

# THE MIDCOUNTRIES CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED

## MEMBER ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

(the “Committee”)

### Terms of Reference

#### 1. Purpose

The Committee is responsible for influencing and reviewing the member engagement strategy set by the Board and being implemented by management within the Society, working closely with the Society’s membership team and the Board. As a committee of the Board, it operates within the strategic policy direction established by the Board and is directly accountable to the Board.

#### 2. Inception

The Committee was established by a resolution of the Board dated 4 July 2007. These terms were approved by the Board on 8 March 2008.

Revisions were approved on 29 July 2009, 6 March 2010, 3 July 2010, 26 July 2010, 3 September, 13 April 2015, 6 February 2017, 17 June 2017, 24 March 2018, 12 May 2018, 2 September 2019, 5 October 2019, 4 November 2019, 23 January 2021, 8 March 2021, 30 July 2022, 28 November 2022 and 25 September 2023.

#### 3. Membership

3.1. The Committee is made up of:

- a. 9 members of the Society, elected from the Society’s membership
- b. 3 young members of the Society, elected from the Society’s membership
- c. 2 members of the Board, appointed by the Board.

3.2. For the purpose of these terms of reference, a “young member” is defined as a member of the Society under the age of 30 at the time of their nomination. Vacancies in the young member constituency cannot be filled by members who do not meet this age requirement.

3.3. Terms of office for elected members are 3 years (for both 3.1.a and 3.1.b).

3.4. Transitional arrangements apply to the Committee’s election process in 2021. The details of those arrangements are set out in Board minute 21/36.4. Those

transitional arrangements relate to the number of vacancies and term of office for young members elected to the Committee at the 2021 election.

- 3.5. Excluding members of the Board appointed at 3.1.c who may be colleagues, no more than 4 members of the Committee can be colleagues of the Society. For a transitional period of three years from October 2021, ending on the day of the 2024 Committee election results, where all 3 elected young members are colleagues of the Society, the total number of members of the Committee who can be colleagues (excluding Board members) will be increased to 5.
- 3.6. To serve on the Committee individuals must have been a member of the Society for at least 6 months prior to the close date of the relevant election. Additionally, and as set out in the Society's Rule 16.3, to be eligible to be nominated for election, they (or their partner, or a member of their household with whom they are financially interdependent) must have spent at least £250 with the Society in the 12 month period finishing one month prior to their nomination. This rate of purchases must be maintained during their service on the Committee.

Any member who ceases to meet this level of spend shall immediately cease to be a member of the Committee.

- 3.7. Should a member miss two or more consecutive meetings of the Committee, the Committee has the right to recommend to the Board the removal of the member from the Committee, and the Board has the right to determine whether the member should be removed.
- 3.8. Casual vacancies on the Committee shall not be filled until the next election save for the following:

In the event that a casual vacancy arises on the Committee during the election 'period' (defined as from the opening of nominations to the closing date of the ballot), the candidate receiving the next highest number of votes will automatically be co-opted onto the Committee in a non-voting capacity. The co-option will run until the next Committee elections.

Should that candidate not wish to be co-opted, the Board can, if it so wishes, co-opt the unsuccessful candidate with the second highest number of votes, etc. If no such candidate is available or willing to be co-opted, then the casual vacancy will remain unfilled. The co-opted position will be non-voting and will last till the next Committee/Board elections.

- 3.9. There shall be no age rule for Committee members.

#### **4. Chair**

- a. The Committee shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair on an annual basis.
- b. The Chair cannot be a colleague of the Society.
- c. If the Chair or Vice-Chair is absent from a meeting, the Committee shall appoint a chair for the meeting.
- d. The Chair of a meeting shall have a casting vote.

#### **5. Secretary**

The General Manager responsible for membership (or their nominee) shall act as the secretary to the Committee.

#### **6. Quorum**

The quorum shall be half the number of members on the Committee (rounded up to the nearest whole number where required), the majority of whom cannot be colleagues of the Society.

#### **7. Meetings**

- a. The Committee will hold at least 4 scheduled meetings a year. Other meetings will be held as required.
- b. The agenda and papers for each meeting will be circulated 10 working days prior to each meeting.
- c. To help the Committee with its deliberations, senior members of the Society's Membership Team shall attend meetings of the Committee.

#### **8. Fees and expenses**

Members of the Committee will be paid fees as determined by the Board and approved by members of the Society from time to time. Reasonable expenses shall be reimbursed to Committee members.

#### **9. Duties**

9.1 The Committee is responsible for influencing and reviewing the member engagement strategy set by the Board and being implemented by management and is appointed by the Board to:

- a. review and evaluate member events and activities using an evidence-based approach;

- b. act as a sounding board reference the above, making recommendations to management for continual improvement;
- c. make suggestions concerning the development of the Society's member engagement strategy.

9.2 The Committee is also responsible for recommending the allocation of grants by The Midcounties Co-operative Community Fund, working in conjunction with the Society's Community team.

## **10. Standards of behaviour**

Committee members should behave in ways that are commensurate with the role while undertaking Committee work. The Committee has agreed formal 'Standards of Behaviour' and a 'Complaint Process' which can be called upon if required. The latter provides, inter alia, for the removal of a member from the MEC.

## **11. Communication**

It is important that communication between the Committee and the Board works well. To help ensure this:

- a. the minutes of each Committee meeting will be copied to the Board for discussion
- b. the Board representatives on the Committee and Society officers (usually the Secretary and the General Manager responsible for membership) will pass information and the views and opinions of both parties each way
- c. the Committee is free to request a meeting with the President of the Society to discuss significant issues if it believes this is necessary
- d. the Board and the Committee will meet once a year to share views.

The above list is not exhaustive, and where appropriate other ways of ensuring that communication is effective will be used.

## **12. Resources**

The Committee will be provided with appropriate resources to carry out its duties.

## **13. Review**

The Board will review these Terms of reference on an annual basis.

## **Rule 10.6**

### **Removal of a Director**

A Director may be removed from office at any time by two-thirds of the votes cast at a Special Members' Meeting of the Society. Pending the decision of such Special Members' Meeting a Director may be suspended from their duties by a resolution of the Board passed by at least three-quarters of the Board, if in the opinion of the Board, the Director has been guilty of conduct seriously detrimental to the interests of the Society, or they have committed a serious breach of the code of conduct for Directors, or they are otherwise thought to be unfit to carry out their duties.

The following procedures are to be followed.

- a) The Board shall consider the matter having taken such steps as it considers appropriate to ensure that any relevant Director's point of view is heard and may either:
  - i) dismiss the matter and take no further action; or
  - ii) for a period not exceeding twelve months, suspend the rights of the Director complained of to attend Board meetings and vote under these rules; or
  - iii) arrange for a resolution to remove from office the Director complained of, to be considered at the next Board meeting.
- b) At the next meeting the Board will consider evidence in support of the complaint and such evidence as the Director complained of may wish to place before them;
- c) if the Director complained of fails to attend the meeting without due cause the meeting may proceed in their absence;
- d) a Director removed from office will cease to be a Director upon the declaration by the chair of the meeting that the resolution to expel them is carried.