area Committee in accordance with its internal procedures, on one or more of the following grounds,

11.1.1. material disagreement, evidenced by conduct, with the fundamental values and objectives of the Federation.

11.1.2. conduct which has brought, or is likely to bring, the Member Group or any part of the Federation into disrepute.

11.1.3. the continued membership of the individual would be seriously detrimental to the interests of the Member Group or any part of the Area or Federation.

11.1.4. the continued membership of the individual would hinder the Member Group or any part of the Federation from acting in pursuance of the said aims and policy of the Federation.

11.2. Details of any revocation shall be sent to the Area Committee.

11.3. Membership shall not be revoked unless the member has been notified in writing of the grounds on which revocation is to be considered and has been given a reasonable opportunity to reply.

11.4. In case of urgency, the Group Committee or the Area Committee (by a simple majority of its voting members) may direct that any member may be suspended from the rights and privileges of membership for a period not exceeding one month while the question of termination of their membership is under consideration.

11.5. Any person aggrieved by such a revocation shall, subject to the relevant procedures of the Area Committee, have the right of appeal as provided by Article 16 Resolution of Conflicts. The revocation shall be suspended while the appeal is heard.

11.6. No person whose membership has been revoked shall be eligible to rejoin any Member Group without the prior approval of the Area Committee who shall consult with the Member Groups concerned before reaching a decision.

11.7. Any person whose membership is revoked while they hold any elected or appointed position on any committee within the Area or Federation shall be deemed to have been removed from office from the date that the revocation takes effect.

11.8. No member whose membership is revoked shall be entitled to be repaid any part of any membership fee which they shall have paid whether in respect of a period before or after such revocation of membership.

12. Article 12: Suspension & Closure of Member Group

12.1. Closure Due To Inactivity

12.1.1. A Member Group shall automatically cease to be a member of the Area if it has enrolled no individual members for a period of twelve months.

12.2. Suspension

12.2.1. If it shall appear to the Area Committee, or shall be represented to them by a statement in writing signed by the representatives of three or more Member Groups, that any Member Group has engaged in, or is about to engage in, activities inconsistent with this Constitution then the Area Committee shall investigate such allegations and shall take such action as is deemed appropriate in accordance with the Articles 12 herein.

12.2.2. The rights of a Member Group and its enrolled members under this Constitution may be suspended for a period not exceeding three months by the Area Committee in accordance with its internal procedures, if

12.2.2.1. it is not adhering to this or its own Constitution or;

12.2.2.2. if events have taken place or are about to take place which are or may be seriously detrimental to the Member Group or to the Area as a whole.

12.2.3. A Member Group shall not while suspended be entitled to representation at the Area Conference, or any event organised by the Area Committee or its sub-committees, and its enrolled members shall not be entitled to any rights of membership.

12.2.4. Before suspending a Member Group, the Area Committee shall draw attention of the Member Group to the grounds on which it is proposed to take this action, and shall give the Member Group a reasonable time to answer any allegations and/or take any necessary corrective action. A Member Group which is suspended under Article 12.2 may appeal from that decision as provided by Article 16. The suspension shall be lifted while the appeal is heard.

12.2.5. The suspension of a Member Group may be lifted if the Area Committee is satisfied that corrective action has been taken.

12.3. Closure

12.3.1. A Group may be closed by the Area Committee in accordance with its internal procedures, if

12.3.1.1. it is not adhering to this or its own Constitution or;

12.3.1.2. if events have taken place or are about to take place which are or may be seriously detrimental to the Member Group or to the Area as a whole.

12.3.2. Before closing a Member Group, the Area Committee shall draw attention of the Member Group to the grounds on which it is proposed to take this action, and shall give the Member Group a reasonable time to answer any allegations and/or take any necessary corrective action. A Member Group which is closed under Article 12.3 may appeal from that decision as provided by Article 16.

12.3.3. A Group which is dissolved in accordance with the provisions of the Group Constitution shall be deemed closed when the Area Committee has received notification thereof.

12.3.4. In the case of closure of a Member Group in accordance with Article 12.3 or the provisions of the Group Constitution the Area shall be entitled to all membership fees paid or accrued due in respect of every year that the Group has been opened including the year in which such cessation occurs.

13. Article 13: Area Conference

13.1. Timing

Each Area shall hold at least one conference per year which shall be the Annual Conference of the Area. Areas may hold such other conferences as are necessary and practical within available budget. Electronic discussion and electronic voting using an agreed system shall be recognised as having the same status as meetings or conferences held in person.

13.2. Notification

13.2.1. At least 35 days before the date set for the start of the Area Conference to begin, the Area Administrator shall send notice in writing of the date of the Area Conference to the Chairman of each Member Group. Each Member Group shall immediately acknowledge receipt of such notice.

13.2.2. If within 14 days of dispatch of such notice such acknowledgement is not received from any Member Group, the Area Administrator shall immediately take such further action as he shall consider necessary to acquaint the Group with the contents of the original notice.

13.3. Group Delegates

13.3.1. Each of the Member Groups shall nominate in writing to the Area Administrator two delegates to attend the Area Conference, of whom one shall be the Chairman for the time being of the Member Group, or a representative appointed by him, and the other shall be elected by the votes of a majority of the full members of the Member Group voting at a General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting of the Group.

13.3.2. To be eligible to represent the Member Group members must be Full members of the Member Group.

13.3.3. New Groups which have not yet elected a Committee may be represented by members of the Member Group (or Groups) responsible for developing the new Group PROVIDED THAT the delegates comply with the provisions of this clause.

13.3.4. The Group delegates so nominated of each Member Group shall be exclusively entitled to exercise all rights of voting on behalf of that member Group at the Area Conference and shall be entitled to one vote each.

13.4. Any Plus member or official of the Federation, although themselves not a Group delegate, shall be entitled to attend the Area Conferences and speak thereat, but shall not have the right to vote.

13.5. The quorum at an Area Conference shall be such number of Group delegates as equals the total number of Member Groups within the Area.

13.6. Subject to article 13.7 any question to be decided by the Area Conference shall be decided by a simple majority of the Group delegates present and voting. If an equal number of votes are cast for and against any motion, the Area Chairman or the acting Chairman, shall have a casting vote.

13.7. Any addition to, or revocation or amendment of this constitution shall not be put to the Area Conference unless the procedure laid down in Article 13.10 has been strictly complied with and may be resolved upon only by a majority amounting at least to 75% of the Group delegates to the Area Conference present and voting; and any such resolution shall not have effect unless and until the consent in writing of the NEC shall have been obtained in accordance with Article 3 of the constitution of the National Federation.

13.8. Special Area Conferences

13.8.1. A special Area Conference may be convened upon request made in writing to the Area Administrator by:

13.8.1.1. one half of the members of the Area Committee;

13.8.1.2. one half of the Member Groups;

13.8.2. If the Area Administrator does not within 21 days after receipt of the request convene such a Conference, the Area Committee or the Member Groups so requesting a Special Area Conference may themselves convene such special Area Conference.

13.8.3. Only business that has been placed on the Agenda and circulated in advance may be discussed at the Special Area Conference.

13.9. Business To Be Conducted At Area Conferences

13.9.1. The business of the Annual Area Conference shall be:

13.9.1.1. the election of the Area Chairman, members of the Area Committee, and the Area Representative;

13.9.1.2. the reception of the Independently-Examined accounts;

13.9.1.3. the appointment of the Independent Examiner;

13.9.1.4. the reception of the reports of the Area Committee; and

13.9.1.5. the disposal of business which may, under this Constitution or the Standing Orders, be introduced at an Area Conference.

13.9.2. The business of other Area Conferences shall be:

13.9.2.1. The reception of interim accounts for the year-to-date;

13.9.2.2. the reception of the reports of the Area Committee; and

13.9.2.3. the disposal of business which may, under this Constitution or the Standing Orders, be introduced at an Area Conference.

13.10. Motions

13.10.1. There are two types of Motion which may be debated at an Area Conference: a Motion proposed by the Area Committee; and a Group Motion.

13.10.2. Motions Proposed By The Area Committee

A motion proposed by the Area Committee is one that has been adopted as a motion by the Area Committee in accordance with its own internal procedures.

A motion proposed by the Area Committee shall not be required to be seconded.

13.10.3. Group Motions

A group motion is any other motion that is proposed by a Member Group.

Any such motion proposed by a Member Group shall not be put to the Area Conference or debated or voted upon unless and until it shall have been seconded by another Member Group.

13.10.4. Notice of motions to be moved at an Area Conference shall be sent in writing to the Area Administrator at least 21 days before the date fixed for the opening of the Area Conference.

13.10.5. The Area Administrator shall submit a copy of all such motions to the Chairman of the Member Groups at least 14 days before the date fixed for the opening of an Area Conference.

13.10.6. The priority of Motions shall be determined as follows:

Firstly, all motions of which the Area Administrator has received notice, and has notified to the Member Groups in accordance with article 13.10.5;

Secondly, all other motions of which the Administrator has not received such notice, or which have not been notified to the Member Groups in accordance with the above articles.

13.11. The Area Administrator shall submit a resume of the minutes of the Area Conference within 28 days of the end of the Conference to all Member Groups.

13.12. Standing Orders

13.12.1 Subject to the provisions of the National Constitution of the Federation and of this Constitution, the proceedings of the Area Conference shall be conducted in accordance with the Standing Orders annexed hereto.

13.12.2 The Area Conference may from time to time add to, revoke or amend the Standing Orders by resolution upon a motion in respect of which the procedure laid down in Article 13.10 has been strictly complied with. A 50% majority is required to alter the Standing orders in any way.

13.13 In case of urgency, the Area Chairman, at an Area Conference, may accept a motion for the suspension of the Standing Orders. The delegate moving such suspension must clearly state the nature and urgency of their business, the number of Standing Orders to be affected and the length of time (not exceeding 15 minutes) they desire such suspension to last. At the option of the Conference a further suspension may be allowed.

13.14 No suspension shall take place whatsoever except by resolution passed by two thirds of the votes of the delegates present and voting.

14. Article 14: New Plus Groups

14.1. No new Plus Groups shall be set up within the Area without the consent in writing of the Area Committee being first obtained.

14.2. Member Groups or Plus Members wishing to form a new Plus Group within the Area may apply to the Area Treasurer for financial assistance.

14.3. Subject to the approval of the Area Committee, such financial assistance, whether by way of loan or outright grant, may be given (where sufficient funds are available) on the recommendation of the Area.

14.4. If such financial assistance is given by way of loan, it shall be upon condition that the proposed new Group accept the obligation to repay the loan when the necessary money is available to such group and that obligation is recorded in the Group's accounts.

15. Article 15: Honorary Membership

15.1. Honorary Life Membership

15.1.1. The title of "Area Honorary Life Member" shall be reserved for those Members of the Area who have given stalwart service to the Area Committee or an Area Sub-Committee for a period of at least four years.

15.1.2. They shall not be required to pay any dues levied by the Area or its groups. Any Group wishing to place a nomination for an HLM should do so in writing to the Area Administration Officer at least 28 days prior to the Area Conference date.

15.1.3. Once a member has been elected an HLM, a membership fee shall not be charged to the member.

15.2. Honorary Advisory Members

15.2.1. There may be up to four Honorary Advisory Members of the Area, and the title shall be conferred on the nomination of the Area Committee by an Area Conference by resolution passed by a majority of two thirds of the delegates present and voting.

15.2.2. Any person who in the opinion of the Area Committee has given exceptional service to the Area shall be eligible for nomination as an Honorary Advisory Member.

15.2.3. Honorary Advisory Members shall serve for a one year term of office and a retiring Honorary Advisory Member shall be eligible for re-election.

15.2.4. The duties of an Honorary Advisory Member shall include acting as an advisor to the Area Committee and other such duties as the Area Chairman or Area Committee may request them to assume from time to time.

15.3. Provisions Relating To Honorary Life Members Of The National Federation Of 18 Plus Groups

15.3.1. The Area grants the holder of an Honorary Life Membership card of the former "National Federation of Eighteen Plus Groups" ("National HLM") the same rights as an Area Honorary Life Member, PROVIDED THAT

15.3.1.1. A National HLM will not be entitled to vote in business of the Area or the Member Groups unless they apply for membership of a Member Group. Such application shall not be accepted if the National HLM already holds membership in a Member Group in the Area, or in another Member Area of the National Federation, in which case the procedure in Article 10 must be observed.

15.3.1.2. A National HLM applying for membership of a Member Group shall not be charged any Membership or administration fee for doing so.

16. Article 16: Resolution of Conflicts

16.1. There shall be an appeals panel of the Area, which shall consist of the Area Chairman, the Group Chairmen, and the Honorary Advisory Members.

16.2. The Appeals Panel shall adjudicate on:

16.2.1. any dispute over the interpretation of this Constitution;

16.2.2. any claim that the rights under this Constitution of a member or of a Member Group have been infringed;

16.2.3. any dispute between Member Groups or between Member Group and the Area.

16.2.4. any matter expressly so provided by these Articles or by rules made there under.

16.3. The members of the Panel to hear a particular case shall be selected by the Area Chairman, who shall if appropriate consult with the applicant, subject to the following provisos;

16.3.1. The Area Chairman alone in conjunction with the Area Committee may determine any dispute over the interpretation of this Constitution.

16.4. Any dispute between the Area and a Group shall be heard by the Area Chairman, two Group Chairmen and two Honorary Advisory Members;

16.5. At least three members shall be appointed to hear any other case (and the applicant may refuse to proceed unless at least three members are present), of whom at least one shall be a Group Chairman.

16.6. Except with the agreement of all the parties to an appeal, an appeal shall be heard within one month of the receipt of notice of the appeal by the Area Committee.

16.7. The Area Committee shall have the power to determine the procedures of the panel (provided that the same are not inconsistent with this Constitution).

16.8. Any decision of the panel shall be final and binding upon all those concerned.

17. Article 17: Interpretation

17.1. In any such cases where it shall appear that The Area Constitution is in conflict with the National Constitution and Standing Orders, the National Constitution and Standing Orders will be deemed the

definite document.

17.2. The “ABC of Chairmanship” by Lord Citrine published by NCLC Publishing Society. London SWI shall be used for guidance where appropriate.