

Memorandum of Association Template

This template can be used to help formalise your committee in its early stages before an actual business is created and registered. The aim of the memorandum is to set down in writing what you are trying to achieve, how you will do it, and who will be involved. You will need to consider with your group or committee your own aim and objectives, but the information below will be a useful starting point.

Aim/Vision

Eg: To lead the community in (re)opening a financially sustainable village shop, which is owned by the community and run for the benefit of all who live and work in the community.

You should:

- Describe the ideal future you want for your users or cause
- Capture the heart and the head, and have an idealistic tone
- Convey a standard of excellence
- Reflect horizon-expanding ideals
- Inspire enthusiasm and commitment
- Use language that's easy to understand
- Link with your mission
- Show that change is needed

Values

Values are:

- Things that people feel have worth or hold dear
- Beliefs, attitudes or principles expressed in behaviours
- Things that govern organisational behaviour – what people do and how they do it
- Consistent with each other and with your vision and mission

Objectives/Mission

- Develop/establish a democratic organisation with an open and affordable membership structure
- Ascertain what services and or goods (depending on the nature of your business) that the community needs
- Assess options available to setting up a viable and profitable community co-operative

Your mission statement should say:

- Who you are
- Who or what you support
- What you do
- Why you do it
- How you do it

It should be:

- Clear and consistent
- Short and focused (usually one or two sentences)
- Inspiring
- Realistic, workable and achievable
- Expressed in terms of outcomes
- Linked to your charitable objectives (if it isn't, then these should be reviewed, too – but remember that amending your objects is a major step)

Specific Activities

Within the committee, specific tasks will need to be undertaken. These include:

- Communication/consultation with the local community
- Visiting other similar community co-operatives / businesses to understand what is involved
- Selecting a site/premises and assessing costs
- Developing a business plan including a financial plan
- Choosing a legal structure
- Opening a bank account, fundraising, applying for grants, and selling shares (depending on the legal structure chosen)
- Recruitment of volunteers (if necessary)

Framework for the Committee

The committee was elected on [date] and will be re-elected on incorporation (registering the business with a formal legal structure which will include its own Memorandum of Association or equivalent governing document) or on an annual basis if incorporation is unsuccessful.

The committee will meet weekly/monthly, and all meeting dates will be advertised, with all residents invited to attend/not attend/submit ideas.

Structure of the Committee

A volunteer committee has come together to pursue the aims and objectives as above. The committee consists of the following:

Chair:

- Forename, surname
- Former experience
- Scope of activity within the committee

Treasurer:

- Forename, surname
- Former experience
- Scope of activity within the committee

Secretary:

- Forename, surname
- Former experience
- Scope of activity within the committee

And:

Fundraising Lead:

- Forename, surname
- Former experience
- Scope of activity within the committee

Retail Lead:

- Forename, surname
- Former experience
- Scope of activity within the committee

Business Planning Lead:

- Forename, surname
- Former experience
- Scope of activity within the committee

Marketing Lead:

- Forename, surname
- Former experience
- Scope of activity within the committee

Staffing/Volunteer Lead:

- Forename, surname
- Former experience
- Scope of activity within the committee

Benefits

These checklists help to make these important organisational statements tangible. It offers a practical way to assess or devise each one.

Limitations

There is no absolute agreed meaning to this terminology: each can mean different things to different people and can cause tension and conflict when discussing them.

When to use it

This tool is useful when you clarify your organisation's direction.

Any questions?

If you have further questions about this, or anything else, please don't hesitate to contact us – we're always happy to hear from you.

Phone: +44 (0)1993 810 730 **Email:** info@plunkett.co.uk

Online: www.plunkett.co.uk