

# Association of Retained Council Housing Constitution

March 2006

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## 1 The Association

- 1.1 The Association shall be called the Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH)

## 2 Aims

- 2.1 The overall aim of the Association is to act as a Forum to provide mutual support to those local authorities and their residents who have chosen to retain ownership and management of council housing. In particular, the Association seeks to:
- 2.1.1 To lobby Government for a sustainable long term financial strategy to support residents choice for retention of Council housing in local authority ownership and management.
  - 2.1.2 To share good practice and exemplify the successes and long term benefits of local authority ownership and management.
  - 2.1.3 To champion the concept of a comprehensive housing service and the integral role of retention of the housing stock to local authorities strategic and enabling role.
  - 2.1.4 To promote opportunities for collaborative working and joint commissioning of services and policy development to support the objectives of stock retention.

## 3 Membership

- 3.1 **Full membership** of the Association is open to all local authorities that have a 'signed off' Housing Option Appraisal to retain ownership and management of all or part of their housing stock. Full Members will have voting rights at the Annual General Meeting and will be eligible for election to the Executive Board.
- 3.2 **Associate membership** of the association is open to all local authorities that have resolved formally to pursue stock retention but have yet to achieve "sign off" to their option appraisal. Associate Members will be entitled to all benefits of full membership with the exception of the right to vote at the Annual General Meeting and the right to stand for election to the Executive Board.
- 3.3 All Members will be required to pay the appropriate annual membership fee, as shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting. Payment shall be made on demand of the Treasurer within 30 days. Failure to pay the annual membership fee will disqualify the organisation from membership of the

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Association. Member shall mean the local authority and not the individuals representing that authority.

## 4 The Executive Board

- 4.1 The Association shall be managed by the Executive Board in accordance with the wishes of the full members.
- 4.2 The Executive Board will be elected by ARCH full member authorities, (each local authority having one vote) and will consist solely of representatives of member authorities.

Member authorities will be represented by a Councillor holding the position of Cabinet Member and one officer. In addition there will be a tenant/leaseholder member elected from a Full Member authority.

Whenever possible a political balance will be maintained. A Chair, 2 Vice-Chairs, Secretary and Treasurer will be elected from Executive Board members. The Executive Board will comprise

### Executive Board

- |                           |                                       |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| - Chair                   | - Secretary                           |
| - 2 x Vice Chair          | - Treasurer                           |
| - Executive Board members | - (Tenant/leaseholder representative) |

The offices of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer will be elected by the Executive Board.

- 4.3 Each Local Authority on the Executive Board will have one vote. Decisions will be made on majority votes with the Chair having a casting vote.
- 4.4 The Executive Board shall meet at least 3 times a year. 4 local authority members shall form a quorum.

## 5 Nominations – Elections and Terms of Office

- 5.1 The election for members of the Executive Board shall be by voting at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Association. Nomination for the election to the Executive Board must be given in writing to the Secretary at least 45 days before the AGM. All nominations must be supported by two members of the Association. Existing Board members may be elected unopposed at the AGM.

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## **6 General Meeting**

- 6.1 There shall be an AGM of the Association on a day to be determined by the Executive Board and within 15 months of the previous AGM.
- 6.2 A special meeting can be called by the Executive Board or by a request of the Secretary signed by 25 percent or more members. Special or Extra-Ordinary General Meetings called by members must be held within 75 days of the request being received by the Secretary.
- 6.3 All meetings require at least 45 days notice to members.
- 6.4 Any member wishing to put a resolution to the AGM or Special General Meeting must do so in writing to the Secretary not less than 45 days before the meeting is held, and all resolutions must be circulated to members at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- 6.5 Each member authority shall have one vote on every resolution put before a General meeting. Any member unable to be present at a General Meeting may have a postal vote.
- 6.6 25 percent of the membership shall form a quorum for all General Meetings.

## **7 Finance**

- 7.1 The financial year of ARCH will run from 1 April to 31 March. Membership of the Association will run for 12 months and will be charged on a pro-rata basis.
- 7.2 The accounts of the Association shall be subject to an annual audit and will be presented to each AGM.
- 7.3 The Executive Board shall have power to authorise the payment of any reasonable expenses incurred by members in furtherance of the aims or activities of the Association.
- 7.4 No member may profit financially from the affairs of the Association.
- 7.5 In the event of the dissolution of the Association the Executive Board, then in office, shall remain in office until all the affairs of the Association have been properly terminated. Any funds remaining after payment of debts and obligations shall be distributed equally amongst remaining member authorities.

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## **8 Management of the Association**

- 8.1 The Executive Board shall have the power to appoint full-time, part-time or seconded employees to undertake such services for the Association as are deemed necessary.
- 8.2 The Executive Board shall have the power to procure services from other bodies to undertake such work for the Association as agreed by the Association.
- 8.3 The Executive Board shall have the power to withdraw the membership of any member authority which does not abide by the rules or any code of practice agreed by the Executive Board of the Association, or brings the Association into disrepute or makes party political statements. In such circumstances, the local authority concerned must be notified 30 days in advance of the proposed withdrawal of their membership and will be given the opportunity to present an explanation of their conduct either in person or in writing, with representation if required. Any authority ceasing to be a member of the Association will forfeit all rights to and claims upon the Association as from the date of withdrawal of membership.
- 8.4 Notice of a proposal to change any clause of the constitution is subject to the same conditions as prescribed for any resolution to be put before a General Meeting. Members may cast their votes for such constitutional changes in writing through the Secretary of the Association. Constitutional changes require the majority support of the votes cast before adoption.