

**CONSTITUTION OF THE
IGBO COMMUNITY ABERDEEN
(ICA)**

1. NAME

The Association shall be known as the Igbo Community Aberdeen and/or by its acronym ICA (hereinafter referred to as the Igbo Community).

2. OBJECTIVES

- To promote community association and sense of belonging amongst ethnic Igbos in Aberdeen and its environs;
- To provide succour and support to Igbo families and members living within Aberdeen and surrounding communities, including the elderly, the sick, the disabled, the bereaved, young families and new arrivals;
- To promote awareness of the Igbo culture amongst children born to Igbo families in the UK, whilst encouraging them to play their full role in the wider British society;
- To advance the education of the public in Aberdeen and environs concerning Igbo history, language, music, art, literature, and culture;
- To foster good relations and collaboration with other organisations and communities with similar interests.
- To promote Nigeria through the ideals of the Igbo Community.

3. POWERS

In pursuance of the objectives outlined above, the Igbo Community shall have powers:-

- a) To form an Association that will
 - i. seek appropriate access to funding and support
 - ii. contribute in the development and implementation of cultural and socio-economic policies and systems that affect the Igbo community
 - iii. support the economic well being and social welfare of the members of the Igbo community in Aberdeen and environs
 - iv. Set up an Igbo Centre for recreation and provision of advice for the needy members of the Igbo community in general and new arrivals in particular. Such assistance and guidance will cover issues relating to immigration, accommodation, education, housing, translation /interpretation, welfare rights, employment, health, etc. ICA shall however not be liable for the effect of any advice given.

- v. network with like-minded statutory and voluntary sector agencies, government departments and individuals at local, national and international levels.
- vi. employ and pay person(s) to supervise, organise and carry out the work of the Igbo Community if necessary.

4. MEMBERSHIP

a. **Membership of the Igbo Community shall be open to:**

- i. All people of Igbo origin who are living within Aberdeen and environs. Anyone below the age of 16 years would require parental consent to become a registered member of the Community.
- ii. All people that are related to a bona fide member (one who is financially up-to-date and regularly attends meetings) by birth, marriage or partnership.
- iii. Membership is granted upon payment of the registration fees.

- b. Failure to attend three consecutive meetings and/or pay the contributions without reasonable excuse shall result in a lapse of membership.
- c. Anyone wishing to reinstate a lapsed membership shall re-apply through the executive committee.
- d. A database shall be kept of all paid-up members.
- e. Membership is by family, hence membership dues paid by any one member of any one family shall apply to other members of that family.

5. RIGHTS, BENEFITS AND DUTIES

a) **Rights and Benefits**

- i) All members have equal right to express their views freely.
- ii) A bona fide member shall have one vote (voting shall be restricted to members aged 18 years and over).
- iii) No member other than a fully registered and paid-up one shall be entitled to vote on elections or important issues of the Community.

- iv) Bona fide members shall have rights to the assets and liabilities of the Association.
- v) Bona fide members are entitled to the following benefits:
 - a. A visit and a cash gift of fifty pounds (£50.00), on the *birth* of their own child.
 - b. A sum of five hundred pounds (£500.00) in the event of their *death* or that of their spouse, son or daughter; the Igbo Community shall also assist with burial arrangements and organise a vigil as necessary. In addition, the corpse shall be delivered to the family at any destination of the family's and the member's choice.
 - c. A sum of seventy-five pounds (£75.00) in the event of the *loss* of an immediate relative (father, mother, parents-in-law). The Igbo Community shall also assist with burial arrangements and organise a vigil as necessary.
 - d. A visit and a cash gift of fifty pounds (£50.00) in the event of their marriage or that of their child, upon invitation to the Community.
 - e. A cash gift of one hundred pounds (£100.00) and a party if they are moving away from Aberdeen or its environs.
 - f. A visit, with card/fruits (not worth more than £10), if they are unwell and hospitalised.

b) Duties

- i. Abide by this constitution
- ii. Attend and participate in Igbo Community activities
- iii. Pay subscription and membership fees

6. MANAGEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY

- a. **PATRON/MATRON:** Shall act, as the father/mother of the Igbo Community in an advisory capacity and the post shall normally be reserved for any man/woman (preferably a husband and wife) and agreeable to the majority of the fully registered members. A majority shall constitute at least 70% of paid-up or financial members at any point in time.
The qualities of a patron shall include the following; they shall be at least 40 years old, of good character and respectable, they shall live in/around Aberdeen and be of good mental health.

b. **CHAIRMAN:** The chairman shall be elected as the leader and spokesperson of the Community at a General meeting.

- Shall chair all meetings;
- Shall have responsibility for the overall delivery of the Community's objectives;
- Shall co-ordinate the activities of all other elected officers;
- Shall have the powers to direct the Secretary to convene emergency meetings;
- Shall never take independent, unilateral decisions on any issues involving the Igbo Community;
- Shall be a co-signatory to the bank account of the Igbo Community.

c. **SECRETARY:** Shall be elected at the general meeting to keep records for the Association.

- Shall convene all emergency meetings as directed by the Chairman;
- Shall take minutes of meetings and keep accurate records of names of members in attendance;
- Shall assist the chairman in the overall delivery of the Community's objectives;
- Shall act as Chairman in the absence for the Chairman of the Community.

d. **TREASURER:** Shall be elected at the general meeting and be responsible for maintaining the accounts of the Association.

- Shall be responsible for banking all monies collected at meetings within two working days of receipt.
- Shall be responsible for all payments in and out of the Igbo Community's bank account. All such payments must be notified to the Chairman and Financial Secretary for their records.

e. **FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

- Shall collect dues and any other payments/fines/levies on behalf of the Igbo Community;
- Shall keep accurate records of all monies collected
- Shall give/provide financial updates at every meeting of the Igbo Community
- Shall act as a co-signatory to the Bank account(s) of the Igbo Community.

f. **PROVOST**

- Shall keep/maintain order during all Igbo Community meetings;
- Shall have the powers to impose and/or enforce collection of fines as necessary

g. **COMMITTEES**

The Chairman acting with the support of the general assembly may from time to time appoint appropriate committees to execute specific tasks for the Community, including the organisation of Christmas parties, fundraising and cultural events, disaster relief and welfare activities, aid awareness campaigns, etc.

7. ELECTIONS

- a. The Secretary shall inform members of the date of any election.
- b. Only fully registered, bona fide members are eligible to vote or to be voted for.
- c. A returning Officer shall be selected by majority vote on the day of the election who will have no voting powers.
- d. Election to office will be by a secret ballot and a winner will emerge by a simple majority.

e. **TERM OF OFFICE:**

There shall be election every two years. An incumbent officer may vie for a position after two consecutive terms provided that (1) there is no opposition and (2) he/she is voted in by the general assembly

8. FINANCES

- a. The financial year of the Association shall run from 1 January to 31 December of each calendar year.
- b. The main sources of the Association's funds shall be from the registration fees, the regular contributions of members and donations from members and outside organisations.
- c. A registration fee of £10 (ten pounds) shall be due on the date of admission. New members may make 'free-will' donations to the Association. Although the amount of such 'free-will' donations shall be made public for accountability, the contributing member can choose to be anonymous.
- d. A levy of £5 (five pounds) per member shall be due on the day of the General meeting, which holds every month. All registered members are expected to pay this levy, irrespective of whether they attend meetings or not, as the levy amount is a contribution for the cost of the meetings (for example, renting the meeting venue, etc). The monthly levy shall be subject to review as members or circumstances (such as costs/inflation) deem necessary.
- e. The Association shall determine on the recommendation of the Executive which financial institution (bank) it shall use from time to time.
- f. All monies realised on behalf of the Community shall be used for the association as directed by the general meeting.
- g. The Association shall suspend the payment of membership dues by any member who find themselves in financial difficulty, either through losing their job or being declared bankrupt. However, that member must have to provide official evidence of the situation of hardship for this to be applied. Any such suspension of monthly dues shall be announced, although the member involved reserves the right to remain anonymous.
- h. Student members are exempt from monthly dues, but are still expected to pay the one-off registration fees.

9. MEETINGS

The Igbo Community shall meet once every month (last Saturday of said month) or at other times that the Executive committee deems necessary.

- a. Notification of these meetings shall be sent by e-mail and mobile text message to the full members address.
- b. The quorum at any meeting shall be formed when at least one (1) member of the Executive and forty percent (40%) of ordinary members are present. If a quorum is not formed 30 minutes after the

scheduled start time, the meeting shall be adjourned. Any decisions taken at a general meeting shall become binding if a quorum is formed at that meeting. However, in the absence of a quorum, members shall be expected to vote on any such decisions at the next general meeting or online (at the suggestions of members of the executive committee)

- c. Meetings shall last approximately 3 hours (1.30pm to 4.30pm) and the meeting timing shall also be subject to venue availability
- d. The meetings will be held at a place agreed by the Community.
- e. Attendance shall be by physical presence. A letter, email or text message or verbal apology (for absence) through another member is acceptable.
- f. Notifications (of time and venue) for emergency meetings must be sent to all registered members, at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. The emergency meeting shall be expected to form a quorum of at least seventy percent (70%) of ordinary members and one (1) executive members for any decisions to be binding.
- g. Cancellation of any meeting shall only be possible in the event of the death of a member, severe weather conditions, or a natural disaster, and members must be notified by all means necessary (by telephone, e-mail, text message and/or word of mouth) as soon as is practicable.

10. LANGUAGE

The approved languages for conducting meetings shall be Igbo and the English language, although minutes shall continue to be written in English.

10. AMENDMENT

This ICA constitution (or any articles therein) can be amended annually following agreement by at least forty percent (40%) of members. However, any suggestions for amendment can be accumulated as addendums prior to such annual amendment. Any bona fide member proposing an amendment must make a case in writing and present their case at a general meeting. Please note that only bona fide members can propose or vote on any constitutional amendments.

10. ADOPTION

This constitution was **adopted** at 3:43pm at the ICA general meeting holding today, Saturday, August 25, 2012 by **all** 15 members in attendance at the Altens Community Centre, Aberdeen.