

Standish Voice – A Neighbourhood Forum

Constitution

1. Standish Voice

- a. Standish Neighbourhood Forum shall be known as Standish Voice.
- b. Standish Voice shall not be affiliated to any political organisation.
- c. The duration of Standish Voice is five years from the official date of designation by Wigan Council.

2. Area of Concern

- a. Standish Voice will pursue its objectives in the area known as the Standish Neighbourhood Area (The Area), a geographic area designated by Wigan Council, for the benefit of the inhabitants of the area including residents, business operators, traders and community and voluntary groups.
- b. The Area can only be altered by a General Meeting of Standish Voice prior to approval by Wigan Council.
- c. The Area should be informally referred to as the 'village'.

3. Objectives

- a. To prepare, in partnership with Wigan Council, a Neighbourhood Plan (The Plan) for the Area.
- b. To encourage the involvement of the community of the Area in the preparation, production and implementation of the Plan.
- c. To promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Area.
- d. To enhance any Conservation Areas designated within the Area.
- e. To be a voice for the Area's community and highlight issues pertinent to the Area.
- f. To lobby for funds to carry out the work of Standish Voice and to enhance the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Area.
- g. To engender social cohesion in the Area between existing and future residents and heighten the feeling of 'community spirit' in the 'village'.
- h. To continue building an inclusive and supportive community; where people feel a sense of ownership and pride in our/their village.
- i. To promote Standish Village as a safe and pleasant place to live, work, shop, and spend leisure time.

4. Mission Statement

- a. To help make Standish 'the best that it can be' for the mutual benefit of all.

5. Management Committee

- a. Standish Voice shall be administered by a Management Committee of no less than 7 people and no more than 15, who must be at least 18 years of age and be members of Standish Voice.
- b. The Management Committee is responsible for the good governance of Standish Voice. Management Committee Members must at all times adhere to the principles set out in the Good Governance Code for voluntary organizations:
(<http://www.goodgovernancecode.org.uk/good-governance-code/>).
- c. Decisions of the Management Committee will be decided by a majority on a show of hands.
- d. A quorum for the Committee will be 7 members.

- e. The initial Management Committee was elected at the inaugural Steering Group meeting of Standish Voice.
- f. Members of the Management Committee must stand for re-election at the Annual General Meeting.
- g. The Management Committee will elect officers consisting of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Minutes Secretary.
- h. Members of the Management Committee must declare any membership of a political organisation to the Chair or his/her deputy.
- i. Members of the Management Committee can constitute working parties and sub-committees to further the objectives of Standish Voice. Members of working parties or sub-committees must be part of the general membership and be approved by the Management Committee.

6. Officers

- a. **Chair:** It shall be the responsibility of the Chair to chair all meetings, or a designated deputy in his/her absence, and to ensure that meetings are held in accordance with the provisions of the constitution. The Chair is responsible for declaring a meeting of the Management Committee and circulating the agenda to the committee. He/she should be a spokesperson for Standish Voice and represent the organisation externally.
- b. **Vice Chair:** It shall be the responsibility of the Vice Chair to aid and deputise for the Chair and be a spokesperson for Standish Voice. The Vice Chair should take the minutes of Management Committee meetings in the absence of the Minutes Secretary.
- c. **Treasurer:** It shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer to ensure the sound and lawful financial management of Standish Voice.
- d. **Membership Secretary:** It shall be the responsibility of the Membership Secretary to keep an up-to-date register of Standish Voice members.
- e. **Minutes Secretary:** It shall be the responsibility of the Minutes Secretary to ensure that minutes are taken of all Management Committee, General and Annual General Meetings, circulate them to the Management Committee and/or the wider membership, and ensure they are publicised on the Standish Voice website.

7. Membership

- a. Membership of Standish Voice is open to all people over the age of 16 who live or have their main place of work or study in the Area.
- b. Voluntary and community groups can also become affiliate members of Standish Voice and should nominate one person in their membership to exercise one voting right at Standish Voice General Meetings.
- c. Membership is open to elected Wigan Council members who represent any part of the Area.
- d. Membership shall be drawn from all parts of the Area and all sections of the Area's community.
- e. Standish Voice shall have a minimum of 21 member votes for any decisions to be made on its behalf.
- f. The Membership Secretary shall maintain a list of members and will have to power to accept new members.
- g. Any member may resign his/her membership by providing the Membership Secretary with written notice.
- h. The Management Committee may refuse membership, or may terminate or suspend the membership of any member by resolution passed at a Management Committee meeting where it is considered membership would be detrimental to the objectives and activities of Standish Voice.

8. Powers

To further its objectives, Standish Voice Management Committee may exercise the power to:

- a. Open a bank account to manage the funds of Standish Voice.
- b. Invite, lobby for and receive contributions and raise funds to finance the work of Standish Voice.
- c. Publicise and promote the work of Standish Voice and organise meetings, training courses, working parties, events or seminars etc.
- d. Work with community organisations within the Area and exchange information, advice and knowledge with them, including cooperation with other voluntary bodies, charities, statutory and non-statutory organisations.
- e. To liaise with businesses and commercial organisations, including housing developers, with a direct interest in the future of the Area.
- f. Employ paid workers (who shall not be members of the Management Committee) and use volunteers as are necessary to conduct activities to meet the objectives.
- g. Take any form of action that is lawful, which is necessary to achieve the objectives of the Forum, including taking out any contracts which it may see fit.

9. Meetings

a. Management Committee Meetings

1. Management Committee meetings should take place once a month. Committee members must be given at least seven days notice of a Management Committee meeting.
2. Voting shall be made by a show of hands on a majority basis. In the case of a tied vote, the Chair or an appointed deputy shall have the casting vote.
3. Management Committee meetings can be observed by any member of Standish Voice unless the Chair deems an issue should be discussed in private by only the Management Committee.
4. The meetings of sub-committees and working parties can be arranged, publicised and undertaken on an ad hoc basis.
5. Minutes of previous meetings should be circulated to the Management Committee 7 days before the meeting at which they are due to be ratified.
6. Declarations of interest must be recorded at the start of any meeting. Any Management Committee member declaring an interest will be ineligible to vote on the issue concerned.
7. Comments to the press by any Management Committee member should be approved by a majority of the Management Committee at a meeting or via email/telephone.

b. Membership Meetings

1. For Membership Meeting business to be conducted, a quorum of 21 members must be present at the meeting.
2. The whole membership should be informed at least 14 days prior to a Membership Meeting.
3. All members of Standish Voice are eligible to vote at Membership Meetings and voting shall be made by a show of hands on a majority basis. In the case of a tied vote, the Chair or an appointed deputy shall have the casting vote.
4. Membership Meetings shall be announced as the Management Committee sees fit.
5. An Annual General Meeting (AGM) should be held within six months of the formal designation of Standish Voice as a Neighbourhood Forum (by Wigan Council).

Subsequent AGMs must be held within 12 months of the previous one. AGMs are Membership Meetings.

6. At the AGM, the Management Committee will be elected and a report of activities should be given by the Chair and/or Vice Chair and the Treasurer.
7. Minutes of previous meetings should be circulated to the Membership 7 days before the meeting at which they are due to be ratified.
8. An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) can be requested by any member of Standish Voice. This request must be made in writing to the Chair. The Management Committee will discuss the request and decide if it should proceed. An EGM is a Membership Meeting.
9. Declarations of interest must be recorded at the start of any meeting. Any Member declaring an interest will be ineligible to vote on the issue concerned.

10. Finances

- a. Standish Voice's accounting year shall run from April 1 to March 31 each year.
- b. Any money acquired by Standish Voice, including donations and contributions, shall be paid into a bank account operated by the Management Committee.
- c. All funds must be used to further the objectives of Standish Voice.
- d. Any cheques / funds paid from the account must be signed by at least two Officers.
- e. Recording of any income/expenditure shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer, who will be accountable to ensure funds are utilised effectively and that finances stay within budget.
- f. Official accounts shall be maintained and will be examined annually by an independent accountant who is not a member of Standish Voice.
- g. An annual financial report shall be presented at the AGM by the Treasurer.

11. Neighbourhood Plan

- a. Any decision to submit to Wigan Council for approval a Neighbourhood Plan shall be subject to a vote at a Membership Meeting of Standish Voice.
- b. Standish Voice will strive to consult at all stages of the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan with all residents and businesses in the Area, whether members of Standish Voice or not. It shall then maintain the plan, if approved.
- c. Standish Voice shall set up a website and use social media tools and traditional means (leaflets, newsletters, posters etc) to publicise the neighbourhood planning process, record it and seek views from the public.
- d. The Management Committee, or sub-committees or working parties, shall be delegated to work with the local planning authority and any independent experts, consultants and advisors on the Neighbourhood Plan as they see fit.
- e. Members of the Management Committee and the general members of Standish Voice can apply to the Management Committee to be part of sub-committees and working parties.
- f. The Neighbourhood Plan shall comply with national and local planning policies.

12. The Constitution

- a. The initial constitution shall be adopted by a quorate Management Committee in a majority vote.
- b. Any changes to this constitution must be agreed by a majority vote at a Membership Meeting under the rules outlined earlier.
- c. Proposed amendments to this Constitution or must be conveyed to the Chair formally in writing by any Member. The Management Committee shall then decide whether to put the proposed amendments to a Membership Meeting.

13. Dissolution

- a. Standish Voice can be dissolved if deemed necessary by the members in a majority vote of 50% of the membership at a Membership Meeting.
- b. On Dissolution any assets or remaining funds after debts have been paid shall be returned to their providers or transferred to local charities or similar groups at the discretion of the Management Committee.

This constitution was adopted by a unanimous vote at a meeting of the Management Committee held at the Unity Club, Cross Street, Standish on 16/09/2014 by the following members of the Management Committee:

Chair – Gill Foster
Deputy Chair – Paul Ogden
Treasurer – Karen Bliss
Membership Secretary – Ron Wade
Member – Tony Jones
Member – Mike Lawrenson
Member – Janet Monks
Member – Sarah Djali
Member – Brian Jones
Member – Diane Gore
Member – Fran Aiken
Member – Andrew Holliday