



# **Metropolitan Black Police Association**

## **Membership Constitution**

### **Introduction**

**The Metropolitan Black Police Association has agreed a Constitution, which sets out how the Association operates, how decisions are made, and the procedures that are followed to ensure that they are transparent and accountable to members.**

### **Article 1 – Name and Definition**

- 1.1 The name of the Association shall be the Metropolitan Black Police Association (herein known as the MetBPA).
- 1.2 The definition of "Black" is one that emphasises the common experience and determination of people of African, African-Caribbean, or Asian origin.
- 1.3 The Association shall have its registered office in London, at an address confirmed by the Executive Committee.
- 1.4 No unauthorised use may be made of the Association's address as an accommodation address.
- 1.5 No unauthorised use may be made of the Association's trade marked logo.

### **Article 2 – Aims and Objectives**

- 2.1 The Association shall seek to improve the working environment of black personnel, including police staff and officers, within the Metropolitan Police Service, with a view to enhancing the quality of service to the public.
- 2.2 This aim will be achieved by:
  - (i) Providing a support network.
  - (ii) Providing a social network.

- (iii) Working more closely with staff associations, statutory bodies and key stakeholders.
- (iv) Working towards improved relations between the police and black communities.
- (v) Being instrumental in improving progression, recruitment and reducing educating wastage.
- (vi) Assisting in the development of new and existing policies where necessary.

2.3 The Association is not seeking to be a representative body or to supersede any statutory staff association or other representative body.

2.4 In pursuance of Paragraph 2.2, the MetBPA may exercise the following powers for the furtherance of its aims:

- (i) To hold support meetings for members and other organisations.
- (ii) To bring together, in conference, representatives of voluntary organisations, local government departments, statutory authorities and individuals.
- (iii) To promote and carry out or assist in the promotion and carrying out of research, surveys and investigations and publish results which impact upon BME officers and staff within the Metropolitan Police Service or the BME communities within London, when appropriate.
- (iv) To arrange and provide for, or join in arranging and providing for, the holding of exhibitions, meetings, lectures, classes, seminars and training courses.
- (v) To collect and disseminate information on all matters affecting such aims.

### **Article 3 – Membership**

3.1 Full membership is open to all serving police officers, special constables and police staff directly employed by the MPS, MOPAC or retired or former members who are of African, African-Caribbean, or Asian origin.

3.2 Personnel who were eligible for membership during service but have been dismissed or asked to resign may become 'Friends' of the MetBPA providing their actions have not breached the MetBPA code of conduct. Personnel within this category will have to apply to the sitting executive for permission to become 'Friends' of the MetBPA. All personnel however, must be prepared to disclose all disciplinary issues in order for the Executive to make an informed decision. Applications will not be considered in the event that the applicant does not comply with disclosure.

- 3.3 Members of the community may become 'Friends' of the MetBPA providing they agree with the ethos of the Association and sign the MetBPA 'Code of Conduct'. In order to preserve the Associations integrity, all applicants will have to declare the nature of any previous criminal convictions or civil tort or any ongoing criminal or civil case in which they are involved. Failure to comply will result in the withdrawal of the application or membership if the information is revealed at a later stage. 'Friends' of the MetBPA will not have voting rights, but may attend annual general and extra-ordinary general meetings only. Breaches of the code of conduct are applicable.
- 3.4 Membership fees will be set by the executive committee. Any fees paid will not be refunded.
- 3.5 Membership is conditional upon a nominated application being approved by the Executive Committee and any membership fees being paid.
- 3.6 Membership of the Association may be withdrawn for a breach of the Code of Conduct by majority decision of the Executive. The decision shall be reviewed on appeal by the Scrutiny Committee who will report to the Executive Committee.
- 3.7 Membership of the Association will be suspended during this period, including voting rights, but the member may attend the meeting, or make written application in order to make a representative appeal.
- 3.8 Every member will, on joining the Association, be given a copy of the constitution and code of conduct. This will be made available online.
- 3.9 The Executive Committee reserves the right to refuse membership.
- 3.10 The membership period shall commence from the 1st day of the month that the application form and fee is received and will be renewable annually.
- 3.11 'Associate' membership is open to all serving police officers, special constables, support staff directly employed by a Police Service, Constabulary or The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime within the UK and support staff employed by an outsourced contractor (or contractor) whose main role is the support of the Metropolitan Police Service and they agree with the ethos of the association. Membership fees for 'Associate' of the MetBPA will be set at 50% less than the rate for full membership.
- 3.12 Associate members will not have voting rights, but may attend annual general and extra-ordinary general meetings only. Breaches of the code of conduct are applicable.
- 3.13 Applicants that are not eligible for full membership may apply to the Executive Committee to become 'Friends of the Metropolitan Black Police Association'. Membership fees for 'Friends' of the MetBPA will be set at 75% less than the rate for full membership.
- 3.14 Any corporation/company/organisation or working community group may also become 'Friends' of the MetBPA providing they believe and support the ethos of the

Association. Annual fees for these 'groups' are determined by their size and the agreement of the sitting Executive. Fees will be charged as follows:

- |       |                                 |         |
|-------|---------------------------------|---------|
| (i)   | Collective of 50 people or less | £50.00  |
| (ii)  | Collective of 51-150 people     | £100.00 |
| (iii) | Collective of 151 or more       | £200.00 |

3.15 Any member may resign her/his position by giving to the General Secretary written notice to that effect

#### **Article 4 – Executive Committee**

4.1 The management of the Association shall be conducted by an Executive Committee consisting of four Post Holders (Chair, Deputy Chair, General Secretary and Treasurer) and six other elected full members in addition to other co-opted members. There may be a maximum number of 5 co-opted members.

4.2 The Executive Committee may co-opt a member to:

- (i) fill any office which falls vacant, and
- (ii) fill any casual vacancy.

4.3 Once voted on to the Executive Committee Co-opted members will have the same rights as an executive member.

4.4 Every member of the Executive Committee and Co-optee's shall hold office until the next election, unless he or she is suspended or expelled from the Association in accordance with the disciplinary procedures. If having been absent for more than three months consecutively without permission of the Chair from Executive meetings, during that period the Chair shall resolve that he or she has by reason of such absence tendered their resignation/vacated office.

4.5 The Executive Committee may appoint from its members any Acting Chair, Assistant General Secretary and Assistant Treasurer. Co-opted members are voted in as per 4.2.

4.6 The Executive Committee shall have at least four members participating (in person, by telephone, video-conference) for a quorum and will take decisions on the basis of a simple majority. In the event of an even vote the Chair of the meeting shall have an additional vote.

4.7 Any member of the Association may attend an Executive Committee meeting upon consent of the Chairperson, General Secretary or their deputies, and participate in any discussion without voting rights. Any executive member refusing attendance of

a member will have to report their decision and reasons to the Executive Committee.

- 4.8 The Executive Committee may exclude any or all non committee members from its meeting, on a majority decision of the executive committee. The individual will be informed of the reason(s) for the exclusion.
- 4.9 The Executive Committee shall meet at a minimum of four times a year (preferably every six weeks). Executive Committee members not attending three consecutive meetings without good reason will be removing themselves from the Executive Committee, after a majority vote of the Executive Committee.,
- 4.10 The Executive Committee shall appoint a chair and minute secretary for each meeting.
- 4.11 The Executive Committee may appoint such sub-committees and working groups as it may from time to time decide are appropriate and determine their powers.
- 4.12 Extra meetings of the Executive Committee may be called providing reasonable notice is given to Executive Committee members.
- 4.13 Any officer or members of the Executive Committee, may at any time, resign by written notice given to the General Secretary.
- 4.14 Only members of the Executive Committee, with prior authority from the Chair, may speak on behalf of or represent the MetBPA in any capacity. This may be in relation to media enquiries. Failure to do so without good reason, may result in the Executive Committee taking a vote on whether that form of representation should continue or not.
- 4.15 That 20% of seats on the Executive Committee are reserved for female members of the MetBPA. This article will only be activated if less than three female members are elected to the MetBPA Executive. If such an event should occur the executive will immediately seek to fill those posts by open competition or co-opting female members to the Executive. If when calculating 20% a figure other than a whole number is produced the figure shall be rounded to the nearest whole number.
- 4.16 That 20% of seats on the Executive Committee are reserved for support staff members of the MetBPA. This article will only be activated if less than three support staff members are elected to the MetBPA Executive. If such an event should occur the executive will immediately seek to fill those posts by open competition or co-opting support staff members to the Executive. If when calculating 20% a figure other than a whole number is produced the figure shall be rounded to the nearest whole number.
- 4.17 All members of the Executive are required to declare any involvement with other groups/associations and or any business interests which may conflict with their role as an Executive member. Whether such a business interest or membership of an association/group could be construed as unethical and or provide potential for a conflict of interests shall be a matter for the Executive to decide upon in a fair and

transparent manner. Should the Executive Committee consider it necessary in the interests of credibility and membership confidence, it may appoint an independent body/person to adjudicate such matters.

#### **Article 5 – Election of Executive Committee**

- 5.1 An election of the Executive Committee will be held at every other annual general meeting of the Association. The term of office will run for two years. The AGM will be held in the month of October.
- 5.2 Votes may be cast personally or by postal ballot.
- 5.3 The method of voting will be first past the post.
- 5.4 At least two calendar months notice will be given of an election.
- 5.5 Ballot papers will be sent out to all Association members at least one calendar month before the election date.
- 5.6 The Executive Committee will appoint a returning officer who will be responsible for posting ballot papers, counting ballots and identifying spoilt ballots. The returning officer will be a member of the Association whose name does not appear on the ballot.
- 5.7 All candidates for election to the executive committee will complete a pro forma which will be posted to all Association members with the ballot papers.
- 5.8 A member of the executive shall not be eligible to be elected to the post of Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, General Secretary or Treasurer unless he/she has served at least one year on the Executive Committee. A newly elected member of the executive may be elected onto one of the post holder positions if he/she has previously served at least one year on the Executive and that service is within the last four years. Co-optees will also be eligible to apply for a Postholder position, as long as they fit the qualifying criteria.
- 5.9 The Chairperson must be a serving member of the MPS and/or MOPAC, as this is a full time paid post.

#### **Article 6 – Resignation and removal from the Executive Committee**

- 6.1 In urgent cases a Postholder of the Executive Committee may take appropriate action as is required without a vote of the Executive Committee. The officer will give a report at the next meeting.
- 6.2 Any member of the Executive Committee may tender his/her resignation at any time by delivering a written notice to the General Secretary.

- 6.3 In pursuance of Paragraph 6.2, the Executive Committee shall consider the tendered resignation, and if the resignation is formally accepted by a majority vote of the Executive, the resignation shall be effective from the date the Executive delivers its decision. The resignation will be ratified by the Committee.
- 6.4 Any member(s) of the Executive Committee may be removed from office for any breaches of the Code of Conduct or Codes of Ethics and the removal is consistent with the established procedure enunciated in Article 3 – Membership.
- 6.5 The Executive Committee may remove from office any Executive member whose performance fails to meet the aims and objectives of the organisation through their consistent failure to attend Executive meetings, or other MetBPA events, without reasonable explanation.
- 6.6 Whenever a vacancy occurs in a member's position on the Executive Committee the vacancy shall be filled by the MetBPA and the appointment shall be ratified by the Executive.
- 6.7 Any Executive Committee member should make every effort to meet the requirements of their role but those who are aware that they will be unable to meet the requirements of their role should resign from the Executive.
- 6.8 The Executive Committee may remove from office any elected member whose performance fails to meet the requirements of the elected post without reasonable explanation and consistently adversely affects the functions of the MetBPA.
- 6.9 Consistently should be read to mean the performance falls short on at least three occasions within a 12-month period. Reasonable should be read to mean that at least 50% of the Executive consider the explanation as not to be reasonable. The Executive Committee members performance will be reviewed on a quarterly basis.
- 6.10 Where there is a vacancy for a member's position on the Executive Committee the vacancy will be filled by a mid-term by-election. The voting to be done in person or postal vote.
- 6.11 Articles 6.4 and 6.5 should only be used in exceptional circumstances where all other means of addressing the performance have reasonably been exhausted.

#### **Article 7 – Role and Responsibility of the Executive Committee**

- 7.1 The purpose of the Executive Committee is to represent the membership of the MetBPA and further the aims of the organisation and support the Chair in the efficient and effective management of the MetBPA.
- 7.2 Each member of the Executive must demonstrate an ongoing commitment to the aims and objectives of the MetBPA.
- 7.3 Members of the Executive Committee may be called upon to represent or speak on behalf of the association in furtherance of its message.

- 7.4 A member of the Executive may be given a specific portfolio to manage on behalf of the association and may be called upon to report the management of this portfolio to the membership.
- 7.5 The Executive Committee shall produce a report to the membership to be presented at the AGM. The nature and content of this report will be at the discretion of the Chair.
- 7.6 Where there are Co-opted members voted into the Executive Committee, the Association must be promptly notified with the reason/rationale on the inclusion onto the Executive Committee.

### **Article 8 – General Meeting**

- 8.1 The Association shall hold an annual general meeting at a date, time and place appointed by the executive committee.
- 8.2 At least two calendar months notice will be given to Association members of the AGM. Such notice will include the date, time and place and outline agenda of the AGM.
- 8.3 An Extra-ordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be convened by the executive committee providing reasonable notice is given to members.
- 8.4 The Executive Committee may change the date, time or venue of a general meeting for any urgent reason.
- 8.5 The agenda of the AGM will include:
- (i) The Executive Committee's report.
  - (ii) The treasurer's report.
  - (iii) Any business directed by the constitution or the executive committee.
- 8.6 An extra-ordinary general meeting shall only consider business stated in the notice convening it.
- 8.7 Any general meeting may, by simple majority vote, agree to consider any other urgent business which has arisen since the notice of the meeting was given.
- 8.8 The quorum for any general meeting will be ten or one fifth of the total membership if less.
- 8.9 Only full members are entitled to vote but all fully paid members are allowed to attend.

## **Article 9 - Code of Conduct**

- 9.1 The Code of Conduct as determined from time to time by the Executive Committee shall provide standards of conduct for members of the MetBPA in the pursuance of the aims, ethos and policies of the MetBPA.
- 9.2 The Code applies to all members of the Metropolitan Black Police Association, and this Code is attached as Appendix A.
- 9.3 Members are responsible for their own professional behaviour and, to ensure that they are able to deliver the highest standards possible, they must have a good understanding of the contents of the Code.
- 9.4 Membership of the MetBPA may be withdrawn or suspended for a specified period for any conduct that is in breach of the Code of Conduct by majority vote of the Executive.

## **Article 10 – Code of Ethics**

- 10.1 This article shall apply to the ethics adopted by all Executive members of the MetBPA.
- 10.2 The Code of Ethics as determined from time to time by the MetBPA shall provide standards of conduct for members of the MetBPA in the pursuance of the aims, ethos and policies of the MetBPA.
- 10.3 The Code of Ethics will be that every Executive member will comport themselves with:
  - (i) **SELFLESSNESS:** Members should take decisions solely in terms of the MetBPA interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their families or their friends.
  - (ii) **INTEGRITY:** Members should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.
  - (iii) **OBJECTIVITY:** In carrying out MetBPA business, including making MetBPA appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, members should make choices on merit.
  - (iv) **ACCOUNTABILITY:** Members are accountable for their decisions and actions to the MetBPA Executive and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

- (v) OPENNESS: Members should be as open as possible about all decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider MetBPA interest clearly demands.
- (vi) HONESTY: Members have a duty to declare any private interest relating to their MetBPA duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the MetBPA interest.
- (vii) LEADERSHIP: Members should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

10.4 Any Executive member of the MetBPA who knowingly breaches the Code of Ethics, or who commits any act (by word or deed) which may be deemed as being detrimental to the MetBPA, shall have his or her membership of the Executive Committee temporarily suspended, pending consideration by the Executive Committee. Any decisions made by the Executive will be based upon a simple majority vote and ratified by the Executive Committee.

#### **Article 11 – Finance**

- 11.1 The financial year should start and end at the point of the AGM. The treasurer will be required to give an annual report to the membership.
- 11.2 An income and expenditure account shall be held, and a balance sheet showing the financial position of the Association will be produced each year.
- 11.3 The Executive Committee shall decide how the Association's accounts will be audited.

#### **Article 12 – Gifts and Hospitality**

- 12.1 Members shall enter into the MetBPA gifts and hospitality register any item received by that member or on behalf of the MetBPA.
- 12.2 If a gift of cash is given to a member, the Executive will determine whether the cash is retained or returned and all cash gifts retained will be paid into the MetBPA account.
- 12.3 If the gift is of a personal nature (not cash) the Executive will determine whether the gift is retained or returned.
- 12.4 The register should be included as part of the financial report by the treasurer at the AGM.
- 12.5 A gifts and hospitality register is attached as Appendix B.

#### **Article 13 – Amendments to the Constitution**

- 13.1 Any amendments to this constitution may be agreed by simple majority vote at a general meeting.
- 13.2 Details of any proposed amendments shall be sent to members as soon as possible with the notice of the EGM called for that purpose.

#### **Article 14 – Interpretation**

- 14.1 In the event of any question of interpretation or any question on which this constitution is silent, the executive committee reserves to itself the right to act according to its interpretation of the constitution or at its discretion.
- 14.2 No word or construction in this constitution shall be taken to imply any discrimination whatsoever with regard to sex, colour, creed, disability marital status or sexual orientation.
- 14.3 The constitution may be clarified on any point by the drafting of a schedule.
- 14.4 The term Black does not relate to skin colour but is used to describe all people of African, African-Caribbean, or Asian origin.

#### **Article 15 – Winding up procedure**

- 15.1 Following an executive meeting or general meeting decision to call for the Association to be wound up, a postal ballot of all members shall be held.
- 15.2 A 2/3 majority will be required to wind up the Association.
- 15.3 After meeting all remaining liabilities, the executive will be responsible for disposing of any remaining assets by donation to a charity or charities nominated by the executive committee whose work and activities pursue the aims of the MetBPA.

***Appendix A – Code of Conduct***

***Appendix B – Gifts and Hospitality Register***