

Carmarthenshire 50+ Forum Constitution

Adopted at 50+ Forum Steering Group meeting, 9th September 2014

1 Introduction

The Carmarthenshire 50+ Forum (hereafter referred to as 'the Forum') brings together individuals aged 50 and over living in Carmarthenshire to debate issues, promote solutions, and influence organisations which affect their lives.

2 Aims

The aim of the Forum is to promote the interests of people aged 50 years and over within Carmarthenshire, primarily but not exclusively, by:

- Maintaining a support network with the purposes of relieving poverty, promoting good health, advancing education and improving conditions of life for people 50+.
- Supporting the development of the skills and capacity of 50+ people in such a way that they are at less risk of poverty, ill-health and social isolation and are better able to identify and meet their needs and to participate more fully in society.
- Having regard to the key themes within the Welsh Government Strategy for Older People.

3 Powers

In order to carry out the aims, the Forum has the power to:

- Raise funds, receive grants and donations.
- Apply for funds to carry out the work of the organisation.
- Co-operate with and support other groups with similar purposes.
- Share information and provide guidance.
- Liaise with Council officers and elected members, and statutory bodies, as appropriate, to promote the aims of the Forum.
- Do anything else within the law which is necessary to achieve the aims.

All executive powers are exercised through the 50+ Forum Steering Group ('the Steering Group').

4 Forum membership

Membership of the Forum will be open to any individual aged 50 and over who is resident within Carmarthenshire.

The membership of the Forum and Steering Group will, as far as possible, reflect the diversity of the 50+ population of Carmarthenshire.

The Forum will keep an up-to-date membership list.

Members have the right to agree a joining or annual membership fee at an AGM.

5 Voting rights

Each member of the Forum will be eligible to have one vote in the Annual General Meeting (one vote per member).

6 Annual Meeting - AGM

The AGM must be held every year, with at least 14 days notice given to all Forum members telling them what is on the agenda. Where appropriate, the Steering Group shall present an annual report and accounts for the previous year.

Any Forum member may put themselves forward for election as a Steering Group member at the AGM.

There must be at least 50 current Forum members present for the entirety of the AGM for the meeting to be in quorum. If this does not apply, the meeting shall be adjourned to such time and place as the Steering Group shall determine.

Seven clear days' notice will be given of the re-convened meeting stating the date time and place of the meeting. If no quorum is present at the reconvened meeting within fifteen minutes of the time specified for the start of the meeting the members present at that time will constitute the quorum for that meeting.

7 Steering Group

The affairs of the Forum will be managed by a Steering Group, comprising up to 22 members, as follows:

7.1 Composition

- Up to 15 elected members from the 50+ Forum. 5 members will be elected at each Annual Meeting, ensuring each member serves a 3 year term.
- A maximum of 5 co-opted members representing relevant groups within Carmarthenshire, at the absolute discretion of the Steering Group.
- The Carmarthenshire County Council 50+ Champion.
- A senior officer of Carmarthenshire County Council, normally the Assistant Chief Executive,

The Steering Group shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair and other appropriate officers from within its membership. Office holders must not be co-opted members, or members who are present by virtue of being officers of Carmarthenshire County Council.

Officer support will be provided by Carmarthenshire County Council.

7.2 Election of Steering Group

- Normally, 5 of the 15 elected members of the Steering Group will be elected each year on a rolling basis. Under certain circumstances, the number of places up for election may vary(e.g., due to resignations).
- The 50+ Forum will give notice of elections to, and request nominations from, all members of the Forum at least 14 days before the Annual Meeting. The notice will include relevant dates and times for closure of nominations.
- A brief statement including the Nominee's experience and their plans for the Forum will be required to support each nomination.
- Nominations should be returned at least 7 days before the Annual Meeting. Details of all nominations received will be placed on the website shortly after this deadline. This information will also be available to members by post upon request and the receipt of a stamped self-addressed envelope by the date of closure of nominations.

- Voting shall be by show of hands at the Annual General Meeting.
- Only members attending the Annual General Meeting shall be eligible to vote. Results will be announced at the Annual Meeting

7.3 Term of office

In the very first instance, all positions on the Steering Group, allocated for elected members, will be ratified at the Annual Meeting. Thereafter, and under normal circumstances, elected members of the Steering Group shall hold office for a term of three years, ratified at the Annual Meeting. Elected members will be able to stand for re-election.

The Steering Group will review co-opted membership of the group periodically to ensure the broad representation required for the group.

7.4 Meetings

The Steering Group shall meet as often as is necessary to conduct the business of the Forum but in any case not less than 4 times per annum.

The quorum at a Steering Group meeting shall be a minimum of 50% of currently serving elected members.

If Steering Group members have a conflict of interest they must declare it and leave the meeting while this matter is being discussed or decided.

The Steering Group needs active participation so members who fail to attend 3 consecutive meetings can be asked to resign if the chair proposes it and the majority of members present agree. The Chair will give consideration to the circumstances surrounding the non-attendance. In circumstances where the individual represents an organisation, an alternative representative will be sought.

Proper records will be kept of decisions made by the Steering Group and at general meetings.

7.5 Role of the Steering Group

The Steering Group will:

- Seek, and act upon, the views of the 50+ Forum. This will involve seeking to influence and build relationships with a range of organisations and individuals.
- Agree a work plan that will guide the work of the Forum.
- Establish informal task and finish groups on an 'as-required' basis. Such groups will have advisory status only and will not have any delegated executive powers.
- Promote the Forum to individuals and groups across Carmarthenshire.
- Monitor the Forum's progress and ability to meet its targets set out in the agreed work plan.
- Invite the Leader of Carmarthenshire County Council to attend annually, to discuss matters relevant to people 50+.
- The Steering Group may make reasonable additional rules to help run the Forum. These rules must not conflict with this constitution or the law.

8 Finance

- All funds raised by or on behalf of the Forum will be used to further the aims of the Forum and for no other purpose.
- The Steering Group will be responsible for the Forum's funds and will appoint a Treasurer. Additional support will be provided by Carmarthenshire County Council.
- Money raised by the Forum must be held in a bank account in the name of the 50+ Forum. All cheques or other withdrawals must be signed by 2 of 3 designated signatories.
- A report of the year's income and expenses will be prepared up to the end of March each year for presentation to members at the Annual Meeting.
- Members may be reimbursed for legitimate expenses properly incurred when acting on behalf of the Forum as agreed by the Steering Group.
- Other than the expenses referred to above, no member may be paid or receive any benefit for being a Steering Group member.

9 Forum meetings and reporting

Members who represent the Steering Group, on the boards of relevant organisations, and at other meetings, must update the Steering Group as required.

Alongside the reason of transacting normal business, the Steering Group can be convened to consider:

- **Winding up** – the 50+ Forum may be wound up by a two thirds majority of Steering Group members present. Any money or property remaining after payment of debts must be given to a group with similar (charitable) purposes.
- **Changing the Constitution** - The constitution may be changed by a two thirds majority of Steering Group members present.

Special General Meetings, open to all 50+ Forum members, may be called by the Steering Group for reasons of:

- **The receipt of a written request from at least 50 members.** All members must be given at least 14 days notice and told the reason for the meeting.
- **Emergency Special General Meetings** – to allow the members to decide on important issues.

10 The Welsh Language Act 1993 and Welsh Language Measure 2010

The Carmarthenshire 50+ Forum normally conducts its business in the English language but recognises the importance of the Welsh language within Carmarthenshire. Whilst the Welsh Language Act and Welsh Language Measure apply specifically to Public Bodies, the Carmarthenshire 50+ Forum will wherever practicable comply with the Act.

Signed

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On behalf of Carmarthenshire 50+ Forum

Date: