

PLANNING OFFICERS SOCIETY

RULES OF THE SOCIETY

Endorsed at AGM 16 May 2014; revised by the Board 5 December 2014

1. Name of the Society

- 1.1. Planning Officers Society, referred to in these rules as the Society.

2. Statement of Objectives

- 2.1. To act as an advocate for all public sector planning and related services in England; to provide, through research, exchanges of information and best practice, efficient and effective service delivery.
- 2.2. To provide assistance and advice to the Local Government Association and to Central Government on planning related matters.
- 2.3. To promote the planning services within the public sector serving Local Government in England.
- 2.4. To provide appropriate services and support to the members of the Society and their authorities in furthering planning in the public sector and enhancing service delivery.
- 2.5. To act as a centre of excellence in public sector planning matters, for example by the production of advice notes, codes of practice and a network of subject and regional groups through which information and best practice is shared between public sector planning practitioners.
- 2.6. To act as a focal point for liaison between other planning professionals and those practising in the public sector and to liaise with the Royal Town Planning Institute and other related professional bodies.
- 2.7. To improve the standard of planning for the public benefit.

3. Financial Year

- 3.1. The financial year shall commence on 1 April.

4. Subscriptions

- 4.1. An annual subscription may be levied for Membership of the Society and shall be payable in advance by 1 April each year. Membership shall cease on the expiry of the period covered by any subscription, including where the subscription is £0.
- 4.2. The rate of subscription will be determined by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors have discretion to waive or reduce subscriptions where they consider the circumstances justify it.

5. Membership

- 5.1. The Society will have two categories of membership:
 - Full Membership

- Associate Membership

5.2. All applications for membership shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

Full Membership

5.3. Full Membership of the Society will be available as follows:

5.3.1. Organisational Membership: to any local planning authority in England. Such membership entitles the organisation to nominate members of the Society who shall meet the criteria for individual membership of the Society. Such nominated members have all the benefits of individual membership but they will not personally be liable for an annual subscription, provided their organisation pays its annual subscription.

5.3.2. Individual Membership: any person in England shall be eligible for Full Membership of the Society if:

- i. they are working for a local planning authority in England;
- ii. they primarily provide planning services to local planning authorities in England; or
- iii. they are retired from such a role and are no longer economically active within or in support of the field of planning.

The person must additionally be a Chartered Town Planner or hold a recognised planning or related qualification which is deemed to be relevant by the Board of Directors of the Society, or responsible for all or part of the planning function within the organisation.

5.4. Where an individual member of the Society becomes unemployed for a significant period or suffers financial hardship they may apply to the Board of Directors for a reduced subscription rate.

5.5. A Full Member of the Society shall at all times abide by the Rules of the Society. A Full Member of the society shall forthwith cease to be such a Member if s/he is excluded by a resolution passed by the Board of Directors for any action which, in the opinion of the Board, is contrary to the interests of the Society.

Associate Membership

5.6. Associate Membership of the Society will be available as follows:

5.6.1. Public Sector Membership: any organisation who primarily offers their services to support local planning authorities in England or are themselves a charity operating in the field of planning. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes a RTPI recognised planning school.

5.6.2. Private Sector Membership: any person or organisation engaged within or in support of the field of planning in England.

5.7. An Associate Member of the Society shall respect the Rules of the Society. An Associate Member of the society shall forthwith cease to be such a Member if he/she is excluded

by a resolution passed by the Board of Directors for any action which, in the opinion of the Board, is contrary to the interests of the Society.

6. Access to Services

6.1. The categories of membership will have the following access to services provided by the Society:

- Full Members of the Society will have full access to the services provided by the Society
- Associate Members of the Society will have such access to the services provided by the Society as determined from time to time by the Board of Directors of the Society

7. Directors of the Society

7.1. The Directors of the Society shall be:

- Chair of the Board
- President (vice chair)
- Senior Vice President
- Junior Vice President
- Immediate Past President
- Chair POS Spatial Planning
- Chair POS Development Management
- Chair POS Novus
- Chair POSe
- Treasurer

7.2. No person shall hold more than one Director role at any one time.

Chair of the Board

7.3. The Chair of the Board will be selected by the Board of Directors and confirmed at the Annual General Meeting of the Society. The term will be for one year renewable annually.

7.4. Any qualifying member of the Society can put themselves forward to the Board of Directors to be considered as Chair of the Board. The Chair of the Board will be a Full Member of the Society who performs a senior role with a local planning authority in England. If during their term of office these circumstances change for any individual, the Board of Directors will decide whether they should continue for their term of office or be replaced.

7.5. All communications sent to the Society and all other matters arising in relation to the affairs of the Society, shall be deemed to be referred to the Chair of the Board for consideration in the first instance. The Chair of the Board shall have power, save for matters that are rightfully the responsibility of the Board of Directors, to take such action as he/she deems fit on behalf of the Society between meetings of the Board of Directors, subject to any action being reported at the next meeting of the Board of Directors.

Presidential Team

- 7.6. The Presidential Team shall comprise the President, Senior Vice President, Junior Vice President and Immediate Past President.
- 7.7. The Junior Vice President shall be selected by the President and confirmed at the Annual general Meeting of the Society.
- 7.8. The Junior Vice President shall automatically succeed to the position of Senior Vice President after a period in office, and the Senior Vice President shall similarly succeed to the position of President after a period in office. The President on having served a period in office, will become the Immediate Past President, until such time that the current President's period in office expires.
- 7.9. The term of office for President, Senior Vice President, Junior Vice President and Immediate Past President shall be one year.
- 7.10. The President, Senior Vice President and Junior Vice President shall each be a Full Member of the Society who. If during their term of office these circumstances change for any of these individuals, the Board of Directors will decide whether he/she should continue for his/her term of office or be replaced.
- 7.11. In the event of a vacancy arising during any member of the Presidential Team's term of office, the right of automatic succession shall remain. The Board of Directors will have the right to fill any vacancy arising, in the event that the vacancy occurs within 11 months of the start of the Director's term of office.

Other Directors

- 7.12. The roles of Chair of POS Spatial Planning, POS Development Management, POS Novus and POSe shall be appointed by those bodies. The term will be for one year renewable annually.
- 7.13. The Treasurer shall be selected by the Board of Directors and confirmed at the Annual General Meeting of the Society. The term will be for one year renewable annually.

8. Board of Directors

- 8.1. The Board of Directors (which is referred to as the Council in the Articles of Memorandum) will consist of the Directors of the Society who will have the responsibilities placed upon them by company law and the incorporation of the Society as a Registered Charity. The Board of Directors is responsible for setting the direction, policies and priorities of the Society. The Board of Directors will have the responsibility to carry out all company business.
- 8.2. The Chair of the Board will chair meetings of the Board of Directors. In his/her absence the President, if absent the Senior Vice President, if absent the Junior Vice President, or if absent the Immediate Past President, shall occupy the Chair. The Board of Directors will meet at least once annually and from time to time as business dictates.
- 8.3. The quorum for any meeting of the Board of Directors shall be not less than two members in attendance, which must include at least one member of the Presidential Team.

- 8.4. Decisions made by the Board of Directors will be arrived at consensually, but where this is not possible be determined by a majority vote. Each Director present shall have a vote and in the event of an equality of votes the Chair shall have a second casting vote.
- 8.5. The Board of Directors will have the power to co-opt such other Members of the Society as deemed appropriate.

9. Meetings of the Society

- 9.1. Meetings of the Society shall take the form of an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary Meeting.
- 9.2. The Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held at a time to be agreed by the Board of Directors. The Annual General Meeting shall consider the nominations from the Board of Directors for the following Director posts:
 - Chair of the Board
 - Junior Vice President
 - Treasurer
- 9.3. The President or the Chair of the Board may call an Extraordinary Meeting of the Society at any time and shall do so when required in writing by not less than nine Full Members.
- 9.4. Fourteen days' clear notice shall be given to all Full Members for a Meeting of the Society.
- 9.5. Motions to be put to a Meeting of the Society shall be received by the Society's Secretariat not less than seven clear days before the date of the meeting.
- 9.6. The President will chair a Meeting of the Society. In his/her absence the Senior Vice President, if absent the Junior Vice President, or if absent the Immediate Past President, shall occupy the Chair.
- 9.7. The Quorum for a Meeting of the Society shall be not less than five Full Members in attendance, which must include at least one member of the Presidential Team.
- 9.8. Decisions at a Meeting of the Society will be arrived at consensually, but where this is not possible, be determined by a majority vote. Each Full Member present shall have a vote and in the event of an equality of votes the Chair shall have a second casting vote.

Society Forums

- 9.9. Regular meetings of the Society's membership shall take two forms:
 - POS Forum
 - POS Sector Forum

POS Forum

- 9.10. The purpose of POS Forum is to debate Society matters by the Core Membership and make recommendations to the Board of Directors on matters which fall to the Board to determine.
- 9.11. The Core Membership of POS Forum will be:
- All members of the Board of Directors
 - Past Presidents (who are still Members of the Society)
 - Regional Network Chairs
 - Subject Specialists
- 9.12. All Full and Associate Members of the Society will be welcome to attend. The Chair has the right to exclude Associate Members for any part of the meeting.
- 9.13. Meetings will usually take place four times a year. In the interests of expediency the President shall have the right to call additional meetings of POS Forum.
- 9.14. The President will chair meetings of POS Forum. In his/her absence the Senior Vice President, if absent the Junior Vice President, or if absent the Immediate Past President, shall occupy the Chair.
- 9.15. The Quorum shall be not less than 5 Full Members in attendance, which must include at least one member of the Presidential team.
- 9.16. Decisions made by POS Forum will be arrived at consensually, but where this is not possible, be determined by a majority vote. Each Full Member present shall have a vote and in the event of an equality of votes the Chair shall have a second casting vote.
- 9.17. POS Forum shall have power to establish working groups or task and finish groups where it requires advice on particular topics of interest to the Society.

POS Sector Forum

- 9.18. The purpose of POS Sector Forum is to engage with other parts of the planning sector without compromising the Society's core purpose.
- 9.19. Meetings are aimed at creating closer working relationships with key Associate Members of the Society and others.
- 9.20. Meetings will take place as required and normally be held in London.
- 9.21. The President will chair meetings of POS Sector Forum. In his/her absence the Senior Vice President, if absent the Junior Vice President, or if absent the Immediate Past President, shall occupy the Chair. In the absence of the latter the Chair shall be elected from those Full Members present.
- 9.22. POS Sector Forum does not have a decision making function but can make recommendations to the Board of Directors on matters which fall to the Board to determine.

Policy Networks

Spatial Planning and Development Management Policy Networks

9.23. There shall be two standing networks responsible for the Society's policy work:

- POS Spatial Planning
- POS Development Management

9.24. Each is a network of interested and active Full Members of the Society that develop the policy of the Society in these two core areas.

9.25. They shall meet regularly (eg 4 to 6 times a year) and seek to engage interested public sector planners across England.

9.26. Each network will choose their chair who will be a Full Member of the Society. The term will be for one year renewable annually. The chair of each network will be a Director of the Board of Directors and have the right to attend meetings of POS Forum as part of the Core Membership.

Subject Specialists

9.27. The Board of Directors can appoint, after taking account of any recommendations from either of the Spatial Planning or Development Management Policy Networks, POS Novus or the Policy Manager, Subject Specialists who will be responsible for co-ordinating the Society's policy view on those specialisms. These can take the following forms:

- Long-term subject leads who have active networks that meet regularly
- Subject leads who have a virtual network that communicate as necessary
- One-off task & finish specialists to deal with an emerging and short term or infrequent issue

9.28. These Subject Specialists will be expected to:

- Take responsibility for corralling the Society's policy position on their topic area
- Assist the Policy Manager in preparing responses on behalf of the Society
- Set up and nurture an appropriate network of public sector planners who are interested in their topic area and willing to be involved in policy development on an active basis
- Actively participate in the Spatial Planning or Development Management Policy Networks as appropriate in relation to their topic area
- Have the right to attend meetings of POS Forum as part of the Core Membership

Regional Networks

- 9.29. The Society shall support a network of Regional Groups, whose main function will be the interchange of information, expertise and good practice among the membership and advising public sector organisations. The Regional Groups may also be consulted on current issues, and will serve as a means of sounding opinion within the Society.
- 9.30. The geographical coverage of the Regional Groups will be at the initiative of the membership in the relevant part of the country, and shall be notified to the Society's Secretariat. Any areas of disagreement between Regional Groups will be resolved by the Board of Directors.
- 9.31. Each Regional Group will elect its own Chair, who shall be a Full Member of the Society. The Regional Chair or nominated person shall have the right to attend meetings of POS Forum as part of the Core Membership.
- 9.32. The frequency and format of meetings and administrative arrangements will be at the discretion of the individual Regional Group.

10. POS Novus

- 10.1. POS Novus is a network of planners who are at the earlier stages of their careers.
- 10.2. POS Novus will choose their chair who will be a Full Member of the Society. The term will be for one year renewable annually. The chair of POS Novus will be a Director of the Board of Directors

11. POS Enterprises Ltd

- 11.1. POS Enterprises Ltd (POSe) is a subsidiary company of the Society limited by shares, held by the Society.
- 11.2. The Directors of POSe shall be approved by the Board of Directors of the Society.
- 11.3. POS Enterprises Ltd will choose the chair of the POSe Board from their Directors, who will be a Full Member of the Society. The term will be for one year renewable annually. The chair of POSe will be a Director of the Board of Directors of the Society.
- 11.4. An annual report will be made to the Board of Directors of the Society on the activities of POSe.
- 11.5. For the avoidance of doubt nothing shall prevent a person being both a Director of the Society and a Director of POSe.

12. Support Services to the Society

- 12.1. The Board of Directors may appoint contractors to provide support services to the Society to discharge responsibilities as follows:
- Secretariat: to assist with the smooth running of the Society
 - Communications Manager: to ensure that the Society's communications are effective and timely

- Policy Manager: to act as lead officer for responses to consultations from the Government and others as required by the Board of Directors

12.2. Any period of appointment will be for a maximum of three years. These contractors will report to the Board of Directors as required.

Finance

12.3. The Treasurer or a nominated person shall present the balance sheet and accounts to the first available Board of Directors after they have been audited by the company's appointed auditors.

12.4. The funds of the Society shall be deposited in a bank or building society account in the name of the Society and all cheques be signed by the Treasurer, Secretariat, the Chair of the Board or a member of the Presidential Team.

12.5. The Treasurer or a nominated person shall have discretion to reimburse expenses for the Directors of the Society, up to a total sum per annum as may be set by the Board of Directors from time to time, subject to him/her being satisfied that the money was/or is to be spent on activities related to the work of the Society. All claims should be made by 31 March each year.

12.6. The Society shall be able to make financial transactions with POS Enterprises Ltd as agreed and determined by the Board of Directors.

13. Changes to the Rules of the Society

13.1. The rules of the Society will normally be amended by the Board of Directors.

13.2. The rules of the Society can be amended by the membership of the Society at the Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Society. Proposed changes to be considered at such a meeting shall be lodged with the Secretariat or a nominated person and published at least seven clear days before the date of the meeting. Any changes agreed at an Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Society will only come into effect if supported by at least three quarters of the Full Members present and voting.

13.3. Rules to govern any procedure or business of the Society may, if not inconsistent with these rules, be made at any of the following meetings of the Society to operate until revoked or modified at any subsequent meeting of the Board of Directors.

- POS Spatial Planning
- POS Development Management
- POS Forum

13.4. Any question touching upon the interpretation of the Rules or of any Rules made there under shall be determined by the Board of Directors in its absolute discretion.

APPENDIX

The structure of the Society is as follows:

