

CONSTITUTION

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FIRE SERVICE PERSONNEL SOUTH YORKSHIRE BRANCH AND ITS GROUPS

1. Name

The name of this Branch of the National Association of Retired Fire Service Personnel, *hereinafter referred to as the Association*, shall be:

The ***South Yorkshire Branch of the National Association of Retired Fire Service Personnel***, hereinafter referred to as the **'Branch.'**

At present the Branch shall consist of two Meeting Groups, *hereinafter referred to as the "Group" or "Groups"*:

- Barnsley and Doncaster Group, and
- Sheffield and Rotherham Group.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Branch, and its Groups shall be:

- To promote and safeguard the interest of its members and their dependants.
- To promote measures for member's welfare, companionship, and social contacts
- To maintain links with retired members of the Fire Service
- The Branch should not have any political affiliations.

3. Membership

- 3.1 Membership of this Branch of the Association shall be open to former personnel, whether whole-time or part-time who have retired or were discharged (other than on grounds of having committed an offence or misdemeanour) from any Fire and Rescue Service maintained by a Fire and Rescue Authority within the United Kingdom.
- 3.2 Every such person joining the Branch shall be styled a **'Member'** with the right to vote at all Branch meetings.
- 3.3 The Branch or Group, at the membership's discretion, may admit other persons as Associate Members, who will be entitled to all the rights and benefits afforded to members, providing that they pay the prescribed annual subscription at Branch, District and National levels. Those Associate Members and Honorary members who do not pay the prescribed annual subscription will have no voting rights.
- 3.4 The Branch, or a Group may grant Honorary Life Membership to such persons, as they deem appropriate.

- 3.5 The Branch, or a Group may recommend to the Association that a member should be suspended, or have their membership terminated, if the Branch considers that the individual has:
- a) Brought the Association, the Branch, or a Group into disrepute, or
 - b) Carried out any action designed to undermine, or considered to have undermined the Association, or the Branch, or a Group
 - c) Been found to have mismanaged or misappropriated Branch, or a Group's funds, or
 - d) Carried out any other action or misdemeanour, which the Branch or Group considers to have adversely affected the image and/or aims of the Association
 - e) In extreme cases, which warrant an 'instant' judgement being made, the elected officials may make a decision to suspend a member, but will be accountable to the Branch, or Group at the next Branch, or Group Meeting and will have to justify their actions at that meeting, and will notify the Association of their decision
 - f) Any member so suspended shall be entitled to appeal to the Association, in accordance with Association Rule 3.8.

4. Organisation

4.1 At their Annual General Meetings, the Groups shall each elect:

- A Chair
- A Secretary
- A Treasurer, and
- Two Auditors

Who shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting of the Group.

4.2 Each year there shall be a consensus between the Branch Groups as to which Treasurer shall hold the Branch membership income in a bank account This Treasurer will be known as the 'Membership Treasurer'. This Treasurer shall also maintain the Branch membership database, and ensure each Group is aware of the members who have elected to be in a membership Group. At the end of each December the elected Treasurer shall pay the annual membership fees for each Branch member to the Association and pay the remaining membership income to each Group in accordance with its membership at that time.

4.3 If the members so wish, the Branch may be part of No. 3 District of the Association.

5. Responsibilities

5.1. The Chair

- a) The Chair will be responsible for the conduct of all meetings held by the Group, and the Chair will maintain impartiality and be entitled to a casting vote. When the Chair is not available, a substitute should be provided by the Group members present at the meeting.
- b) The Chairs shall have the right to attend such other meetings, as they may consider necessary, to further the aims of the Association.
- c) The Chair shall perform such further functions and duties as may be assigned by the Group.

5.2 The Secretary:

- a) The Secretary will be responsible, under the direction of the Group for conducting general correspondence and keeping accurate records. The Secretary shall on all occasions, as far as it is practicable, act only within the agreed policies of the Branch.
- b) The Secretary will ensure that all members of the Group are informed of all relevant matters. He shall attend Ordinary Meetings and Annual General Meetings, at which the Secretary will ensure that an accurate record is made, to include the names of all those attending, apologies received for non-attendance, matters discussed, and decisions reached. The Secretary will produce this record in the form of Minutes kept on file, copies of which will be made available to all members of the Group. The Secretary will present these Minutes at the next applicable meeting for acceptance and signing by the Chair of that meeting. If the Secretary is absent from a meeting, the Chair of that meeting will arrange for the Minutes to be recorded and passed on to the Secretary for filing and circulation. The Secretary will perform such other duties as specified in this Constitution or as directed by the Group.

Any matters not defined in these policies or queries which may arise are to be referred to the next meeting of the Group before any action is taken, or if urgent, must be referred to the Chair, the Secretary and the Treasurer for their ruling.

5.3 The Treasurer:

- a) The Treasurer shall be responsible, under the general direction of the Group, for the administration of the Group's financial affairs.
- b) The Treasurer shall be responsible for the accounting, records, and financial procedures of the Group in relation to income received, expenditure, assets, and liabilities

- c) The Treasurer shall be responsible for the Group's banking arrangements and shall operate such accounts in the name of the Group.
- d) The Treasurer shall submit a statement of the Group's financial position to all meetings of the ~~Branch~~ Group.
- e) The Treasurer, at the Annual General Meeting of the Group, shall submit a statement of the Group's financial affairs. Two competent auditors, who were elected at the previous Annual General Meeting, should independently audit and sign the statement as true and accurate record of the finances of the association.
- f) In normal circumstances, the Treasurer shall be the only person empowered to incur expenditure on behalf of the Association.

6. District Representation

If required, a member a Group Committee shall attend a District meeting of the Association. When a Group Committee member is unable to attend a District meeting, the Group should appoint a substitute to attend, with the authority to vote, provided that the substitute is a member of that Group.

7. Quorum

The quorum for a Group Meeting and Annual General Meeting shall be six of the Group Members entitled to vote at such meetings.

The six members include the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

Voting shall be by a show of hands, or by ballot, as decided by the Group, all members, other than the Chair shall have one vote. The Chair will maintain a casting vote.

8. Expenses

Reasonable travelling expenses and out of pocket expenses may be allowed to members of The Group attending meetings or otherwise engaged on Association business with the authority of the Group. Expenses are not payable for attendance at Group meetings.

9 Assets

The income and property of the Group shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the 'Aims and Objectives' of the Association as set out in Clause 2 of this Constitution.

10. Subscriptions

10.1 The Financial Year shall be from 1st of January to the 31st of December.

- 10.2 The annual subscriptions shall be payable to the Membership Treasurer for every Member of the Branch.
- 10.3 The Membership Treasurer shall forward the subscriptions to the Association Treasurer as early as possible following the 1st of January each year.
- 10.4 Any member who is more than twelve months in arrears with their subscriptions, shall be removed from the South Yorkshire Branch and National Databases, providing that the Member has been given due notice, by the Membership Treasurer, in writing that they are in default.

11. Annual General Meeting

- 11.1 The Annual General Meeting of the Group shall be held at such time and place as the Group determines, usually in the month of April.
- 11.2 The voting at Annual General Meetings will be by a show of hands.
- 11.3 Any member may submit notices of Motion proposed for the Annual General Meeting. All Notices of Motion shall be forwarded to the Secretary before the 1st of April each year.
- 11.4 Notices of Motion received by the specified date shall be placed on the agenda.
- 11.5 Any closing dates must be rigorously adhered to.
- 11.6 Composition of Motions will be discussed by the Groups prior to submission to the National Association.

12. Special General Meetings

A Special General Meeting of the Branch, or Group may be convened by the Chair, or in response to a request in writing, to the Secretary. The Secretary shall convene such meetings.

13. Alterations to the Constitution

- 13.1 This Constitution should only be subject to review at an Annual General meeting.
- 13.2 This Constitution shall not be rescinded, altered, or added thereto except at the appropriate Annual General Meeting of the Group, at which, such changes must be approved by not less than two thirds of the Members present. Such Notices of Motion shall be given in accordance with Clause 11 of this Constitution and notified to all Group Officers by the Secretary.

14. Dissolution of the Branch

- 14.1 In the event of a Group being unable to continue effectively, for whatever reason, the Group, in accordance with the rules of the Association, may ask the Membership Treasurer, on behalf of the Group, to hold all financial assets belonging to the Group for a maximum period of two years. At the end of which time those assets become the property of the South Yorkshire Branch, with the Group having no further claim to the monies. However, if the Group can reform in the two-year period, then the financial assets will be returned to the Group along with 50% of the net interest (i.e., that is for each year that the account is held by the Membership Treasurer).
- 14.2 In the event of the Branch being unable to continue effectively, for whatever reason, the Branch, in accordance with the rules of the Association, may ask the National Treasurer, on behalf of the Branch, to hold all financial assets belonging to the Branch for a maximum period of ten years. At the end of which time those assets become the property of the Association, with the Branch having no further claim to the monies. However, if the Branch can reform in the ten-year period, then the financial assets will be returned to the Branch along with 50% of the net interest (i.e., that is for each year that the account is held by the National Treasurer).
- 14.3 The Branch or Group shall not be dissolved except by a Special General Meeting, convened for the specific purpose.
- 14.4 The Branch or Group shall not be dissolved unless two thirds of the Members present vote in favour of dissolution.
- 14.5 If the decision is taken to dissolve the Branch or Group, then it shall be competent for the Members present, at this Special General Meeting, to arrange for procedures detailed in 14.1 or 14.2 of this Constitution to be carried out.
