

# CONSTITUTION

## BRIDGEND TOWN TWINNING ASSOCIATION

*Committed to European understanding through twinning and friendship links*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- (a) The Association shall be known as the Bridgend Town Twinning Association, hereinafter referred to as the " Association".
- (b) The Association comprises the Executive, that is, the elected officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) and the enrolled and associate members.
- (c) The Association is recognised by the Council as the authorised Association carrying out the functions of Town Twinning and Friendship Link delegated by the Council by whom the Charters/Agreements were signed in 1971 and 1994.
- (d) The activities of the Association shall be of an apolitical nature at all times.

### 2. OBJECTIVES

- To promote and foster goodwill, friendship and understanding between the citizens of Bridgend and those of Langenau, Germany, Villenave d'Ornon, France and Hechtel-Eksel, Belgium and those of any other towns with which the Association later forms links; recognising that civic links will be authorised by Bridgend Town Council.
- To promote and encourage contact between the peoples of the areas involved, specifically Villenave d'Ornon, Langenau and the Hand of Friendship with Hechtel-Eksel, regardless of status, or religion, or political belief as expressed in past and present signed Charters.
- To develop personal contacts and to promote exchanges of a cultural, social, educational and business nature as expressed in past and present signed Charters.
- To recognise the significance and importance of the European Charter, signed in 2014 and to work towards its values and objectives.
- To support the objectives of the Three Year Business Plan in the European Charter.

### 3. BOUNDARIES

- The Association's area of activities shall be within the County Borough of Bridgend, to include all those Community and Town Councils, which are prepared to support student and adult exchanges together with business interaction to further Bridgend's economic interests.
- Financial support, shall in the case of Bridgend Town Council financial support and/or grants, be limited to residents of Bridgend Town.

### 4. POWERS

The Association, acting through its Officers, will do all things necessary or expedient for the fulfilment of its objectives including:

- Organising and running fund-raising activities to support working towards the Association's objectives.
- Bringing together representatives of local voluntary organisations and any other interested individuals, as and when appropriate.
- Collecting and disseminating information on all matters relating to its objectives;

- Writing, printing or publishing in whatever form as shall further its objectives and issuing or circulating the same, including drawing up policies as and when required. Refer to Appendices A, B and C for the Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy as laid out by BCBC, the suggested Government guidelines to be implemented in the event of Acts of Terrorism and the Local Authority's Educational Visits Policy.
- Insuring and arranging insurance cover and indemnifying its members and other volunteers from and against all such risks incurred in the course of the performance of their duties, having undertaken an appropriate risk assessment.
- Any such insurance shall not extend to any claim arising from any act or omission which the Officers (or any other member) knew to be a breach of trust or to be in reckless disregard of whether it was a breach of duty or breach of trust or not.
- Any such insurance does not extend to any personal or medical cover or any loss of personal possessions.

## **5. MEMBERSHIP**

Membership shall be granted, (irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, race, age, disability, religious or other) to:

- All individuals of 18 years and over who are interested in furthering the work of Bridgend Town Twinning.
- Any business or voluntary organisation, which is interested in furthering the work of the Association, can apply for corporate membership.
- The Membership and Hosting Secretary is responsible for keeping the register of enrolled and associate members, collecting subscriptions annually and contacting those members whose attendance has lapsed. The Membership and Hosting Secretary will report back to the Executive. Such details will not be for public discussion. A long-term absence of six months or more may be considered to be a resignation unless there are mitigating circumstances.
- If a member resigns and later wishes to come back, the Executive will make an appropriate decision considering all aspects of the resignation.
- On election, the Mayor of Bridgend may be invited to be the Honorary President of the Association in an ex officio capacity. If this offer is not accepted, the Association may invite a person of some standing in the community to be the Honorary President in a nominal, ex officio role. The position will stand for twelve months and will be renewable at the end of that term at the invitation of the Association.

## **6. CODE OF CONDUCT**

- All members of the Association will be expected to respect the other members during meetings in the way they speak to them and how they respond to their opinions.
- Any deviation from this respectful way of behaving, be it physical, verbal or in writing, with the intention of harassment, belittlement or intimidation, will meet with an appropriate response from the Executive and may result in that person being asked to leave the meeting, with the possibility of being banned from future meetings temporarily or permanently.
- Communication between members outside meetings should be equally respectful.
- See Appendix D for the full Statement of the Code of Conduct.

## **7. FINANCE**

- The Association shall have the authority to raise finance, to receive donations and direct grants and to have an independent responsibility for its expenditure.

- Application for grant aid may be made to the Bridgend Town Council and to any other participating Community Council.
- Expenditure of the Association's funds shall be solely in the interest of Town Twinning and the Friendship link.
- The Association's financial year shall be from 1st January to 31<sup>st</sup> December.
- An independent auditor shall be nominated and agreed to audit the accounts for the current financial year.
- The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer shall be the Signatories to Bank or Building Society Accounts of the Association.
- All members are required to pay an annual subscription as shall from time to time be decided by the Association. Subscriptions should be paid annually by April 1st.
- The amount of subscriptions shall be reviewed at the Annual General Meeting in January.

## **8. MEETINGS OF THE TOWN TWINNING ASSOCIATION**

### **(a) Annual General Meetings**

An Annual General meeting of the Bridgend Town Twinning Association shall be held in January, at such time and place as the Association shall determine but not more than fourteen months after the preceding Annual General Meeting. At least twenty-one clear days' notice shall be given and posted in a conspicuous place in Bridgend Town.

The business of each Annual General Meeting shall be:

- To receive the report from the Officers on the activities of the Association during the preceding year;
- To receive and confirm acceptance of the accounts of the preceding financial year;
- To elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer and other honorary officers by secret ballot;
  - **Elections**
  - The Secretary will send out nomination forms to all enrolled and associated members a month before the Annual General Meeting inviting nominations for the office of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer to allow sufficient time for members to return nomination forms not less than two weeks before the date of the Annual General Meeting.
  - At the Annual General Meeting the retiring Chair shall vacate the Chair in favour of the President who will conduct the ballot. In the absence of the President, a nominated enrolled member of the Association will conduct the ballot. Two scrutineers, appointed from the Association, shall assist the President.
  - In the event of more than two candidates standing, the successful candidate shall have an overall majority of votes cast. If one candidate does not achieve an overall majority the lowest candidate shall be eliminated and a second ballot taken.

### **(b) Ordinary Meetings**

- The Association shall meet not less than six times in a financial year.
- In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Association, one of the members of the Executive shall be elected to Chair the meeting.

### **(c) Special General Meeting**

Special General Meetings shall be summoned at the discretion of the Chair, upon the written request of no less than a third of the enrolled members of the Association or at the discretion of the President. The summons shall set out the business of the Special General Meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting. At least seven days' notice must be given to members.

## 9. THE OFFICERS

- At the Annual General Meeting the Association shall elect a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Secretary, a Treasurer and such other honorary officers as the Association shall from time to time decide.
- The Chair and the honorary officers of the Association shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting of the Association after their election but shall be eligible for re-election.
- If a vacancy occurs during the course of the year, the Officers shall have the power to co-opt a member of the Association until the next Annual General Meeting.

## 10. WORKING GROUPS

- The Association can appoint Working Groups as and when required. The terms of reference, powers, duration and composition of these Working Groups shall be determined by the Executive.
- All appointed Working Groups shall report to the Executive on a regular basis and before any action is taken following discussions in the Working Groups.
- Any interested educational establishment, voluntary organisation or cultural group may serve and shall be encouraged to contribute to all meetings and to assist in the organisation of exchange visits relative to those groups when required.

## 11. DECLARING INTEREST

Any member of the Association, or his or her relative, making special gain or advancement by the passing of any resolution must declare an interest in such resolution and may be asked to leave during voting.

## 12. RULES OF PROCEDURE AT MEETINGS

### Voting

- Members shall be required to move and have a seconder to any motion.
- The motion will stand or fall according to the voting by members present on the basis of a simple majority.
- In the event of a tie, the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

### Quorum

- *General Meetings:* The Association shall be quorate when not less than a third of members are present, including associate members who may be present.
- The quorum of a Working Group shall be at the discretion of the appointed Chair.
- In the event that no quorum is present at an Annual General Meeting of the Association or the meeting has to be abandoned, the meeting shall stand adjourned and be reconvened fourteen days later and those enrolled and associate members with power to vote who are present at that meeting shall be deemed to form a quorum.

### Duties of Officers

- *Chair:* The Chair shall be responsible for the Agenda and conduct of Association and Executive meetings and of any variation of the order of business.
- *Vice-Chair:* The Vice-Chair shall be responsible for the Agenda and conduct of Association and Executive meetings and of any variation of the order of business, in the absence of the Chair.

- *Secretary:* The Secretary shall attend the meetings of the Association and the Executive, produce agendas and minutes and deal with all administrative matters and correspondence. All correspondence shall be addressed to the Secretary. In the absence of the Secretary the Executive shall elect a registered member attending the meeting to take the Minutes of the meeting and the election of that member shall be minuted.
- *Treasurer:* The Treasurer shall be responsible to the Association for the general administration of the funds and shall present a report on the current situation at each meeting, which shall be minuted. The Treasurer shall be responsible for producing an income and expenditure account, which shall be independently audited, then presented at the Annual General Meeting.
- *Membership and Hosting Secretary:* The Membership and Hosting Secretary is responsible for keeping the register of enrolled and associate members, collecting subscription annually and contacting those members whose attendance has lapsed. The Membership and Hosting Secretary is responsible for maintaining a record of enrolled members and people willing to host, and to encourage and promote an increase in members and others willing to host.
- *A Social and Fundraising Secretary* may be elected to organise social gatherings to promote all appropriate methods of fund raising, as needed.
- *The Publicity Secretary* is responsible for promoting the profile of the Association through producing newsletters, providing reports and future activities to the local press on town twinning activities and ensuring the Association's website is kept up to date.

### 13. DISSOLUTION

The Association may at any time be dissolved by a recommendation passed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at a Special Meeting convened for the purpose, of which not less than 21 days' notice shall have been given to all members of the Association and duly published in the town of Bridgend.

- Prior to such dissolution the Bridgend Town Council will be informed.
- Any credit balance of monies, for the exclusive use of the student exchange, provided by Villenave d'Ornon or any other organisation shall be returned to the donor(s).
- Any remaining monies should be distributed to a charity or organisation at the discretion of the Executive.

### 14. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- The Secretary must receive proposals at least 21 clear days before the meeting.
- At least 14 days' notice of a Special Meeting for this purpose must be given by the Secretary to enrolled and associates members and include any notice of the proposed amendments.
- Any proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be implemented after a vote by two thirds of the enrolled and associate members at the specially convened meeting of the Association.
- The Executive should review the Constitution every three years.

Adopted the 13<sup>th</sup> August 2019

Signed: [Signature] (Chair)

Signed: [Signature] (Secretary)

## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A**

The Association adopts as its Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy, the policy drawn up by Bryntirion Comprehensive School which follows the All Wales Child Protection Procedures and all local protocols in relation to Safeguarding that have been endorsed by BCBC.

To read this policy in full, go to [All Wales Child Protection Procedures](#).

### **APPENDIX B**

#### **Recognising the Terrorist Threat**

The Association subscribes to the Government's guidance on recognising the terrorist threat.

To read this guidance in full, go to [Recognising the terrorist threat – GOV.UK](#)

### **APPENDIX C**

The Association follows the BCBC procedures for planning, approval and monitoring using the EVOLVE on line visit planning and approval system for all visits run by schools or volunteers.

Procedures may be viewed in the '[Guidance and resources section of EVOLVE](#)' and also in the '[National Guidance for Educational Visits](#)' endorsed by the Welsh Government in 2008.

### **APPENDIX D**

#### **Code of Conduct**

Unacceptable behaviour during the course of meetings of the Bridgend Town Twinning Association refers to offensive words or behaviour and includes any harassment, intimidation or discrimination, whether it be physical, verbal or expressed in the written form and has the purpose of violating the recipient's dignity or disrupting the meeting. Any person who is the perpetrator of such conduct will be asked by the Chair to desist and failing to do so, will be asked to leave the meeting. The Executive will discuss the incident at a later stage and reach a decision as to whether to ban the perpetrator for a limited period. On returning to meetings, an apology for such conduct will be required.

The Secretary of the Town Twinning Association will hold hard copies of all the above policies, which can be viewed on request.