

Harrow U 3 A - Standing Orders for the conduct of Annual and Special Meetings of Members

23rd July 2012

Rule 6 of the Constitution of Harrow University of the Third Age states:-

“The management of the U3A shall be vested in the Executive Committee, consisting of members whose duty it shall be to carry out its general policy and to provide for the administration, management and control of the affairs and property of the U3A.”

Rule 6 of the Constitution sets out details of the composition of the Executive Committee and its powers to administer the U3A.

Rule 7 of the Constitution sets out details for the election of the Executive Committee.

Rule 8 of the Constitution sets out details for the calling of Executive Committee Meetings and operational procedures.

Rule 12 of the Constitution sets out details for the calling of the Annual General Meeting of the U3A.

Rule 13 of the Constitution sets out details for the calling of a Special General Meeting of the U3A.

Rule 14 of the Constitution sets out details for the operational procedures at Annual or Special General Meetings of the U3A.

This document clarifies items in Rule 14

(a) Business of the meeting:

In advance of the meeting, the Chairman and Secretary will determine the Agenda and prepare recommendations as to the order in which the business is to be conducted. The Executive Committee will confirm agreement and the Agenda will be circulated to members in accordance with the Constitution.

(b) Conduct of meetings

The conduct of meetings will be the responsibility of the Chair. The Chair will have power to lay down time limits for the discussion of items on the Agenda. The Chair will rule on any question under the standing orders, or on points of order or information. A challenge to a ruling by the Chair must be moved and formally seconded. The challenger may make one speech in favour of the motion of challenge and the Chair may make one speech in favour of the ruling. The motion should be put to the vote without further debate. In a vote, such a challenge will require the support of two-thirds of the members present and voting at the meeting, an abstention not being regarded as a vote for this purpose.

(c) Minutes

Minutes will be kept of all general meetings. The minutes of the previous meeting having already been circulated, the Chair will call for any questions regarding their accuracy. When there are no further questions the Chair will declare them (as amended, if necessary) confirmed. Members will then be at liberty to raise points arising out of the minutes, except on matters appearing elsewhere on the agenda.

(d) Voting

A proxy shall have an authorisation letter from the delegating member. This letter shall be given to the Secretary at least twenty minutes before the start of the meeting. Voting will be by show of hands, unless the Chair directs otherwise. Tellers will, if required, be appointed at the beginning of the meeting. Decisions will be taken by a simple majority of those present and voting (an abstention not being regarded as a vote for this purpose), unless otherwise directed by these standing orders or the constitutional rules of the Harrow University of the Third Age.

(e) Motions

All motions must be moved and seconded and be submitted to the Secretary in writing at least five weeks before the date of the Meeting. Movers of motions may speak for a maximum of five minutes. All other speakers may speak for a maximum of three minutes. Except at the discretion of the Chair, no member will speak more than once on any motion, except that the mover of the motion will have a right to reply. Any member may formally second any proposition and reserve his or her speech until a later period in the debate. Amendments from the floor of the meeting will be taken at the Chair's discretion. All amendments must be moved and seconded and be voted on before the vote on the motion is taken.

(f) Motions to close debate

Any member at the meeting may seek to end the debate on a motion or amendment by moving THAT THE MEETING PROCEED TO NEXT BUSINESS or THAT THE QUESTION BE NOW PUT provided that there has been at least one speech each for and against the motion or amendment under discussion. Such motions must be seconded and no speeches will be allowed on them but the vote on them must be taken straightaway. If either motion be lost, the same motion will not be moved until at least ten minutes have elapsed.

(g) Effect of motions to close debate

If the motion TO PROCEED TO NEXT BUSINESS is carried, the debate will cease and no vote may be taken on the main question nor on any amendment; if it is lost, the debate will continue as if NEXT BUSINESS had not been moved. If the motion THAT THE QUESTION BE NOW PUT is carried, the meeting will vote immediately on the proposition before it.

(h) Points of order

Any member may, at any time, raise a point of order.

(i) Points of information

Any member may, with the leave of the Chair, raise a point of information.

(j) Withdrawal of propositions

Permission to withdraw any proposition that is before the meeting may be granted by a simple majority of those present and voting at the meeting, an abstention not being regarded as a vote for this purpose.

(k) Reference of motions

Any motion to refer a motion to The Executive Committee either for examination or for re-drafting will, if seconded, rank as an amendment with precedence over any other amendment. Any motion which is left on the Agenda at the end of a meeting will be considered by The Executive Committee at their next meeting.

(l) Suspension of standing orders

Any of the above standing orders will be suspended by the meeting for a specified purpose if a motion to that effect is moved, seconded and supported by two-thirds of those present and voting, an abstention not being regarded as a vote for this purpose. Standing orders will again apply as soon as the specified issue has been concluded.

(m) Alteration of standing orders

These standing orders may be altered by a resolution of The Executive Committee of the Harrow University of the Third Age, provided that notice of any proposed amendment is received by Executive Committee members not later than the day that is 14 days before the day on which that Executive Committee takes place. Such a resolution requires the support of two thirds of the Executive Committee members present and voting, an abstention not being regarded as a vote for this purpose.