



RULES

OF THE

**NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION**

OF

**CO-OPERATIVE
OFFICIALS**

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CO-OPERATIVE OFFICIALS

All previous rules rescinded.

RULES

Title

1. The Organisation is a professional Trade Union. It shall be called "The National Association of Co-operative Officials"; the short title of which shall be "NACO".

Office

2. The Registered Office of the Association shall be 6A Clarendon Place, Hyde, Cheshire SK14 2QZ, or such other address as the General Council of the Association shall decide from time to time.

Objects

3. The objects of the Association shall be:-

- (a) To regulate relations between members and Employers.
- (b) To obtain such rates of wages and conditions of employment as are commensurate with the responsibilities of the respective positions of its members.
- (c) To provide for its members such legal aid as in the circumstances of the case the General Council may determine.
- (d) To maintain and improve the status and efficiency of Management, including Secretarial practice and accounting.
- (e) To seek the representation of the Association on any bodies or committees which are in any way concerned, directly or indirectly, with the professional status or functions or efficiency of members.
- (f) To Promote equality for all through collective bargaining, representation, union organisation and structures, education and training, organising and recruitment, the provision of services and benefits, the Association's own employment practices and in all other activities.
- (g) To oppose actively all forms of harassment, prejudice and unfair discrimination whether on the grounds of sex, race, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, caring responsibilities, marital status, civil partnerships, sexuality, disability or age.
- (h) Generally to protect and promote the professional interests of members.

Membership

4. (a) Subject to the following provisions, membership of the Association shall be open to persons who fall within these categories detailed:

Full membership shall be open to persons who occupy a recognised official, managerial, administrative, professional or technical position with any registered Co-operative Society within the United Kingdom or with any subsidiary of a Co-operative Society or any organisation or company in which a registered Co-operative Society has a financial interest, subject to determination in case of doubt by the General Secretary.

Full membership will be split into three subscription categories, one where the members works in excess of 25 hours per week, the second where the member works 25 hours per week or less, the third where the member's

gross salary per annum is £25,000 or less, this sub category to be known as Unity membership. For those who apply for membership in the second and third categories, supporting evidence must accompany the application form e.g. letter from the Co-operative Society confirming the appropriate details.

Individual Representation Only Membership shall be open to persons deemed qualified who work within the Co-operative Movement in the United Kingdom, and with whose employer NACO does not have collective bargaining rights. Membership in this category shall be subject to determination in case of doubt by the General Secretary. Should NACO gain collective bargaining rights membership will be converted to full membership.

Affiliate Membership shall be open to persons who work within the Co-operative Movement world-wide, as well as those who have an interest in furthering the Co-operative ideals and principles through education, research or mutual interest groups. Affiliate Members will be allowed to participate in the activities of the Association, but shall not be entitled to vote. Membership in this category shall be subject to determination in case of doubt by the General Secretary.

Associate Membership shall be open to members who have retired from employment or, for any reason other than misconduct, become unemployed. Associate Members will be allowed to participate in the activities of the Association, but shall not be entitled to vote. Associate membership shall cease in the event of such a member ceasing to be unemployed. Membership in this category shall be subject to determination in case of doubt by the General Secretary.

Provisional Membership shall be open to persons under training for recognised managerial positions provided that such persons are not eligible for full membership and that other membership requirements are satisfied. Provisional membership shall cease on a person becoming eligible for full membership.

Contract Membership shall be open to persons who are employed within the Co-operative Movement under long-term contracts (with a minimum 6 months to run at the date of application). Confirmation by way of a copy of the aforesaid contract shall accompany the membership application form. Contract Members will be allowed to participate in the activities of the Association, but shall not be entitled to vote. Membership in this category shall be subject to determination in case of doubt by the General Secretary.

A member ceasing to hold a position aforesaid shall cease to be a member except as provided hereunder:

(i) A member who is transferred into the employment of a non-co-operative employer in the course of a recognised "Transfer of Undertakings" covered by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations may remain a Member of the Association for as long as the member shall remain in the employment of that business.

Full members may apply to the General Secretary for part-time membership status if they can furnish proof that their contract of employment specifies part-time working on the basis of: either three days per week or less; or not more than 25 hours per week.

The General Secretary will have the power to reallocate members to the appropriate membership category following a change in employment status, or should there be a change in any collective bargaining rights.

(b) Applications for admission to membership shall be made on the Association's official form, which shall be signed and duly completed by the applicant as regards all particulars required thereon. The General Secretary shall have the power to accept or reject applications for membership and shall consult appropriately regarding admission to membership of particular constituent associations.

(c) The General Council shall have power to confer Honorary Membership on any retired member in recognition of outstanding services to the Association. Such Honorary Membership shall, however, be subject to the same limitations as apply in Clause (a) to Associate Members. Honorary Members shall not pay any annual subscription.

(d) A member shall be entitled to apply for Secondary Membership to another Association other than that in which the member is registered as a full member and through which the member holds voting rights. The purpose of such membership shall be to provide that any member who wishes may widen their contacts through association with another Constituent Association.

(e) A member may resign from the Association by giving notice in writing to the Constituent Association to which the member belongs, or to the General Secretary, and his membership shall cease one month after the date on which the notice is received by the Constituent Association or the General Secretary as the case may be providing all outstanding subscriptions and levies have been paid.

(f) Where an applicant contends that he has wrongfully been denied admission to membership, he shall be entitled to appeal to the Appeals Tribunal in accordance with Rule 36.

(g) A waiting period of three calendar months shall apply before a new member is entitled to receive any benefit from the Association by way of representation or any financial benefit.

This waiting period will commence with the date of the letter from Registered Office confirming acceptance into Membership.

(h) Any former member of NACO may apply for re-admission to membership. The General Secretary will have authority to accept such applicants into membership on receipt of payment in one lump sum of an amount equal to the aggregate of subscriptions that would have been payable to the Association from the date on which the applicant ceased to be a member until the date of re-joining had the applicant not terminated his/her membership. No payment of subscriptions will be required where the reason for the applicant having ceased to be a member of NACO was because he or she became ineligible for membership of the Association. The provisions of Rule 4 (g) will apply to persons re-admitted to NACO membership under this Rule.

Subscriptions

5. (a) Each member shall pay an annual subscription for each year January 1st - December 31st, which is due and payable on January 1st. The amount of annual subscription shall be determined by the Annual General Meeting from time to time. Any amendment to the rate of subscription must be supported by two-thirds of the votes cast at a General Meeting of members. Should the subscription rates rise during any calendar year then the additional amount of subscription shall be requested in line with the agreement reached at the Annual General Meeting.

In the year of admission into membership, members will pay a subscription proportionate to the period of membership during that year. Any person ceasing to be a member during a year, may apply to the General Council for a refund of subscriptions proportionate to the period remaining in that subscription year. Payment of such refund will be at the sole discretion of the General Council, who will also determine the amount of such refund.

The General Council shall determine the subscription to be paid by all non-full members, which shall not exceed the following proportion of the full membership subscription: -

Part Time Membership	80%
Individual Representation Only Membership	80%
Provisional membership	80%
Unity Membership	80%
Affiliate Membership	50%
Contract Membership	80%
Associate Membership	20%

Honorary Members will not pay any subscriptions.

(b) Unless covered by Clause (c) of this Rule, members shall receive at the commencement of each year, a written intimation that their annual subscription is due. This will advise them of where remittances should be forwarded. Members may elect to pay their subscriptions by direct debit.

(c) At the discretion of the General Council, arrangements may be made with employing Societies for subscriptions to be deducted direct from members' salaries annually and remitted to Registered Office. Where such a system exists, arrangements may be made at the discretion of the General Council for the amount of the subscription to be collected over the year, by regular deductions from salary, so that the whole of subscription is paid within a subscription year. At their sole discretion, the General Council shall be empowered to introduce other methods of subscription collection.

Levies

6. The General Council may, if the condition of the funds require it, authorise in any one year, a levy not exceeding 20 per cent of the annual contribution upon all members. Such levies shall be remitted on receipt of the notice.

Arrears

7. (a) Any member whose contributions or levies are unpaid on the date on which same fall due, or on any date on which a claim for benefit arises and is made, shall not be entitled to receive any financial benefit until all arrears are paid. Any member whose contributions are in arrears to a greater extent than 13 weeks, and who subsequently pays his arrears, shall not be entitled to any financial benefits until the expiration of 26 weeks from the date on which the arrears were paid.

(b) Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the General Council may, at its discretion, suspend the operation of this rule; in cases of special nature.

(c) Where a member is in arrears with his subscription to a greater extent than 13 weeks, Registered Office shall forward to the defaulting member a reminder that the subscription was due on the 1st January and has not been received; and if the subscription still remains unpaid after a further 13 weeks, a written communication shall be forwarded to the member from Registered Office intimating that unless the arrears are paid within one calendar month of the date of the communication, or evidence is submitted showing that the subscription has in fact been paid, membership will be terminated, and the employing Society concerned informed accordingly.

(d) If the member fails to pay his subscription within one calendar month, as in paragraph (c), a written notice of termination of membership shall be forwarded to the member concerned.

General Council

8. The General Council shall consist of a maximum of 16 Members drawn from two classes of Membership as shown below:-

Co-operative Group Class:	10 seats
All Others Class:	6 seats

The Co-operative Group Class shall be defined as comprising all members employed by the Co-operative Group but excluding members employed by Co-operative Financial Services (including the Co-operative Bank plc and the Co-operative Insurance Society Limited). The All Others Class shall be defined as comprising all members employed by Co-operative Financial Services and all other members not employed by the Co-operative Group. Provided they are otherwise qualified, members shall be eligible for re-election

Nomination and Voting for General Council

9. (a) Candidates for election to the General Council who must be full members shall be nominated on forms obtainable on application to the Registered Office of the Association by any member whose contributions are not in arrears ten weeks before the date of the Annual General Meeting.

(b) Nomination forms must be returned to the Registered Office of the Association at least ten weeks before the date of the Annual General Meeting and must have stated thereon the name and private address of the person nominated, the name of the employing Society and any further particulars the General Council may require.

(c) Members may only be nominated and may only stand for election to a seat on the General Council which is appropriate to their employment which is defined in Rule (8).

(d) Whenever the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacant seats, an election shall be conducted to determine the successful candidate(s). Such elections shall be conducted as follows:-

(i) The election shall be by means of a secret postal ballot of all eligible members. Those members eligible to vote shall be the full and Individual Representation Only members on the Register of members following the monthly up-date of the Register that immediately precedes the closing date for nominations.

(ii) Voting shall be conducted on the whole voting membership of the Association as defined under Rule 4.

(iii) Ballot papers shall be issued at least six weeks before the Annual General Meeting and shall contain the names of all persons validly nominated. All candidates for election have the right to submit a written election address of not more than 200 words, which will be enclosed with the ballot papers. Such address shall be restricted to a candidate's suitability for the position through qualification, experience and policies.

(iv) All the members of the Association who are entitled to vote in accordance with Rule 4 and are full and Individual Representation Only members whose names are on the Register at the date of the ballot shall be issued with a ballot voting paper and shall be entitled to vote for all classes of seats.

(v) Ballot papers must be returned to the appointed Scrutineer, sealed in the envelopes provided which shall clearly indicate thereon that they are ballot papers. Ballot papers shall be returned at least four weeks before the Annual General Meeting.

(vi) The General Council shall appoint scrutineers in accordance with the prevailing legislation who shall issue a certificate declaring the result of the ballot. Thereafter a copy of the Scrutineers' Certificate shall be forwarded to all Constituent Secretaries by the General Secretary.

(vii) Persons elected shall be those who receive the highest number of votes in their class.

(viii) Should the votes in any case be equal, the Annual General Meeting of Members shall have the determining vote.

(e) The members elected to the General Council shall take office immediately after the Annual General Meeting at which they are declared elected.

(f) Provided they are otherwise qualified, members shall be eligible for re-election.

(g) Casual vacancies shall be filled by the candidates who received the next highest number of votes in the class in which the vacancy occurs. In the event of there being no such candidate, casual vacancies will be subject to election at the next election following the vacancy arising. Successful candidates in such cases will be elected for one year only. Candidates may only stand for casual vacancies in their own class of membership.

(h) In 2009 all members of the General Council shall be required to stand down and a complete re-election of the General Council shall take place. Members standing down will be eligible for re-election.

(i) In 2010, the five Co-operative Group Class seats receiving the least number of votes and the three All Others Class seats receiving the least number of votes will be open for re-election – this will be known as General Council Group A. In 2011, the five Co-operative Group Class seats from the 2009 original election and the three All Others Class seats from the 2009 original election will be open for re-election – this will be known as General Council Group B. Thereafter elections will alternate each year between General Council Group A and General Council Group B. Sitting members will be eligible to stand for re-election provided they remain otherwise qualified.

Constituent Association Liaison Committees

10. (a) The General Council shall be empowered to appoint ad hoc committees as they deem necessary to facilitate the consideration of business of a professional and/or specialist nature, pertinent to Constituent Associations.

(b) A Constituent Association Liaison Committee shall comprise three members appointed by and from the General Council, three members appointed by and from the Executive Committee of the Constituent Association and up to three members co-opted from the lay membership of the Constituent Associations.

(c) Such committees shall be subordinate to the General Council and, on any matters which may affect members in other Constituent Associations, shall also be subordinate to Sectional Councils.

(d) Each Committee shall appoint a Chairman from its own number who shall be a member of the General Council. The Secretary shall be appointed from the Constituent Association representatives or a deputy appointed by him. Committees shall meet as directed by the General Council and shall render such reports to that body as requested by them.

Other Committees

11. The General Council may appoint or remove other Committees from its own number which shall, in the functions entrusted to them, conform in all respects to the instructions given to them by the General Council.

Powers of General Council

12. (a) The General Council shall have full control of the business of the Association and shall have power to apply the funds of the Association in pursuance of the objects, and to do anything not inconsistent with these rules, or the Acts of Parliament under which the Association is registered. In the event of any question arising on which the rules are silent or obscure, the General Council shall have power to decide thereon. In the exercise of these powers the General Council may require any or all Committees of the Association to prepare financial budgets and to work within the budgets approved by the General Council.

(b) Every decision and order of the General Council shall be binding on members and Constituent Associations, subject to appeal to the next succeeding Annual General Meeting, or to a Special General Meeting. Every member of the Association both present and future agrees that this clause shall be of full force and effect, and shall form the essential basis of the contract between the Association and its members.

(c) The General Council shall have power at any time to take a ballot of the members or any group of members.

(d) In the event of a ballot being necessary, voting papers shall be issued to all full and Individual Representation Only members, or in the case of a group of members all full and Individual Representation Only members within that group, whose names are on the register at the date of the ballot.

Ballot papers shall be returned sealed in the envelopes provided, which shall clearly indicate thereon that it is a ballot paper.

(e) The General Council shall appoint Scrutineers in accordance with the requirements of the law. In all ballots the Scrutineers shall issue a Certificate declaring the results of the ballot. Thereafter, the General Secretary shall send a copy of the Scrutineer's Certificate to the Secretaries of all Constituent Associations affected.

Officers

13. At its first meeting in each calendar year, the General Council shall appoint from its own number a President-Designate, who shall assume the office of President at the next but one Annual General Meeting. The new President shall be installed in office as the last business at the Annual General Meeting. On concluding his office, the President shall become Vice-President.

The President shall preside at all meetings of the General Council and at the Annual Meeting. The Vice-President shall act if the President is absent. In the event of both being absent, the General Council shall appoint one of its number to preside. A person who ceases to be a member of the General Council shall be disqualified from continuing in office as President, Vice-President or President-Designate.

In the event of a vacancy arising in the office of President, Vice-President or President-Designate, the General Council shall fill the vacancy from its own number.

Meetings and Proceeding of the General Council

14. The General Council shall prepare standing orders to regulate its own proceeding and those of any other committees. (See Appendix "A")

All questions shall be decided by a majority of votes. In the case of an equality of votes, the chairman shall also have a casting vote.

The quorum of General Council meetings shall be 6.

Removal of General Council Members

15. A member of the General Council may be removed from office at any time by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose.

Co-operative Group Council

16. (a) The Co-operative Group Council shall be subject to the overall authority of the General Council of NACO. Its purpose and function shall be to deal with matters specific to the interests of members employed by the Co-operative Group Limited.

(b) The Co-operative Group Council shall consist of the persons elected to the General Council in the Co-operative Group Class and such other members as may be elected by postal ballot from the Co-operative Group Constituent Associations on the basis of one seat for every two hundred members or part thereof in respect of each such Association.

(c) Only full members of the appropriate Co-operative Group Constituent Association can nominate, stand and vote for Council vacancies. The election process shall be as follows: -

- (i) No member shall be eligible for nomination for the Co-operative Group (CWS) Council other than for a vacancy relating to his Constituent Association.
- (ii) Nomination forms must have stated thereon the name and private address of the person nominated and any further particulars the General Council may require.
- (iii) Nominations shall be received by Registered Office not later than five weeks before the NACO Annual General Meeting.
- (iv) Where an election is required, voting papers shall be issued not later than three weeks before the Annual General Meeting.
- (v) Members will be entitled to vote only for vacancies relating to their Constituent Association.
- (vi) Voting papers must be returned unopened to the appointed Scrutineer at least one week before the Annual General Meeting.
- (vii) Persons elected shall be those who received the highest number of votes in their Constituency. Casual vacancies shall be filled by the candidate who polled the next highest number of votes in the same Constituency as the vacancy occurs, provided that if there is no such candidate, the Co-operative Group Council shall be empowered to fill the vacancy.
- (viii) Should the votes in any case be equal, the General Council shall have the determining vote.
- (ix) The members elected to the Co-operative Group Council shall take office immediately after the Annual General Meeting.

(d) Elections shall be conducted in accordance with the procedure contained in this Rule.

(e) The elected members shall be elected for two years. Provided they are otherwise qualified, members shall be eligible for re-election.

Constituent Associations

- 17.** (a) Each Constituent Association shall consist of not less than ten members and shall be established by the General Secretary at his discretion following application by the members concerned and subject to the subsequent approval of the General Council.
- (b) Should the number of members in any Constituent Association fall below ten except temporarily, the Association shall be closed upon the authority of the General Council who shall determine to which other Constituent Association the remaining members shall be attached.
- (c) Each Constituent Association shall elect a Committee consisting of not less than five members, including a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Hon. Secretary and/or Treasurer. The Chairman, or in his absence the Vice-Chairman, shall preside at all meetings and have an additional casting vote.
- (d) Each Constituent Association shall formulate and adopt rules for the conduct of its own affairs but these must be in conformity with rules of the Association and be subject to approval by the General Council.
- (e) Each Constituent Association shall hold an annual meeting at least four weeks before the date of the Annual General Meeting of the parent body at which the Officials and Committee, and representative(s) to the Sectional Council, shall be elected, each upon a majority vote of those present. Such Officials and Committee shall hold office until the close of the next Association Annual General Meeting, or may be removed from office by a majority vote at a General Meeting.
- (f) The Constituent Association Committee as elected in Clause (e) shall have the power to fill casual vacancies.
- (g) Subscriptions shall be collected by direct remittance to Registered Office.
- (h) The income of the Constituent Association from Registered Office shall consist of such an amount as the General Council shall determine in any year, based on the number of members in the Constituent Association at 31st December in the immediately preceding year. The amount so determined shall be remitted to the Constituent Association by Registered Office not later than 31st March in the year in question. Where the amount so determined proves inadequate to meet legitimate administration costs of the Constituent Association, an application may be submitted for an additional financial grant. Such claim shall be accompanied by a copy of the last audited accounts of the Association. It shall be for the General Council at their sole discretion to determine on the amount of any additional grant to be paid to any Constituent Association but no such grant shall be payable until 1st July in any year.
- (i) All Constituent Association funds shall be deposited in a deposit or current account at the Co-operative Bank plc, or invested in accordance with the provisions of Rule 27 (a) (b) (c) or with Registered Office, in the name of the Constituent Association. Withdrawals shall only take place on the signature of the Hon. Secretary or Treasurer and another member appointed by the Committee.
- (j) The Constituent Association Committee shall have authority to pay an honorarium to the Hon. Secretary and/or Treasurer.
- (k) The Honorary Secretary of the Constituent Association shall keep the Minute Book of the Association and shall conduct all necessary correspondence between the Constituent Association, General Council and individual members and shall at all times produce such books and records for inspection by his Committee, General Council or General Secretary.
- (l) The Constituent Association Committee shall meet as determined by its local rules.
- (m) Any Constituent Association may be dissolved by the authority of the General Council, and upon such dissolution the members of the Constituent Association shall be transferred to such other Constituent Association as the General Council may determine, and the funds of the Constituent Association shall be forwarded to Registered Office and shall become part of the general fund of the Association.
- (n) Each Constituent Association shall submit before 31st January in each year an Annual Statement of Accounts to Registered Office in such form as the latter may from time to time prescribe and which shall be duly audited by a member of the Constituent Association who does not hold office on the Constituent Association Committee, or any member of NACO approved by the General Council, who shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting of the Constituent Association.
- (o) In matters of a purely domestic character, each Constituent Association shall have full discretionary powers, provided such power shall conform to the main Rules, but in all matters having a national bearing, their decisions or recommendations shall be subject to confirmation by the General Council.

(p) Members shall be organised into Constituent Associations consisting of not less than ten persons in accordance with the geographical location of their employment or their employment function.

Expenses

18. For attendance at meetings of the General Council or of any Executive, or any meeting convened by the General Secretary, or when serving as representatives or on official delegations, members shall be paid expenses at such rates as may be determined from time to time by an Annual General Meeting. With the authority of the General Secretary, endorsed by the General Council, fares for Air Travel or First-Class Rail Travel may in certain clearly defined circumstances be paid. The expenses of travelling overseas shall be those reasonably incurred.

General Secretary

19. (a) The members of the Association shall elect a General Secretary, who shall be the Chief Executive of the Association and shall have full authority over all other paid officials appointed by the General Council, and they shall carry out such duties as are assigned to them by him/her, acting under the control of the General Council. The General Council shall retain the right to dismiss a General Secretary.

The position of General Secretary shall be subject to re-election five years from the date of the last election.

The procedure for such election shall be determined by the General Council. Those members eligible to vote shall be full and Individual Representation Only members on the Register of Members following the monthly up-date of the Register that immediately precedes the closing date for nominations.

Nominations for the post of General Secretary shall be open to full and Individual Representation Only members of the Association as defined in Rule 4 *(a)* who have three years' continuous membership of the Association and are fully paid up at the time such nomination is lodged. The General Council at their absolute discretion may also advertise for or invite nominations for the position of General Secretary from persons other than full and Individual Representation Only members of three years' standing who, in the opinion of the General Council, have such qualifications, experience and abilities as would enable them to be considered for such appointment.

(b) The General Secretary, who shall also be Treasurer, shall be responsible for the keeping of proper accounting records, preparation of accounts, and maintain the register of members, and shall also send each year the return required by Certification Officer not later than June 1st.

(c) He shall give such security as the General Council may determine. He shall convene in writing all meetings of the General Council, and keep the Minutes of their proceedings.

(d) He shall be responsible for receiving contributions and other income of the Association, and shall make all payments from the funds on the authority of the General Council. He shall be responsible for paying all monies received into the bank, except in so far as the General Council may authorise the retention of a balance as petty cash, and shall perform such other duties as may be determined by the General Council. The General Secretary and the Assistant General Secretary shall have the power to sign cheques up to such amounts as shall be determined by the General Council from time to time. Cheques in excess of the stipulated amount shall be counter-signed by the President or the Vice President or the President Designate.

(e) The General Secretary shall, on demand, from the General Council, render up all books of records, accounts and cash.

(f) All staff except other Officials shall be appointed and dismissed by the General Secretary, acting under authority conferred upon him by the General Council.

(g) The General Secretary shall each year submit for audit to an Auditor appointed in accordance with Rule 27, the accounts made up to the 31st December next preceding the date on which they are submitted, together with all vouchers relating thereto, all Deeds, Documents of Title, and Securities relating to property, and money of the Association, and such other information as the Auditor may reasonably require.

(h) The General Secretary shall act as Secretary of the Appeals Tribunal (vide Rule 36).

Other Officials

20. The General Council may appoint or dismiss an Assistant General Secretary, an Assistant Secretary, or any other Official.

Affiliation – TUC

21. The Association shall be affiliated to the Trade Union Congress (and its affiliates) and any other organisation that the General Council may determine.

Annual General Meeting

22. (a) The Annual General Meeting shall be held at such place and time as the General Council may determine, and shall consist of delegates from the Constituent Associations.

(b) Each Constituent Association shall be entitled to appoint from its own number two delegates to attend the Annual General Meeting or any Special General Meeting. Those Constituent Associations with more than fifty members shall be entitled to appoint one additional delegate for each additional fifty members or part thereof up to a maximum of five delegates in total for any one Constituent Association. Constituent Associations may appoint Associate and Individual Representation Only or Honorary members as delegates provided that at least one delegate is a full member. The delegates appointed shall not be provisional members or Affiliate Members or Contract Members or members of the General Council.

(c) Each Constituent Association shall pay the expenses of its own delegates at the same rate as for the General Council.

(d) The method of voting shall be by show of hands or on a card vote at the discretion of the President. Where, however, a vote is challenged by not less than 10 delegates a card vote shall be taken. On a card vote, the value of the votes shall be the number of members in the Constituent Associations on December 31st previous to the meeting. Except in special cases where the rules provided for a two-thirds majority, the business shall be determined by a majority of the votes recorded.

(e) Should the voting be equal, the President shall also have the casting vote.

(f) Members other than duly appointed delegates may attend the meeting and speak, but shall not have the power to vote.

(g) The business of the meeting shall consist of receiving and passing the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts, the declaration of election of General Council members, consideration of resolutions which can only be submitted by Constituent Associations or the General Council, and any other matters deemed of general interest to the members.

(h) The Annual Report, Statement of Accounts and Agenda shall be posted to members not less than four weeks prior to the meeting.

(i) All resolutions, other than those to be brought forward by the General Council, shall be forwarded to the General Secretary at least eight weeks before the date fixed for the General Meeting. Any amendments to such resolutions must be forwarded in writing to the General Secretary at least two weeks before the date of the General Meeting.

(j) No Annual General Meeting shall proceed to business unless 20 delegates are present within half-an-hour after the time the meeting is called for, but business shall not be stopped for want of a quorum after the meeting has commenced.

(k) Any emergency motion for consideration of the Annual General Meeting shall be submitted to the General Secretary at least three days prior to the date of the Annual General Meeting, and the General Council shall recommend to the Annual General Meeting whether the motion shall be discussed but no motion shall be considered an emergency motion if it could have been forwarded in time for inclusion on the Agenda for the Annual General Meeting. (See Appendix "B")

Special General Meetings

23. (a) A Special General Meeting may be convened by the General Council at any time by giving 14 days' clear notice to members. Such notice shall be posted to the registered address of members, and shall state the time and place of the Special General Meeting and the business to be transacted. The procedure and voting at Special Meetings shall be as at the Annual General Meeting.

(b) In cases of special emergency, the General Council may decide upon a shorter notice than 14 days.

(c) The General Council shall call a Special General Meeting provided that not less than 25 members send notice to the General Council demanding the calling of a Special General Meeting, accompanied by a deposit of £50.00 to cover expenses incidental to the summoning and holding of the meeting. The refund of the deposit to the requisitioner shall be at the discretion of the General Council, but in the event of the proposal being carried, such deposit shall be refunded to the persons by whom it was made. Such notice shall state the business to be brought forward and shall be sent to the General Secretary 28 clear days before the date suggested for the meeting.

Conduct of Meetings

24. The conduct of all meetings for transacting any business of the organisation (other than the Annual General Meeting) shall be regulated by the Standing Orders and Rules of Debate shown in Appendix "A".

Alteration of Rules

25. (a) No rule shall be made, nor shall any of the rules herein contained or hereafter made, be amended, altered or rescinded, unless with the consent of a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members voting at the Annual General Meeting of the Association.

This requirement will also apply to Motions amending the rate of annual subscriptions (*vide* Rule 5 (a)).

(b) All proposed alterations of Rules must either be submitted by the General Council or a Constituent Association. The General Council shall cause all proposed alterations of rules to be circulated to all Constituent Associations not later than sixteen weeks before the meeting, who shall have the right to submit amendments to same, provided such amendments are sent to the General Secretary not later than eight weeks before the Annual General Meeting.

(c) The General Council shall thereafter cause to be circulated to all members all proposals, alterations of rules and subsequent amendments thereto.

(d) The foregoing provisions shall be subject to any decision of the General Council that any proposed amendment, alterations or rescission of the rule shall be dealt with as a matter of urgency in advance of the Annual General Meeting. Following such decision, the General Secretary shall notify members of the proposals and shall issue to members a voting paper to be returned to the Scrutineers by such date as the General Secretary shall specify, provided that such date is not less than 10 days after the issue of the voting paper.

The result of the voting shall be announced in such manner as the General Secretary deems appropriate, and shall also be reported to the succeeding Annual General Meeting. The General Council may decide that members shall be given the opportunity of submitting amendments to a proposal and any said valid amendment shall be contained in the voting paper. An amendment shall be voted upon as though it were a separate proposal.

In the event of an original proposal and an amendment being carried, the one receiving the highest number of votes in favour shall prevail.

If two-thirds of the votes are in favour of the proposal (or of an amendment prevailing over the motion) it shall be deemed to be carried and to be a resolution of the Annual General Meeting.

Trustees and Investments

26. Three Trustees shall be appointed by a vote of the majority of the members at the Annual Meeting. They shall hold office subject to the Annual Meeting, which shall fill any vacancies caused by death, removal or resignation. All monies not required for general use shall be invested by them as directed by the General Council, in their names on behalf of the Association, from time to time. No investments or securities shall be withdrawn or removed without the signatures of the trustees. They shall deliver up all securities, deeds of property, money or other effects belonging to the Association at any time on request of a majority of the members in Annual or Special Meeting assembled. Investments may be made as follows:-

(a) In or upon any mortgage, bond, debenture, debenture stock, corporation stock, annuity, rent charge, rent or other security (not being securities payable to bearer) authorised by or under any Act of any authority within the meaning of the Local Loans Act 1875.

(b) In shares of any Society registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act, or any Society registered under the Building Societies Act, or of any Company registered under the Companies Act or incorporated by Act of Parliament or by Charter, being a Society or Company with limited liability.

(c) In or upon any other security in which trustees are for the time being authorised by law to invest, for which purpose Sections 1 to 6 of the Trustee Investment Act 1961 shall apply as if the Association were a trustee and its funds were trust property.

Auditors

27. *(a)* The accounts of the Association shall be audited at least once every year by one or more of the Qualified Auditors elected by the Annual Meeting of the members.

(b) In case of a vacancy from death or other causes the General Council are empowered to fill the position until the next Annual General Meeting.

(c) The Auditor(s) may be removed from office by a General Meeting of members.

Dealings in Land

28. The General Council may authorise the purchase of land not exceeding one acre, and buildings or any other property required for the purpose of the Association, or make any arrangements as to the renting or hiring of suitable premises as may be necessary from time to time.

Management Fund

29. This fund shall consist of contributions received from members, and income from any other sources, and from it all expenses of Management incurred pursuant to the objects including payments to General Council, Legal, Deputation and other charges and Grants to Charitable or other organisations may be made as the General Council or members may determine.

Benevolent Fund

30. The General Council shall have the power to allocate sums of money to a Benevolent Fund which shall be applied in accordance with rules. (Details in Appendix "C")

Stewards

31. The General Council may, at their discretion, appoint one of their number to visit and report upon any applications for a Benevolent Grant. Such Stewards shall be remunerated in such a manner as the General Council may determine.

Inspection of Records

32. Any member or person having an interest in the funds of the Association shall be entitled to inspect the accounting records and the register of members at Registered Office on application to the General Secretary at any reasonable time. A reasonable fee will be levied to cover administration costs. The amount will be determined by the General Secretary.

Change of Address

33. Any member removing or changing his employment is required to notify the General Secretary at once of his new address, or address of new employer as the case may be.

Withdrawal

34. (a) In the case of a member who leaves Co-operative employment, membership shall cease at the end of the period for which subscription has been paid.

(b) In the case of a member who is reduced in status to a position which is not in conformity with the provision of Rule 4, membership shall cease at the end of the period for which subscription has been paid.

Expulsion - Reinstatement - Termination of Membership

35. (a) Any member who is guilty of conduct detrimental to the Association may be expelled by the General Council. Any member so expelled shall have the right of appeal. The General Council may, by giving six weeks' notice in writing, terminate the membership if necessary in order to comply with a decision of a Disputes Committee of the Trades Union Congress.

(b) In circumstances of Clause *(a)* a member shall thereupon cease to hold any office in the Association.

(c) No member shall be subject to any disciplinary action (except in respect of non-payment of any contributions) unless:

(i) He has received written notice of the charges brought against him and has been given a reasonable time to prepare his defence.

(ii) He is afforded a full and fair hearing.

(iii) A written statement of the findings resulting from the hearing is given to him.

(iv) His appeal has been heard, or the time for appealing has expired without his having exercised that right.

Appeals Tribunal

36. (a) An Appeals Tribunal shall be established for the purpose of dealing with any claims arising from one or more of the following headings:-

(i) Refusal to admit into membership.

(ii) Expulsion in accordance with Rule 35.

(iii) Action taken by the organisation or by any of its Officials which it is contended is contrary to the rules.

(b) At each Annual General Meeting the General Council shall submit to the members the names of three suitably qualified persons, not being members of the General Council, who they recommend for appointment to constitute an Appeals Tribunal. The persons appointed shall, subject to Rule 23 *(c)* constitute the Appeals Tribunal subject to the next Annual General Meeting.

(c) Any appeals arising under item *(i)*, *(ii)*, *(iii)* shall be heard by the Appeals Tribunal who will require the applicant or member to submit his appeal or complaint in writing to the General Secretary within 28 days of the particular happening or decision.

(d) The member or applicant concerned shall be allowed, if he so desires, to attend before the Tribunal when the Charge or his Appeal is considered, and to state his case, either personally or through some person nominated by him. The General Secretary, who shall act as Secretary of the Tribunal, shall notify by registered post the parties concerned of the Tribunal's decision.

(e) The decision of the Appeals Tribunal shall be final and binding under Clause (a) (i and ii) but under Clause (iii) they shall be empowered to make a recommendation.

(f) Where an appeal or claim is lodged with the Tribunal a written statement shall be submitted by both parties and the appeal or claim shall be considered within four weeks of submission. No action shall be taken against the respondent pending a decision of the Tribunal which shall be conveyed in writing to the parties concerned by registered post.

(g) In the event of a member of the Appeals Tribunal being directly or indirectly involved in any particular case under review, such member shall stand down and it shall be competent for the General Council to co-opt a member to fill the vacancy for that particular case.

(h) The Tribunal shall meet, adjourn or otherwise regulate its proceedings as it shall deem proper, each member being given reasonable notice in writing of its meetings.

(i) In the event of any member alleging he has a justified complaint relating to the activities of the Association with the exception of those mentioned in Clauses (a) (i, ii and iii) he shall submit his complaint in writing to the General Secretary. In the event of his being dissatisfied with the reply he receives it shall be competent for him to request that his communication be referred to the General Council for consideration.

Grievances/Disputes/Industrial Action

37. In the interests of maintaining good Industrial Relations Practice, the NACO shall, wherever possible, seek to establish Procedural Agreements with employers for the handling of Grievances and Disputes.

(a) Grievances

The aforementioned agreements shall aim to identify the right of any individual member or group of members to register a grievance in relation to their employment. The NACO will, within the terms of the specific agreement concerned, assist in the preparation and presentation of such grievance, as requested.

(b) Disputes

All disputes are recognised as being National Issues and can only be registered by the National Association. Individual members, groups of members and any sub-division of the National Association do not have the authority to register disputes.

Such disputes may only be registered with the authority of the General Council. On an operational basis such authority will be delegated to the General Secretary subject to the endorsement of the General Council at their next following meeting.

In the event of a disagreement arising from the application of the foregoing procedure the matter may be applied to the General Council, who shall be the final arbiter on such matters, subject to provisions of Rule 12 (b).

(c) Industrial Action

Industrial Action will not be undertaken until all established procedures to which the Association is a party have been exhausted. Such action must be supported by a majority of those members affected voting in a secret postal ballot.

Such Industrial Action must also be approved by the General Council by a two-thirds majority vote of those General Council members present and entitled to vote at a duly convened meeting where such action is considered.

In the event of Industrial Action being approved, instructions shall be issued to all Constituent Associations and members by the General Secretary acting on behalf of the General Council.

Dissolution

38. The Association may be dissolved by a majority of two-thirds of the members present and voting at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose, unless the General Council decide that a ballot of the whole of the membership shall be taken. In the latter case the General Council shall post voting papers to the registered address of all full members and a two-thirds majority of votes received shall be necessary for dissolution. Should

the dissolution be carried, the funds of the Association shall be used to pay all liabilities of the Association. Should there be a surplus, it shall be divided equally between all full members who are financially clear on the books at the date of the dissolution.

Copies of Rules

39. The General Council shall provide a sufficient number of copies of these Rules to enable the General Secretary to deliver a copy to any person on application at a cost not exceeding 50p plus cost of second class post.

Interpretation

40. (a) In all cases where the masculine is mentioned the feminine is to be included.

APPENDIX “A”

Standing Orders and Rules of Debate

(a) Standing Orders

1. The quorum for any meeting shall, in the absence of any other provision in the rules, be one-quarter, or three, whichever is the greater number, of the members entitled to attend and vote at the meeting. A meeting shall be dissolved if a quorum is not present within half an hour from the time appointed for the commencement of the meeting, but proceedings shall not be invalidated for want of a quorum arising after business has commenced.
2. The Chair shall be taken by a member authorised by the rules to do so or, if no such member is present, by a member chosen by the members present and entitled to vote. The Chairman shall conduct the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders and Rules of Debate, and subject thereto his ruling on any matter of procedure shall be final.
3. The Agenda, if not circulated before the meeting, shall be made available to every member present at the meeting. Except as otherwise provided in the rules, each person present and entitled to vote at the meeting shall have one vote on any question, and no vote on behalf of a member who is not present shall be accepted. In the event of an equality of votes the Chairman of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.
4. Voting on any question shall be by show of hands unless a ballot is required by the rules or demanded by two-thirds of members present and entitled to vote. In the event of a ballot being required or demanded, two Scrutineers shall be appointed by the meeting, who shall be responsible for the issue and collection of ballot papers and shall scrutinise and count the votes. The ballot shall be held at such time during the course of the meeting as the Chairman shall direct. The Chairman shall ensure that all who vote on a show of hands are entitled to do so, and shall count, or supervise the counting of, the votes. The results of all voting, whether on a show of hands or a ballot, shall be declared to the meeting by the Chairman.
5. Except as may otherwise be provided for in the rules, in case of an election, the candidate or candidates receiving the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected, and any other matter shall be decided by a simple majority of the votes cast.
6. Unless otherwise provided in the rules, candidates may be nominated for vacancies at the meeting at which the election takes place.
7. A meeting may be adjourned by resolution carried by two-thirds of the members present and entitled to vote. At an adjourned meeting no business shall be transacted that could not have been transacted at the original meeting.
8. All meetings of a Constituent Association, or its Committee, or of a Sectional Council, shall be convened in writing by the Secretary of the Association.
9. The General Secretary, who shall be responsible for the convening of meetings of the General Council and its Executives, shall ensure that seven days' notice in writing is given of such meetings to the recorded address of the member concerned.

(b) Rules of Debate

1. Any member wishing to speak shall address the Chairman. If more than one member rises to speak, the Chairman shall decide the order of speakers.
2. Any motion, unless the terms are set out in an agenda circulated prior to the meeting, shall, if the Chairman so requires, be put in writing before a vote is taken.
3. A motion shall not be debated until it has been seconded. A seconder may reserve his speech until later in the debate. A proposer of a motion shall be allowed 10 minutes for his original speech and five minutes for a right of reply at the end of the debate; a seconder shall be allowed five minutes. Any other members may speak only once in the same debate and shall be allowed five minutes. These periods may be extended at the discretion of the Chairman with the consent of the meeting.
4. Any amendment proposed to a motion must be relevant and not be a direct negative. It shall not be debated until seconded. The proposer and seconder of an amendment shall have the same rights as those of an original motion under paragraph 3 except that the proposer of an amendment has no right of reply.
5. When an amendment has been moved and seconded no further amendment may be moved until it has been disposed of; but notice of intention to move a subsequent amendment may be given, without comment, during the course of the debate.

6. If an amendment is carried the motion as amended shall become the substantive motion and a further amendment may be proposed.
7. If an amendment is negatived a further amendment may be proposed provided it is not substantially the same as an amendment previously defeated.
8. The proposer of the motion with consent of his seconder may signify that he is willing to accept an amendment, but, at the Chairman's discretion, the debate may continue.
9. A motion or amendment having been proposed and seconded may only be withdrawn by consent of the meeting.
10. Any member who has not already taken part in the debate on a motion or an amendment may, at the conclusion of the speech of another member, move without comment:
 - (a) That the question be now put.
 - (b) That the debate be now adjourned to the next meeting.
 - (c) That the meeting proceed to the next business.

If the motion is seconded the Chairman shall at once put it to the meeting.

If a motion that the question be now put is carried, the proposer of a motion may nevertheless exercise his right of reply under paragraph 3. If either of the other procedural motions is passed the meeting shall immediately proceed to the next item of business.

11. If a motion under paragraph 10 (a), (b) or (c) is lost it is within the Chairman's discretion whether or when he will accept a further motion under any of the three paragraphs during the course of the same debate. Subject to paragraph 10 and this paragraph, the Chairman shall decide when the vote is to be taken.
12. Any member of the meeting may seek the Chairman's ruling on a point of order at any time during the meeting and this shall be disposed of before the debate is resumed or any further business introduced.
13. The report of any Committee or Sub-Committee may be discussed informally but the Chairman may, at his discretion, ask for a motion that it be "received", "approved", "rejected" or "referred back". The rules of debate shall apply to any such resolution.
14. These Rules of Debate or any of them may be suspended in whole or in part for the whole or any part of a meeting but only by resolution agreed to by at least two-thirds of the members present and entitled to vote at the meeting.

APPENDIX “B”

Standing Orders for Annual General Meeting

1. Quorum

No Annual General Meeting shall proceed to business unless 20 Delegates are present within half-an-hour after the time the meeting is called for, but business shall not be stopped for want of a quorum after the meeting has commenced (*vide* Rule 22).

2. Delegates’ Credentials

(a) Each Constituent Association shall be entitled to appoint from its own number two delegates to attend the Annual General Meeting or any Special General Meeting. Those Constituent Associations with more than fifty members shall be entitled to appoint one additional delegate for each additional fifty members or part thereof up to a maximum of five delegates in total for any one Constituent Association. Constituent Associations may appoint Associate or Honorary members as delegates provided that at least one delegate is a full member. The delegates appointed shall not be provisional members or members of the General Council.

(b) Members other than duly-appointed Delegates may attend the meeting and speak, but shall not have the power to vote.

3. Voting

(a) The method of voting shall be by show of hands, or on a card vote at the discretion of the President. Where, however, a vote is challenged by not less than 10 delegates a card vote shall be taken. On a card vote, the value of the votes shall be the number of members in the Constituent Associations on December 31st previous to the meeting. Except in special cases where the rules provide for a two-thirds majority, the business shall be determined by a majority of the votes recorded.

(b) In the event of a card vote being properly demanded the President shall repeat the motion which is the subject of a division, and delegates shall vote by showing their official voting cards for or against the proposition. The ruling of the Tellers as to the numbers shall be final, except in the event of a difference between them, when the President shall order a recount.

(c) Should the voting be equal, the President shall have a casting vote (*vide* Rule 22).

4. Appointment of Tellers

Two or more members shall be nominated by the General Council to act as Tellers, subject to the approval of Annual General Meeting. They shall be responsible for counting the votes on any matter which is the subject of a division.

5. President’s Address

The President shall deliver an address which shall not occupy more than 30 minutes.

6. Motions

Motions from an Association must be moved by its duly appointed delegates, in whose absence they shall be formally moved from the Chair.

7. Discussions and Amendments

All discussion, resolutions and amendments etc. shall be governed by the Rules of Debate shown in Appendix “A”, and be in accordance with the provisions of Rule 22 (i) and Rule 25 (b).

8. Emergency Resolutions

No motion shall be considered an emergency if there has been an opportunity for inclusion in the Agenda. Such motions shall be submitted to the General Secretary at least three days prior to the Annual General Meeting, and the General Council shall recommend whether the motion shall be discussed (*vide* Rule 22).

9. Chairman’s Ruling

(a) Each member shall stand when speaking. If the President rises to call a member to order or for any other purpose connected with the proceedings, the member speaking shall thereupon resume his seat and no other member shall rise until the President has authorised the discussion to proceed.

(b) The ruling of the President on any question under the Standing Orders or on points of order of explanation shall be final unless challenged by not less than four members, and unless two-thirds of the duly appointed delegates present vote to the contrary.

10. Interruption

If any member interrupts another whilst addressing the meeting, or causes a disturbance and refuses to obey the President when called to order, he shall be named by the President. He shall thereupon be expelled from the meeting and shall not be allowed to enter again until an apology satisfactory to those present has been given.

11. Notice of Standing Orders

A notice drawing attention to these Standing Orders shall be circulated to every Constituent Association in advance of each Annual General Meeting.

12. Amendment of Standing Orders

These Standing Orders may be amended at any Annual General Meeting by the submission of a motion in accordance with provision of Rule 22 (i).

APPENDIX “C”

Benevolent Fund Rules

(Adopted by General Council on 10th May, 1988)

1. Title

The fund shall be called the Benevolent Fund of the National Association of Co-operative Officials.

2. Objects

The primary object of the Fund shall be to give financial assistance to members, former members and widows and any other dependents of deceased members of the National Association of Co-operative Officials who, in the view of the General Council, are in need of such assistance.

3. Funds

The capital fund shall be raised by allocations made from the general funds of the Association, by the General Council under the authority of Rule 30. The General Council shall also have the power to accept for the benefit of the fund such other sums as may be subscribed from other sources.

4. Government

The fund shall be under the control of the General Council of the Association for the time being. The General Council may appoint from amongst its members a Sub-Committee for the purpose of dealing with applications and making recommendations to the General Council. No grant may be made unless the grant is authorised by a resolution of the General Council.

Should the General Council determine that the fund shall be discontinued any surplus of assets over liabilities shall be paid over to such charity as the General Council decide.

5. Relief

Applications shall in the first instance be made to the appropriate Constituent Association of the Association on the form provided for the purpose. The Constituent Association shall make proper enquiries on the case and send in their report and recommendations to the General Council.

The General Council may make such enquiries as they think fit ascertaining from time to time that recipients continue to be in necessitous circumstances.

6. Investments

The fund shall be invested in the name of the Association in the Co-operative Wholesale Society Limited, or in Trustee Investments.

7. Accounts

A yearly Statement of the Accounts of the fund, audited by the Auditor of the Association, shall be presented to the members of the Association, together with the Annual Balance Sheet of the Association.

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