

SAKOMA

TOGETHERNESS

CONSTITUTION

1. Name

The name of the organisation shall be:

SAKOMA BME Network

(Hereinafter referred to as “Sakoma”)

2. Objects

The objects of Sakoma shall be to:

To provide an opportunity for Black, Minority and Ethnic organisations to work together on issues of mutual concern.

- Share information and experience concerning the Member organisations and their constituencies.
- Promote the empowerment of Member organisations.
- To articulate and promote the needs of Members, where they concern more than one organisation
- Be a focal point for service providers that wish to consult about their services.
- Develop partnerships and cooperation between Members.
- Develop and implement partnerships with other organisations.

Especially in the greater Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham areas. It is, however, acknowledged that much of the public education work will have benefit at a wider regional level (hereinafter referred to as Sakoma’s “area of benefit”).

3. Fundamental working principles

The work of the Sakoma is based on the founding principles to work towards the elimination of racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups. Admission into Membership will be refused to organisations if they or their representatives do not fully agree to this. Membership will be withdrawn from any Member if they or their representatives do not fully comply to the principles.

4. Mode of operation

In furtherance of the objects, but not further or otherwise, Sakoma may undertake the following functions and within the limits permitted by the law and this Constitution may do anything lawful and necessary to fulfil them:

- Policy development
- Community development and support
- Public campaigns, education and promotional work

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5. Powers

In furtherance of the objects but not further on otherwise, Sakoma shall have the following powers:

- (a) to raise funds PROVIDED THAT in raising funds Sakoma shall not undertake any permanent trading activities and shall conform to any relevant requirements of law
- (b) to invest temporarily surplus not immediately required for the objects;
- (c) to rent, lease or buy premises and necessary equipment;
- (d) to undertake research and publish the useful results thereof;
- (e) to employ and pay staff;
- (f) to insure for full value against loss or damage any property belonging to Sakoma;
- (g) to insure and to indemnify its staff and voluntary workers against all such risks incurred in the performance of their duties as may be thought fit;
- (h) Otherwise to expand funds as necessary to further its objects;
- (i) Power to do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the furtherance of the objects.

6. Meetings of Sakoma

Sakoma shall meet not less often than three times a year. One of these meetings shall be the Annual General Meeting, which shall take place in the first four months of the financial year. Sakoma may determine whether all or part of any Sakoma meeting shall be closed to the public.

7. Membership

Sakoma shall consist of not fewer than 10 full members, all of whom shall live in, work in, or be organisations operating in, the area of benefit.

Full membership shall be open to any ethnic minority community organisation which is interested in furthering the work of Sakoma (hereinafter referred to as “affiliated members”), and can:

- Prove its status by means of a formal constitution, articles of Association or a recognised method.
- Prove its activity, openness and democracy. This might be by means of copies of minutes of meetings, attendance records and such other methods deemed appropriate by Sakoma.

Organisations which operate in Sakoma’s area of benefit and which at the time of their initial application or application for three-yearly renewal have been in existence for at least six months, may be admitted to initial or renewed affiliated membership if they:

- (a) make a written declaration of their commitment to Sakoma’s objects and their desire to work strategically towards the achievement of those objects;
- (b) satisfy Sakoma that there is nothing in their constitution, aims or actions which conflicts with the Forum’s objects and functions.

With each application for initial and renewed affiliated membership, there shall be supplied to Sakoma the following documentation or an assurance that such documentation will be supplied to it within six months of the date of its admission as an affiliated member:

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- (a) a copy of the organisation's current constitution or other documents setting out its aims and objectives;
- (b) in the case of religious organisations, a copy of the organisation's statement of beliefs, address of the place of worship, and name of governing body or umbrella organisation (if any);
- (c) evidence in writing that the organisation has a bona fide membership

Failure to comply with the foregoing requirements shall cause the affiliated membership to lapse.

In considering each application for Membership, Sakoma shall :

- (a) Seek confirmation that the affiliated members constitution ofF statement of aims and objectives and its equal opportunities policy remains in force (as a minimum, the affiliated members must sign a statement confirming this):
- (b) Seek evidence that it still has a bona fide membership by reference to:
 - (i) the number of members
 - (ii) whether the members are related to each other or not
 - (iii) whether the membership duplicates that of another organisation in part or wholly

An affiliated member, all or majority of whose members are:

- (I) related to each other, and/or
- (II) members of another organisation shall be deemed not to have a bona fide membership

8. Each affiliated member may at each general meeting nominate one person of 18 years or over to represent it and to vote on its behalf at meetings of Sakoma. The affiliated member can also nominate a deputy, who will only have a vote if the main representative is not in attendance. Each representative shall have one vote exercisable personally.

An affiliated member may replace one or both of its representatives, PROVIDED THAT: at all other times it gives notice in writing to the Secretary and its representative of its intention to do so not less than seven days before Sakoma meeting at which it desires its new representative(s) to take office; and

9. **Termination of membership and withdrawal of recognition**

10. **The Management committee shall have power to-**

- (a) terminate the membership of an affiliate member whose actions or whose consistent failure to participate in the affairs of Sakoma, are or are deemed to be prejudicial to the interests of Sakoma;
- (b) Withdraw recognition and the right to vote from the representative of an affiliated member.

11. Any member of Sakoma may resign by giving to the Chair, written notice to that affect.

12. **Membership panel**

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The Management Committee shall appoint a Membership Panel

- (a) To receive and consider all applications for affiliated.
- (b) To determine all such applications provided that an organisation wishing to appeal against a decision of the panel shall have the right to do so, and to be heard in such appeal, at the next ordinary general meeting of Sakoma.
- (c) To recommend to the management committee, termination of membership or withdrawal of recognition and membership.

13. **Consultant Observers**

Sakoma shall determine, on the recommendation of the management committee, whether invitations to attend meetings as consultant observers, on similar terms, should be extended to the chief officers of other organisations in the public, private or voluntary sectors, or their named representatives.

14. **Management committee: composition, duties, meetings**

Subject as herein provided, Sakoma and its property shall be administered and managed in accordance with this constitution, and having regard to specific policy decision of the REC, by members of the executive committee hereinafter constituted.

The executive committee shall consist of:

- (a) not more than 9 members, of whom –
- (b) not fewer than two thirds of the total at any time shall be full members of the Forum elected by ballot at the time of Sakoma's annual general meeting.

The duties of the management committee shall be to administer and manage the Forum and its work, and shall include the following specific functions:

- (a) To exercise the powers of Sakoma.
- (b) Attention to legal matters affecting Sakoma Forum and its property;
- (c) To report on its activities and decisions to each annual and ordinary general meetings of the Forum.

15. **Meetings and proceedings of the Management committee**

The Management committee shall hold at least six ordinary meetings each year.

Every matter shall be determined by a majority of votes of the Management committee present and voting on the question but in the case of equality of votes, the chair shall have a second casting vote.

The committee shall keep minutes, in books kept for the purpose

16. The committee shall appoint from its members the Membership Panel.

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17. The Management committee may appoint other sub-committees, ad hoc working parties or task groups consisting of such persons as the management committee shall determine for the support of specialist areas of Sakoma's work. Each of these shall:
- (a) have power to co-opt persons
 - (b) include at least one member of the management committee, to represent the policy interests of Sakoma.
 - (c) Report to each meeting of the management committee, making recommendations on all matters requiring policy decisions.

Such sub-committees, working parties or task groups shall not have power to commit the management committee to any particular action.

18. **Election of Executive Committee Members and Honorary Officers**

The inaugural and then subsequently Annual General Meetings shall elect, for a period of two years.

A Chair, *

A ViceChair, *

A Treasurer, *

* The above three positions are all ex-office and to the management committee.

At least three other Management Committee members.

At the conclusion of any two-year term of office, a member of the Management Committee or elected officers shall be eligible for re-election for a further period of **two** years.

19. A member of the management committee shall cease to hold office if she or he-
- (a) is disqualified from acting as a member of the executive committee by virtue of Section 72 of the Charities Act 1993.
 - (b) becomes incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing and administering her/his own affairs.

If through resignation or other cause a vacancy occurs in the membership of the management committee, the committee may appoint a member of Sakoma to fill the vacancy until the next annual general meeting.

- o all members of the executive committee, regardless of the number of years remaining in their three year period of service, are eligible for election as honorary officers.
- o The duties of the Chair shall be:
 - (a) to preside at meetings of the committee and Sakoma;
 - (b) as may be required by Sakoma or executive committee, to act as a principal spokesperson on public occasions or when representations are being made on behalf of Sakoma to other bodies;
 - (c) to uphold the constitution and standing orders of the Sakoma.

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20. The Vice-chair shall deputise for the chair in the performance of any of the duties
- a) when so requested by the Chair, or
 - b) in the absence or non-availability of the Chair.

In the absence or non-availability of both these officers, the management committee shall appoint one of its number to act as Chair.

If the office of Chair falls vacant, through resignation or any other cause, the executive committee shall, as soon as possible, elect one of its number to assume the title and duties of the office until the first executive committee meeting after the next annual general meeting. If the person elected to the Chair is the person who has been serving as vice-chair, the executive committee shall similarly elect a new vice-chair.

21. **Quorum**

Meetings of Sakoma, including the Annual General meeting, shall be deemed to be quorate when at least one quarter of the total numbers of voting members are present.

A quorum for meetings of the management Committee shall be three persons, of whom at least two shall be elected members and at least one shall be an honorary officer.

22. **Alterations to the Constitution**

Changes to this constitution shall be by approval of at least two thirds of the voting members at a General Meeting.