

National Association of Welfare Rights Advisers Constitution

1. Name

The name of the Association shall be the "National Association of Welfare Rights Advisers" (hereafter called "NAWRA").

2. Aims & Objectives

a) The aims of NAWRA are:

- To challenge, influence and improve welfare rights policy and legislation
- To promote NAWRA as the national voice of welfare rights advisers

b) NAWRA's objectives are:

- To build a strong national network of welfare rights advisers from all sectors
- To seek to influence government proposals and existing legislation by utilising the expertise of our members
- To identify and share good practice and to promote anti discriminatory practice
- To offer mutual support and provide a forum for discussion
- To facilitate learning workshops and distribute information
- To recognise and challenge discriminatory legislation
- To promote welfare rights issues and encourage effective partnership working

3. Powers

In furtherance of the said aims and objectives, NAWRA shall have the following powers:

- a) To raise funds and receive contributions through subscriptions, donations, grants, and legacies, provided that NAWRA shall not undertake permanent trading activities
- b) To engage paid or voluntary workers to assist in achieving the said objectives
- c) To do all such other lawful things as shall further the attainment of the said objectives

4. Membership

a) Membership shall be open to all welfare rights advisers (whether paid or voluntary) and to other persons interested in furthering NAWRA's work.

b) Membership can be held collectively by a group (or workplace) or individually. One membership gives entitlement to one vote at General Meetings.

c) The committee shall have the right to:

- Approve or reject applications for membership

- Terminate the membership of any member for good reason, provided that the member has the right to be heard by the committee before a final decision

d) Members shall pay such annual subscription as determined at the Annual General Meeting for the financial year (April 1 to March 31).

5. Committee

a) The Committee shall direct the policy and general management of NAWRA's affairs.

b) The Committee shall consist of:

- One representative from each of the following English regions:
 - North East
 - North West
 - Yorkshire and Humber
 - East Midlands
 - West Midlands
 - East of England
 - London
 - South East
 - South West
- Two representatives from Wales
- Two representatives from Scotland
- One representative from Northern Ireland
- One representative nominated by Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG)

c) Every three years there shall be an election for the Committee. Members may stand for re-election without limitation. Any vacancies that arise within the three year period shall be filled by election.

d) The Committee may terminate a member's position before the three-year period for good reason, provided that the member has the right to be heard by the Committee before a final decision is reached.

e) On the formation of each new Committee, the Committee shall elect from its members:

- A Chair
- A Vice-Chair

The CPAG representative shall serve as Treasurer.

f) The Committee may co-opt additional members as it sees fit. Co-opted members shall have full voting rights.

g) The Committee shall meet at least three times per year.

h) Four members shall constitute a quorum.

i) Minutes shall be kept of all proceedings and resolutions.

6. General Meetings

a) An Annual General Meeting shall be held each year, with no more than 15 months between meetings.

b) The Annual General Meeting shall:

- Receive the Annual Report and Accounts
- Elect Committee members as required
- Determine the annual membership subscription
- Handle other necessary business

c) Special General Meetings may be called by:

- The Committee
- Written request of one quarter of the membership

d) Members shall receive at least 28 days' notice of any General Meeting.

e) The quorum for General Meetings shall be one quarter of the total membership.

f) Decisions shall be by simple majority of those present and voting, with one vote per membership.

g) Members may appoint a proxy, who must be a NAWRA member, except for votes on dissolution or constitutional changes.

7. Finance

a) CPAG shall maintain proper accounts for NAWRA and prepare annual statements.

b) Funds shall be applied only to further NAWRA's objectives.

c) All funds shall be held in CPAG accounts and managed according to the current financial protocol.

8. Constitutional Changes

Changes to this constitution require a two-thirds majority at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose.

9. Dissolution

NAWRA may be dissolved by a two-thirds majority at a Special General Meeting. Any remaining assets shall be transferred to a charitable institution with similar objectives.