



**The North of England Zoological Society ('the Society' or 'Chester Zoo')**  
**Staff Association Committee ('the Committee')**

**CONSTITUTION**

**FINAL DRAFT**

**1. Role and Responsibilities**

- a) To represent staff, either individually or collectively as appropriate, in matters and negotiations concerning their welfare, remuneration, health and safety and the generality of conditions of employment
- b) To communicate the interests and concerns of Staff Association members to Management and the Trustees of the Society with a view to fostering safe and effective working practices which benefit all concerned
- c) Jointly to pursue with Management and/or the Trustees of the Society, the speedy resolution of any issue which may adversely impact on the good relations existing between them and Staff Association members

It is recognised that Committee members will have access to such information held by the Society as will facilitate them fully and effectively to fulfil their role and responsibilities. To this end, Committee members will always respect and maintain any confidentiality of such information.

**2. Staff Association**

All paid employees of the Society or its subsidiaries are automatically members of the Chester Zoo Staff Association but may indicate in writing (to the Chair of the Staff Association or Head of HR) that they do not wish to become or remain a member. The Committee may also make representation on behalf of Chester Zoo volunteers and/or other unpaid Zoo staff.

The direction and control of the Staff Association shall be vested in the Committee which shall consist of the duly elected group of representatives.

Representatives are entitled to reasonable time away from their normal duties, without loss of pay, in order to fulfil their roles as representatives.

The Staff Association Committee may create its own sub-committees if required. Every sub-committee will have a defined remit and a Staff Association Committee member as its Chair. Other members of any sub-committee and/or assistants to the sub-committee will be co-opted as necessary.

### **3. Staff Association Annual General Meeting ('the AGM')**

The Committee will arrange and publicise the Staff Association's AGM every year and the AGM will be held no longer than fourteen months and no less than ten months after the previous AGM.

The Chair of the Staff Association Committee will publicise the Agenda of the AGM no less than one week prior to the AGM. This Agenda will normally include:

- a) Minutes of the last AGM and Matters Arising
- b) The Chair of Staff Association's and/or the Treasurer's report(s)
- c) Ratification of Staff Representatives for the coming year

Any additional items to be included in the Agenda must be lodged with the Chair of the Staff Association no fewer than ten days prior to the AGM.

### **4. Representation**

Staff Association members will be represented by the following Committee structure:

|                        |                                                           |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Commercial Operations  | 3 representatives (Guest Experience, Catering and Retail) |
| Discovery and Learning | 1 representative                                          |
| Health and Safety      | 1 representative                                          |
| Marketing              | 1 representative                                          |
| Collections            | 3 representatives (2 x animal; 1 x horticulture)          |
| Site Ops               | 1 representative                                          |

And one other representative from any team in the zoo

The Committee may adjust the level of representation or categories as it deems necessary.

### **5. Election of Representatives**

Representatives will be elected annually to serve on the Committee for one year.

Qualifications

- a) Only members of the Staff Association with a minimum of two years' continuous service may stand for election by being proposed and seconded

b) Existing members of the Committee are not excluded from standing for re-election

c) The Proposer and Secunder of any nominee for election must both be Staff

Association members and in the same working group as the nominee

Only members of a work group may vote in an election for the representatives for that work group.

Elections for representatives shall take place before, but near to, the date of the Staff Association's AGM. New, or re-elected, representatives will be ratified at the AGM by having their names read into the Minutes.

The Chair of the Staff Association Committee will ensure the staff notices requesting nominations for representatives and the names, Proposers and Seconders of subsequent nominees are prominently displayed in the Zoo and circulated to staff for a period of no less than one week.

If more nominations are received than there are representative vacancies in any work group, then a ballot will be held. Such a ballot will be publicised by notice in a prominent place for at least a week.

If in any work group, the same number of nominations is received as there are representative vacancies, then the nominee(s) will be considered to have been elected without a ballot being held.

If in any work group fewer nominations are received than there are representative vacancies, then the Chair of the Staff Association Committee may, at his/her discretion, and as a last resort, fill any vacancy with a staff member either from another work group or from the same work group but with less than two years' service. This situation will be minuted at the AGM.

In the event of a representative resigning from, or being no longer eligible to serve on, the Committee a replacement will be sought, following the above process, to serve the remainder of the year.

## **6. Committee Officers**

The Officers (Chair, Vice-chair and 3 other officers) must be members of the Committee. The Committee will elect its own Officers to serve for one year, at its first formal meeting following the AGM.

## **7. Committee Meetings**

The Committee will meet regularly once a month and not less than ten times a year, unless it formally resolves to forego a particular meeting at the preceding meeting. In the event of a

representative being unable to attend, due to holidays or incapacity, the Committee Chair may invite a suitably qualified substitute to attend instead.

The Committee will consider all matters brought to it through the representatives which affect the relationship of the staff with the management of the zoo (or vice versa) and other relevant matters. The Committee may also consider any matters submitted to it directly in writing.

The Committee shall decide which matters it can deal with itself which should be referred to the member(s) of staff who first raised them and which should be brought to the attention of management.

Notwithstanding the above, the Committee will not be obliged to give consideration to any matters brought to it couched in offensive or threatening terms, nor need it consider items of an obviously frivolous nature.

The Committee will treat all matters of an essentially personal nature in a confidential and caring manner and will endeavour to give even-handed consideration to matters involving dispute between members of staff.

#### **8. Meetings with Management**

Meetings between the Society's senior management and the Staff Association will take place on the following basis with the stated relevant personnel:

- (i) Weekly: informal meeting with Chair of Staff Association (or nominated Staff Association Representative) and Head of Human Resources (or nominated Human Resources' representative)
- (ii) Monthly: formal meeting with Chair, Vice-chair and Representatives of Staff Association, Head of Human Resources and any invited relevant Head of Division (pertaining to agenda items) in attendance. Minutes will be taken at this meeting and circulated to staff
- (iii) Tri-monthly: every three months Chair, Vice-chair and a core group of five Representatives from Staff Association to meet with the Director General, Managing Director and Head of Human Resources and invited personnel, where relevant. Minutes may be taken at this meeting.
- (iv) Ad hoc: Meetings may take place on an ad hoc basis between the Staff Association Chair and Head of Human Resources.

#### **9. Records of Meetings**

A 'minutes' clerk' will be provided by the Society to record in writing any formal meeting and its outcome(s) between the Committee and the Director General and/or Heads of Divisions and/or

Chair of the Trustees. Copies of such written records will be posted on staff noticeboards and made available to staff electronically on Chester Zoo's intranet as soon as reasonably possible following meetings, such records also being conveyed to the Chair and Vice-chair of Trustees. The Committee will ensure that staff are informed of the progress and/or resolution of any issue which has been the subject of formal discussion between Committee members and Chester Zoo management.

Office administration facilities will be provided by the Society to Committee members.

#### **10. Quorum**

The Chair and/or Secretary of the Committee will ensure that all representatives are notified of meeting dates. Sixty per cent (60%) of the total number of currently serving Committee members (rounded down to the nearest whole number) will form a quorum provided that this number is never less than three.

The quorum for an AGM will be four serving Committee members plus ten Staff Association members.

#### **11. Voting**

In the event of an equality of votes, the Chair of the Staff Association Committee will have the casting vote.

#### **12. Extraordinary General Meeting ('EGM')**

The Committee has the power, giving reasonable notice, to call an EGM if and when required. Any ten members of staff may call an EGM by giving three weeks' notice in writing to the Committee Secretary.

Any resolution being submitted by staff either to an AGM or EGM must:

- a) be in writing
- b) be signed by at least 5 Staff Association members
- c) be received by the Staff Association Committee Secretary at least ten days prior to the AGM or EGM for which it is intended.

