

**Minutes of the General Body meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2017 – 3:30 PM to 6:00PM at MMA Office, Gorton Mount Primary School, Mount Road, Manchester M18 7GR.**

**Attendees:** 33 members attended the meeting which started at 3:30PM. Please refer to the registration list in the minutes book for full list of attendees.

## **1. Welcome and Introduction**

The meeting started with a minute's silence in remembrance of the nearest and dearest who departed us recently. Then the President welcomed the members to the meeting and presented the agenda of the meeting. President then briefed the meeting that the main agenda item for this meeting is to decide whether to register the association as a Charity and to compare the clauses in the standard charity constitution provided by the Charity Commission with MMA's constitution so as to decide which clauses if any contradicts with MMA's constitution. He then invited Mr Ahmed, the Charity Consultant, to do a short presentation about the merits and demerits of registering as a Charity.

Mr Ahmed, explained that while becoming a charity will require, establishing proper governance structures including detailed minutes of meetings, audited and verified accounts etc, since MMA got most of this in place already (e.g. detailed minutes publicly available on the website, proper accounting system etc), it makes perfect sense to register as a Charity. He also reiterated that as the annual turnover of the association is over £5,000 at the moment and since most funders will prefer funding charitable organisations, it is in MMA's interest to register as a Charity.

## **2. Charity Registration and New Constitution**

The Secretary then did a detailed PowerPoint presentation which included a comparison between the MMA constitution and the Charity Commission proposed constitution. The following clauses which are different from the MMA constitution were specifically discussed and the general body agreed to propose these changes to the Charity Constitution. It was also decided that if the Charity Commission opposes the inclusion of any these clauses, the Executive Committee could take the decision to remove these from the new constitution without going back to the general body.

1. It was decided to propose the current objectives to the Commission but, since the Charity Consultant (Mr Ahmed), mentioned that due to equality laws the charity commission might not accept it. It was agreed that, if that happens, the standard objectives for community organisations proposed by the Charity commission would be acceptable and we just need to tighten the membership criteria.
2. Under 'admissions of new members', it was decided to propose that only individuals can be members of MMA



3. Under 'admissions procedure', it was decided to propose an increase in the number of days for notifying the applicant to 31 days as there is usually only one meeting of the executive committee in a month
4. Under 'admissions procedure', it was also decided to propose that the Charity Trustees can only refuse an application for membership after confirmation from the General Meeting of the members.
5. Under 'termination of membership', it was agreed to reduce the period for paying dues to 6 months from current 2 years as this will make collection of dues and accounting much easier. Mr Polson Thottapilly requested his opposition to this decision to be noted in the minutes. It was decided that the annual subscription for that calendar year will fall due on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March every year.
6. It was agreed that the people who lose membership due to non-payment of dues can apply for new membership at any time after clearing their dues.
7. It was decided that since the proposed structure in the Charity Constitution is individual membership, it was decided to change, the annual subscription fees to £10 per individual member and the new membership fees to £10 per individual member.
8. Under 'Calling general meetings' it was decided to reduce the number of members required to request a General Meeting to 10% from the current 20% as this in effect will be the same number as, as per the Charity constitution, since it is individual members the total number of members will double.
9. Under 'Quorum at general meetings' it was decided to propose to increase the number of minutes from the notified starting time for achieving the quorum to 30 minutes
10. It was decided to propose an amendment to include the roles of President, Vice President, Secretary, Joint Secretary and Treasurer as trustees who are also Office Bearers as per the current structure in MMA
11. Under 'Eligibility for trusteeship', it was decided to propose the inclusion of the following two clauses in the Charity Constitution
  - No one is entitled to act as a charity trustee if they haven't completed at least one full year as a member within the current membership period.
  - No one is entitled to act as an Office Bearer if they haven't completed two years as a paid member within the current membership period and have completed at least one year as a trustee.
12. Under number of 'Charity Trustees', it was decided to make the minimum number of trustees to seven and the maximum to fifteen.
13. Under 'Elected Charity Trustees', it was decided to propose that all elected charity trustees shall retire from office at every annual general meeting
14. Under 'retirement and removal of charity trustees', it was decided to propose a reduction in the period of time a trustee can be absent without permission to 3 months.
15. Under 'reappointment of charity trustees', it was decided to propose the following new clause



16. Those who have more than 50% of unapproved apologies or absence in the previous year's charity trustees' meetings are not eligible to appear in the election of the following two executive committees.
17. It was decided to propose that any charity trustees may request the Secretary or the Joint Secretary to call a meeting.
18. It was decided to propose the President, if present, shall preside the trustees meeting and the General Meeting.
19. Under the 'Procedure at meetings', it was decided to propose that the quorum will be 50% of the total number of charity trustees rounded to the next whole number.
20. Under 'Execution of documents' it was decided to propose that documents should be executed by two people from among the President, Secretary and Treasurer.
21. Under 'amendment of constitution', it was decided to change the majority required at a general meeting to amend the constitution from simple majority to 75% of the votes cast.
22. Under 'voluntary winding up or dissolution' it was decided to propose that the association can only be dissolved by a resolution passed by 75% of the total members of the CIO

Following lengthy discussions and amendments to the standard constitution template of the Charity Commission the meeting adopted the said constitution. Furthermore, there was consensus on the notion of presenting this to the Charity Commission and agreeing with the final statement that would best reflect the spirit of the discussions which took place therein. It was further agreed that the related matters would be reported upon in the Executive Committee meetings until such time that the charity registration confirmation has been received.

### **3. Code of Conduct for the Executive Committee**

The Secretary presented the new code of conduct for the Executive Committee which was developed by the sub-committee appointed by the General Body. The Secretary highlighted the changes proposed by the Executive Committee. These changes were;

1. Rewording point 7 under Powers and Responsibilities as below
  - We will consider carefully whether executive decisions may adversely affect the community, MMA schools and activities.
2. Removing the phrase, 'our actions within the association and the local community will reflect this' from point 8
3. Deleting point 10 as there are no procedures established for this
4. Amending clauses 1 and 2 under the Breach of this Code of Conduct so that any breach of this code is referred to the three member Disciplinary Committee appointed by the General Body.
5. It was decided that Mr Jaya Chandran, Mr Vinod Kumar and Mr Mathew James will be the Disciplinary Committee members for this year.



6. It was agreed that point 3 under the breach of this code be amended as below
  - Any allegations against any committee members should not be made outside the committee meeting.

#### 4. Any other business

There were no other items discussed under this agenda item