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# **BIRMINGHAM FABIAN SOCIETY**

## **CONSTITUTION**

### ***Invariable Items***

1. The society shall be known as the **Birmingham Fabian Society** and in this constitution shall be described as 'the society'.
2. **Objects.** The objects of the society are identical with those of the Fabian Society. The society consists of socialists. It aims at the establishment of a society in which equality of opportunity will be assured and the economic power and privileges of individuals and classes abolished through the collective ownership and democratic control of the economic resources of the community. It seeks to secure these ends by the methods of political democracy. The society, believing in equal citizenship in the fullest sense, is open to persons, irrespective of sex, race or creed, who commit themselves to its aim and purposes and undertake to promote its work. It also aims at the implementation of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It seeks the creation of effective international institutions to uphold and enforce world peace. Its activities shall be the furtherance of socialism and the education of its members and the public on socialist lines, by the holding of meetings, lectures, discussions groups, conferences and the promotion of research and by any other appropriate methods.
3. **Affiliation to the Fabian Society.** The society affiliates to the Fabian Society and adopts the conditions of membership laid down in the rules of the Fabian Society and any bye-laws laid down by the Executive Committee of the Fabian Society, whose declaration as to whether the society fulfils and continues to fulfil the conditions laid down for a local society shall be final. The society shall pay a minimum affiliation fee of the same value as the full annual rate of subscription for an individual national member to the Fabian Society and a fee of £1 per year for each member above the first ten. Fees need not be paid for those members who are also members of the national society. The society shall apply for recognition to the Executive Committee of the Fabian Society and shall send to the central office a copy of these rules and any amendments or bye-laws made from time to time.
4. **Resolutions of a political character.** The society agrees to submit no resolution of a political character expressing an opinion or calling for action, to any body to which it affiliates.
5. **Affiliation to the Labour Party.** It shall rest with the executive committee of the

local society to decide when the society shall affiliate to the constituency Labour Party once a period of six months has elapsed from the date of its recognition. The local society must obtain the agreement of the Fabian Executive Committee on the Constituency Labour Party/Parties to which it wishes to affiliate. Members of the society will then become members of the Labour Party by affiliation.

6. **Associates.** Persons interested in the work of the society who do not wish, or are ineligible, to become affiliated members of the Labour Party may become associate members. The right to refuse associate membership is vested in the committee. Associates may not hold office in the society and have no voting rights. Associates may not represent the society.
7. The National Executive Committee shall have the power to intervene in the running of a local society, amend its rules or de-recognise it in the event of unacceptable practice which brings the national society into disrepute.

### ***Variable Items***

8. **Subscriptions.** The rates of subscriptions shall be as determined by the society's Executive Committee payable for the whole or part of the financial year. Subscriptions shall be paid to the honorary treasurer and a receipt obtained. (See footnote i).
9. **Affiliated organisations.** Organisations eligible for affiliation to the Labour Party can also affiliate to the local society and may appoint one delegate who has voting rights. **Associated organisations.** Organisations which do not wish or are not eligible for affiliation can become associated bodies on the same conditions as associated members.
10. **Annual General Meeting.** The affairs of the Society shall be governed by the annual general meeting of members, which shall be held not more than 12 weeks after the end of the financial year (see footnote ii). The secretary shall give members at least four weeks' notice in writing of the date of the meeting. All resolutions calling for an amendment of the constitution shall be sent to the secretary at least a fortnight before the annual general meeting and circulated to members a week before the meeting. The honorary secretary shall submit a report of the activities of the society and the treasurer a financial report to the meeting.
11. **Executive committee.** The executive committee shall be elected at the annual general meeting and be vested with the authority to carry on the affairs of the society. The executive shall consist of the following officers: - chair, vice-chair, treasurer, secretary and three members. The executive committee shall have the power to co-opt up to four additional members and fill vacancies. Nominations for officers shall be submitted in writing to the secretary or to any other persons designated by the executive committee, at least seven days prior to the annual general meeting. Nominations for other members of the executive committee

shall be taken at the annual general meeting. All nominations shall be seconded and the consent of the person nominated shall be obtained. Five members shall constitute a quorum. The executive committee shall have the power to create further officers and set up sub-committees. The executive committee shall be responsible for ensuring that lists of fully paid-up local members, who are not also national members and who are entitled to take part in the election of the Executive Committee of the Fabian Society and in annual or special general meetings, are sent up to central office on demand.

12. **Special meetings.** A special general meeting of all members may be called by the executive committee, or at the request of one third of the members of the society made in writing to the executive committee. The business to be discussed shall be stated in the notice calling the meeting and no other resolutions requiring changes in the constitutions shall be passed.

13. **Voting rights for elections of the Fabian Society.** Fully paid up members of the society, provided that the society remains recognised by the Executive Committee of the Fabian Society, and their names have been received at the central office together with all dues, shall have the right to take part in the Executive Committee of the Fabian Society and in other elections organized by the Society. They shall also have the right to vote at the annual general meetings. (See footnote iii).

14. **Amendments to the constitution.** Amendments to the constitution of the local society shall require a majority vote of members present at the annual or special general meeting. No amendment shall be introduced that causes the constitution to violate the conditions laid down for local societies in the rules of the Fabian Society. (See footnote iv).

H:\lp\fabianlocal.doc 8th April 2004. Reviewed by Birmingham Fabian Society and agreed in principle at the AGM 9th July 2013

#### Footnotes

- i. Many societies find it desirable to charge variable subscription rates. This clause does not preclude the right of local societies to admit some members at preferential rates. Local members have no rights in the national society unless affiliation fees are paid for them.
- ii. The Financial Year shall be from 1<sup>st</sup> January to the following 31<sup>st</sup> December.
- iii. The local society secretary shall be responsible for sending in the names and addresses of those members who are not national members when requested by central office. To ease our work we ask the secretary to send us stamped addressed envelopes, but not until requested please.
- iv. Notice of any amendment should be sent to the local societies secretary

*This Constitution was agreed in principle at the AGM held 9<sup>th</sup> July 2013*

*Signed.....Chairman Date.....*

*Signed.....Secretary Date.....*