



'Helping Women, Help Themselves'

CHORLEY WOMEN'S CENTRE

CONSTITUTION

Name

The name of the Association shall be the "CHORLEY WOMEN'S CENTRE", hereinafter referred to as "The Association". This encompasses Release, Circle and General counselling service's.

Our Mission

We are dedicated to supporting all women in Chorley and South Ribble of all ages regardless of circumstances.

Aims

We aim to support and help women find solutions to their problems, so that they can feel empowered to help themselves. We promote the mental and physical health and wellbeing of all women, not only in Chorley but in the Chorley and South Ribble district.

In furtherance of these aims, The Association shall have the powers to:

- a) Offer information, one to one listening and support service to women, by women, in an informal atmosphere and in confidence.
- b) Be open to all women, regardless of race, age and marital status, in line with our equality and inclusion policies.
- c) Provide the means whereby trained volunteers may supply listening, counselling, support and assistance services.
- d) Promote the training and education of such volunteers and ensure they are working safely, ethically and within their competence, and ensure all team members have current criminal record checks.
- e) Where appropriate, engage employed or self-employed team members to fulfil specific roles within the centre.
- f) We will strive to provide a safe and appropriate environment for service users, volunteers and staff, subject to the limitations of the building.
- g) To obtain, collect and receive money and funds by way of contributions, donations, funding, legacies, grants and by another other lawful method.
- h) Review and change the Association's policies and procedures.
- i) To print and publish any materials to promote the above objectives.
- j) The Association shall have the power to do all things necessary for the fulfilment of its objectives.



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Membership

Membership of The Association shall be open to women and shall be of three kinds:

- a) Each volunteer will have membership of The Association
- b) Each employed staff member will have membership of The Association
- c) Each member of staff employed on a self-employed basis will have membership of The Association

Membership of the Management Committee will be open to women as follows:

- a) Applicants should apply by informal expression of interest detailing why they would like to join the committee, what specific skills/knowledge they can bring.
- b) The expression of interest shall be considered by a panel using set eligibility criteria. This expression of interest will be considered by a panel consisting of the chair of the committee, the centre manager and one other delegated committee member who will consider it against the following eligibility criteria:

To be eligible to be put forward as a committee member, the applicant must:

- Not be a current service user i.e. not accessed the centre as a service user within 6 months.
 - Hold a current DBS check or be willing to apply for one. DBS check must not reveal any areas of concern. If it does, this will be considered by the panel.
 - Have skills, qualities and/or knowledge that is relevant to the role and organisation.
 - Not be a volunteer who is still within their 6 months probationary period.
 - Not under the age of 18
 - Gender to be female
 - Not present a conflict of interest – if so, this will be discussed and determined by the panel.
- c) Only if eligible should a person be put forward for a membership vote. A majority vote will be required to elect someone on to the committee, and in the event of a tie, the chair or deputy/acting chair will have a casting vote.
 - d) Some committee members may be ex-officio – they are members by virtue of the role they hold such as local councillor. They will still need to have a current DBS check.
 - e) Co-opting members – namely new volunteers who have completed their probationary period and have expressed a wish to join the committee. Applicants will be discussed at the following Management Committee meeting and will need a majority vote to be co-opted. Any other applicants should ideally wait to be nominated and seconded at the next AGM.
 - f) Committee members shall be elected for one year at the AGM by a majority member vote.
 - g) Retiring committee members are eligible for re-election.



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Membership of the association (Chorley Women's Centre)

Membership should consist of:

- Each volunteer
- Each employed staff member
- Each member of staff employed on a self-employed basis

Women attending the centre can express their interest to apply to become a member of the association in writing and this will be discussed at the following Management Committee Meeting. If an applicant is considered eligible for membership by a majority vote (there must be at least the minimum quorum present i.e. one third of the total management committee in attendance). Any successful applicants can be elected at the next AGM or earlier if agreed by the committee if deemed appropriate.

General Meetings

- a) The Annual General Meeting of The Association shall be held each year at such a time (not being more than fifteen months after the proceeding Annual General Meeting) and place as the Management Committee shall determine. At least fourteen clear days notice of the meeting shall be given in writing by the secretary to the members and/or publicly advertised in an adequate and appropriate manner as The Association shall decide.
- b) At the Annual General Meeting, the members shall elect the officers and the Management Committee and shall appoint an auditor. The officers shall be:
 - Chairperson
 - Vice chairperson
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Vice Treasurer

Anyone who wishes to be considered for any of these positions, need to be nominated and seconded at the AGM.

Officers elected at the AGM will serve for a term of one year.

Retiring officers shall be eligible for re-election unless they have already served for 4 consecutive years in the same role. In this case, the retiring officer may be eligible for re-election in a different role.

- c) An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called at any time at the request of the Management Committee and/or $\frac{1}{4}$ of the members.
- d) The Secretary shall send a note of the date, time and place of each Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meeting with a list of items to be discussed to all members, giving at least fourteen clear days notice of the meeting.



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- e) The quorum shall be no less than a third of the membership. If fewer attend, a new meeting shall be called.
- f) Decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of those present and voting.

The Management Committee

- a) The Management Committee shall consist of:
 - The officers
 - Up to twenty-five elected members
 - If the Committee so decides, up to four members co-opted by the Committee in exceptional circumstances – otherwise, new members will be voted on to the Committee at the next AGM

The Management Committee shall have the power to invite representatives of statutory or non-statutory organisations to attend its meetings in an advisory capacity.

- b) Committee members shall be elected for one year at the Annual General Meeting by the members.
- c) Retiring Committee members are eligible for re-election.
- d) Nominations from members of The Association for the election of the Management Committee and offers shall be in writing with the consent of the nominee and must be received by the secretary at least seven days before the Annual General Meeting. If fewer nominations are received than are required to fill the places available, the Chairperson shall have the power to accept further nominations at the Annual General Meeting.
- e) Any casual vacancy on the Committee may be filled by the Management Committee and any person appointed to fill such a vacancy shall hold office until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting and shall be eligible for re-election at that meeting.
- f) Co-opted members that join during the year by invitation of the Committee shall retire at the next Annual General Meeting but can be nominated for a further year at this time, subject to nomination and voting by the Management Committee.
- g) The Management Committee may appoint a Finance Committee and such other special or standing committees as may be deemed necessary and may determine their terms of reference, powers, duration and composition.

Meetings of the Management Committee

- a) Meetings shall be held at least six times per year.
- b) The quorum at a meeting shall not be less than 1/3 of the members, including two officers and two ordinary committee members.



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- c) Each Committee member shall have one vote. Members who are also employed/self-employed may have a vote as long as there is no conflict of interest. In the event of a tie, the chair person shall have the casting vote. In the event that the chair is operating in a temporary capacity due to the elected chair person being unable to fulfil their role temporarily, the deputy/acting chair shall have the casting vote.
- d) The Secretary shall ensure that minutes are kept of every meeting of the Management Committee and, if any, operational meetings.
- e) Committee meetings are a confidential forum and as such shall be subject to the separately defined confidentiality statement:-

"All information/views/opinions which are shared in this meeting must remain confidential. No information should be discussed outside of this meeting. If you wish to discuss anything out of the meeting, please contact the Centre Manager, Chair or Safeguarding Leads.

 - Any violation of confidentiality, in whole or in part, could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of use of the Women's Centre and/or legal action.
 - Confidential information is defined as any information found in any written information and work-related information. All information relating to a client's addresses, email addresses, contact numbers, counselling sessions or condition constitutes confidential information.
 - Confidential matters involving service users will not be discussed in areas where they might be overheard by other service users, visitors or other non-employees/volunteers. - this includes information shared in committee meetings

Finance

- a) The Association's year shall run from 31st April to 1st May in the following year.
- b) The income and property of the Association is solely for the promotion of the purposes of the Association, as set out in its constitution. No member of the Association can profit from the Association, but reasonable and proper remuneration for work or out of pocket expenses while carrying out the Association's business is permitted.
- c) The Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of The Association. At the end of the financial year the Treasurer shall prepare accounts which, by examination of an independent examiner appointed by The Association, and shall be presented at the Annual General Meeting.
- d) Payment of all accounts by cheque shall be signed by two officers of the Management Committee. i.e. Treasurer and vice treasurer. The treasurer and vice treasurer can access the online banking.

Trustees

The Management Committee may appoint and may determine the appointment of not less than three persons to act as Holding Trustees for the purpose of holding any monies or property belonging to The Association.



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Alteration to the Constitution

Any changes to be made to the constitution need to be brought to the next Management Committee meeting and receive the assent of a 2/3 majority of the members present and voting at an Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary General Meeting called solely for the purpose. A resolution of the alteration of the constitution shall be received by the Secretary at least twenty-one clear days before the meeting at which the resolution is to be brought forward. The Secretary shall give at least fourteen clear days notice in writing of such a meeting and shall include notice of the alterations proposed. It will then be submitted to the Registered Charity Commission and displayed on the website.

Dissolution

The Association may be dissolved at any time by a resolution passed by a 2/3 majority of those present and voting at a general and quorate meeting of The Association of at which twenty-one clear days' notice has been given.

Such a resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by or in the name of The Association provided that if any property remains after the satisfaction of all debts, liabilities and claims on any property by the Local Authority, such property shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of The Association but shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or local institutions which have the same ethos as The Association, with the approval of the Charities Commissions or other authority deem fit. Such distribution shall not take place until three months after the dissolution of The Association during which time the Local Authority shall be consulted in connection with any claims as mentioned above.