

Breconshire Local & Family History Society
Cymdeithas Hanes Lleol a Theuluoedd Brycheiniog

Terms of Reference

(Version 1.0 – created 22 March 2011)

The **Constitution** of the Society sets out clauses relating to the election and purpose of the **Management Committee (The Committee)**, and provides some guidance on the way the Society should be run. However the purpose of these **Terms of Reference** is to ensure the consistent and smooth management of the Society.

The **Terms of Reference** document is a working tool and may be changed or amended by the Management Committee at any time.

Holding Committee Meetings

Job Descriptions: Every member of the Committee should be given a job title and written job description which is agreed with the individual at the time of their election. The allocation of tasks within the Committee may vary depending on the strengths of the individual members.

Length of Term in Office: The officers (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) are elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. It is advisable that they do not serve for more than three consecutive years in office.

New Members: Potential new members of the Committee may be invited to attend one or more committee meeting(s) as an observer in advance of their nomination at the AGM.

Agenda: The Chair and Secretary will usually draw up the agenda for Committee meetings but any member of the Committee may ask for items to be added to the agenda. The Agenda will be sent to all Committee members at least seven days before the meeting to which it refers.

Communications: Notice of meetings and other communications among the Committee will be sent by electronic mail whenever possible. An email normally arrives on the day it is sent so committee members should contact the Secretary if they suspect there is a problem.

Minutes: The Secretary will prepare minutes of each management committee meeting. The draft minutes should be sent to the Chair for his/her agreement before circulation to the other members of the committee. The minutes should be sent to members with the agenda for the next meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting will be agreed at each Committee meeting when the Chair will sign the approved minutes. The Secretary will maintain a paper copy of the signed minutes from Committee Meetings, Annual General Meetings and Special General Meetings.

Planning: The Committee may wish to draw up an outline of projects, activities or research to be carried out over the next 12 months. The Committee may draft a timetable to ensure that tasks allocated to members of the Committee and members of the Society constitute a reasonable workload.

Setting up Sub Committees

It is sometimes advisable to set up a small sub-committee to be responsible for a particular activity, project or piece of research. The sub committee should:

- i. Have clear tasks and objectives.
- ii. Have a limited life-span.
- iii. Be able to appoint or co-opt individuals to serve on the sub committee. These individuals need not be members of the Society.
- iv. Report on a regular basis to the Committee.

The Committee must review the activities of the sub-committee regularly to ensure that it still has a clear function and purpose. If necessary, the Committee may dissolve the sub committee at any time.

Management of Financial Matters

Contact with Members: A statement of the Society's finances should be made available to any member of the Society within seven working days of receipt of a reasonable written request.

Budgeting: At the start of each financial year, the Committee should prepare a draft budget for the coming year. This will establish expected income and expenditure and will assist financial management through the year.

Investments: The Society's funds will be held in a bank account for day to day purposes. For longer term investment of funds, subject of the approval of the Committee, secure investments may be made to attract a better rate of interest. The Committee may wish to seek external expert advice on investments.

Restricted Funds: The Society may establish separate bank accounts for specific projects such as money raised for a specific purchase or grant income. The income and expenditure of restricted funds should be clearly set out in the annual accounts.

Reporting: The Treasurer should present a summary of all income and expenditure to every management committee meeting. If the Treasurer is unable to be present at the meeting, a written summary should be submitted through the Chair.

Approval of Expenditure: Every item of expenditure must be covered by a receipt. As far as possible all expenditure must be agreed by the Committee in advance. However, between meetings:

- i. An individual member of the Committee may make expenditure up to £20.00 and make a written request for reimbursement at the next management committee meeting. The Committee may refuse reimbursement if it considers the expenditure was not in the best interests of the Society.
- ii. Any expenditure between £20.01 and £50 may be approved in advance by the Treasurer and one other member of the Committee. Only one such payment may be made between management committee meetings.
- iii. Any expenditure over £50 requires the prior approval of the Committee and must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Signing of Cheques: The constitution states that TWO members of the Committee must sign all cheques. Any member of the Committee may be nominated as a signatory, with four members registered as signatories. No signatories may sign a blank cheque nor sign a cheque made payable to themselves. The signatories must also sign the cheque stub and/or claim form in order that it is clearly recorded who signed for every payment.

Changing Signatories: Any changes to those registered as signatories at the bank must be approved by the Committee and recorded in the minutes. Banks often require a copy of the signed minutes before any changes can be made.

Forward Funding: No forward funding or ‘petty cash’ may be given to any person or organisation without prior agreement of the Committee. Such agreement must be recorded in the minutes.

Re-imbusement: All claims for re-imbusement should be made on a Claim Form and accompanied by the appropriate receipts(s). The Committee may refuse reimbursement if it considers that the expenditure was not in the best interests of the Society.

Presentation of Annual Accounts: When the turnover of the Society is low (under £2,500 per annum) the Treasurer may present a written statement of account to the members at the Annual General Meeting for their approval. As the turnover increases the Committee may ask for the accounts to be examined annually by an external financial advisor. Guidance for this is provided by the Charity Commissioners or other advisory bodies.

General

In Case of Dispute: The Committee may call on the services of an external mediator to help resolve any disputes or disagreements. For example, the Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations (PAVO), or another body may be asked to assist.