Constitution of the Westminster LGBT Forum

1. Name

The name of the group shall be **Westminster LGBT Forum**

2. Aims

The aims of Westminster LGBT Forum will be:

To Improve Information Provision

- Providing advice to Westminster City Council on matters such as Hate Crime and LGBT+ local service provision.
- A source of information & developments to the Westminster LGBT+ community on issues that affect local areas such as changes to businesses or local services.
- Act as a critical friend to Westminster City Council while also helping raise the individual concerns of local LGBT+ Community.
- Being a voice for local LGBT+ residents that is a visible and trusted presence within the LGBT+ community in Westminster.
- Maintaining our links with local charities, local health watch teams, LGBT+ business forums and other vital LGBT+ societies within Westminster.

To Improve Communication

- Identifying & monitoring the availability of safe spaces for LGBT+ groups.
- Cross Party working with Westminster Council local Councillors on issues that affect the LGBT+ Community in Westminster Wards.

To Provide Scrutiny

- Monitoring levels of Hate Crime across Westminster and then working with the MET Police and Westminster Council to address concerns.
- Monitoring the provision of local health and social services to match the needs of the diverse local & visiting LGBT+ community.

To support LGBT Community Businesses and Cultural organisations in Westminster

- Working with LGBT and LGBT friendly businesses to help them meet the needs of the LGBT community
- Supporting LGBT arts and cultural organisations and improving the artistic and cultural offer for the LGBT community
- Develop inclusive artistic projects within the borough in partnership with other organisations

3. Membership

Membership is open to anyone who:

- is aged over 16 years old; and
- lives, works or visits the City of Westminster borough; and

- supports the aims of the Westminster LGBT Forum.

Membership will be conferred by submission of email contact information to the Forum.

A list of all members will be kept by the Coordinator.

Ceasing to be a member

Members may resign at any time in writing to the coordinator.

Any offensive behaviour, including racist, sexist or inflammatory remarks, will not be permitted. Anyone behaving in an offensive way or breaking the equal opportunities policy may be asked not to attend further meetings or to resign from the group if an apology is not given or the behaviour is repeated. The individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the management committee, accompanied by a friend, before a final decision is made.

4. Equal Opportunities

Westminster LGBT Forum will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, disability, religious or political belief, marital status or age.

5. Officers and committee

The business of the group will be carried out by a Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee will meet as necessary and not less than four times a year.

The Committee will consist of 3 members, and be composed of 3 officers. Up to 2 additional members may be co-opted onto the committee at the discretion of the committee.

The officers' roles are as follows:

- Chair, who shall chair both general and committee meetings;
- Vice-Chair, who shall support the Chair in their duties and lead on project work;
- Coordinator, who shall be responsible for the taking of minutes, the distribution of all papers, for keeping records of members, and for maintaining accounts.

In the event of an officer standing down during the year a replacement will be elected by the next General Meeting of members.

Any committee member not attending a meeting without apology for three months will be contacted by the committee and asked if they wish to resign.

Committee meetings will be open to any member of Westminster LGBT Forum wishing to attend, who may speak but not vote.

6. Meetings

6.1. Annual General Meetings

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held within fifteen months of the previous AGM.

All members will be notified in writing at least 3 weeks before the date of the meeting, giving the venue, date and time.

Nominations for the committee may be made to the Coordinator before the meeting, or at the meeting.

The quorum for the AGM will be 5% of the membership or 6 members, whichever is the greater number.

At the AGM:-

- The Committee will present a report of the work of Westminster LGBT Forum over the year.
- The Committee will present the accounts of Westminster LGBT Forum for the previous year.
- The officers and Committee for the next year will be elected.
- Any proposals given to the Coordinator at least 7 days in advance of the meeting will be discussed.

6.2 Special General Meetings

The Coordinator will call a Special General Meeting at the request of the majority of the committee or at least four other members giving a written request to the Chair or Coordinator stating the reason for their request.

The meeting will take place within twenty-eight days of the request.

All members will be given two weeks' notice of such a meeting, giving the venue, date, time and agenda, and notice may be by telephone, email or post.

The quorum for the Special General Meeting will be 5% of the membership or 6 members, whichever is the greater number.

6.3 General Meetings

General Meetings are open to all members and will be held at least once every 2 months or more often if necessary.

All members will be given two weeks' notice of such a meeting, giving the venue, date, time and agenda, and notice may be by telephone, email or post.

The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 5% of the membership or 6 members, whichever is the greater number.

6.4 Committee Meetings

Committee meetings may be called by the Chair or Coordinator. Committee members must receive notice of meetings at least 7 days before the meeting.

The quorum for Committee meetings is two Committee members.

7. Rules of Procedure for meetings

All questions that arise at any meeting will be discussed openly and the meeting will seek to find general agreement that everyone present can agree to.

If a consensus cannot be reached a vote will be taken and a decision will be made by a simple majority of members present. If the number of votes cast on each side is equal, the chair of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.

8. Finances

An account will be maintained on behalf of the Forum at a bank agreed by the committee. Two cheque signatories will be nominated by the Committee (one to be the coordinator). The signatories must not be related nor members of the same household.

All payments will be signed by two of the signatories.

- For cheque payments, the signatories will sign the cheque.
- For other payments (such as BACS payments, cash withdrawals, debit card payments or cash payments), a requisition note will be signed by two signatories, and held by the coordinator.

Records of income and expenditure will be maintained by the Coordinator and a financial statement given at each meeting.

All money raised by or on behalf of Westminster LGBT Forum is only to be used to further the aims of the group, as specified in item 2 of this constitution.

9. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to the constitution may only be made at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.

Any proposal to amend the constitution must be given to the Coordinator in writing. The proposal must then be circulated with the notice of meeting.

Any proposal to amend the constitution will require a two thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote.

10. Dissolution

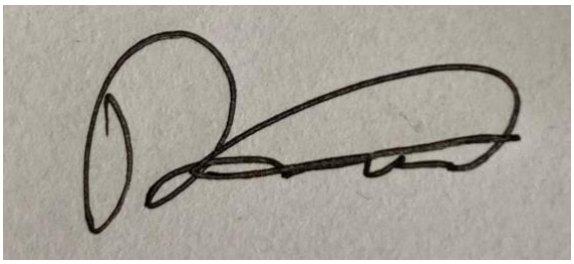
If a meeting, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to close down the group it may call a Special General Meeting to do so. The sole business of this meeting will be to dissolve the group.

If it is agreed to dissolve the group, all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to an LGBT charitable organisation. The organisation will be agreed at the meeting which agrees the dissolution.

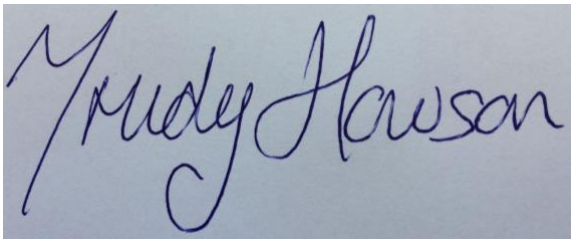
This constitution was agreed at the Inaugural General Meeting of the Westminster LGBT Forum on:-

Date: 20/05/2020

Name and position in group: **David van de Velde, Co-Chair**

Signed: 

Name and position in group: **Trudy Howson, Co-Chair**

Signed: 

Name and position in group: **Mark Abraham Platt, Coordinator**

Signed: