

Proposed amendments to VSSN Constitution

For Consideration at Special General Meeting 14 May 2008

Proposed by the VSSN Steering Group to take effect immediately*

PLEASE NOTE: Words in italics are for explanation only and do not form part of the amendments

To view the full current VSSN Constitution (last amended May 2007) please follow this link:
www.vssn.org.uk/about

AMENDMENT - To provide for Steering Group Members to be elected on a three year cycle

Proposed:

- Delete the existing paras F(1)-(3) and replace with the new text F(1)-(7) below.
- Re-number existing paras F(4)-(6) as F(8)-(10).

F Steering Group

- (1) The Steering Group shall consist of:
 - (a) not more than nine elected members (who shall all be individual members or appointed representatives); and
 - (b) not more than two co-opted members.
- (2) Co-opted members of the Steering Group may be appointed by the Steering Group provided that no co-option may be made unless notice was given when the Steering Group meeting was called. Each appointment of a co-opted member shall take effect from the end of that meeting unless the appointment is to fill a place which has not then been vacated in which case the appointment shall run from the date when the post becomes vacant. Co-opted members shall serve until the next Annual General Meeting.
- (3)
 - (a) Except as provided below, not more than three Steering Group members shall be elected at each Annual General Meeting, and they shall be elected for a period of three years.
 - (b) In the event of an elected Steering Group member ceasing to hold office after less than the full three year term, the place thus vacated shall be open for election at the next Annual General Meeting but the person so elected shall serve only for the remaining term of the place vacated.
- (4) At any time when there are vacancies for elected Steering Group members for different lengths of time – whether under F(3) or F(5) or F(6) – the candidates obtaining the most votes (or the candidates elected first in the event that the Steering Group resolves under clause Q(5) that the election take place by single transferable vote) shall serve for the longest periods of time for which they are eligible to serve.

- (5) An elected Steering Group member may stand for re-election at the end of his/her period of office, provide that no person shall serve as a Steering Group member for more than six consecutive years (whether as an elected or co-opted member). A Steering Group member who has served consecutively for four years or five years may stand for re-election but only for a maximum period of two years or one year respectively.
- (6) At the Annual General Meeting in 2008 all existing Steering Group members shall stand down, and elections shall be held for three persons to serve for three years, three to serve for two years, and three for one year.
- (7) In this clause a "year" means the period from one Annual General Meeting to the next.

Explanation (NOT part of the resolution)

The main purpose of this amendment is to create a rolling three year programme for the election of SG members. In the normal event, three members will be elected each year, to serve for three years, giving nine elected members in total (one more than at present).

To avoid confusion, the previous minimum of five SG members has been removed – this was really only applicable at the Inaugural meeting. Resignations are now covered by clause F, which requires that the SG never drops below three members (the normal minimum number of trustees permitted by the Charity Commission).

As currently, provision is made for up to two co-opted members in addition to the elected members – so if all elected places are filled and the SG uses both co-options it could be up to 11 in all. A new provision is added that co-options last only until the next AGM (previously, all SG members stood down at the AGM so no special statement was needed).

New para F(6) makes a transitional arrangement to bring this into effect – at the AGM in autumn 2008, all existing SG members will stand down (as happens currently) and nine places will be available for election – the three elected first (assuming the SG opts to continue using STV) will serve for three years, the next three for two years and the next three for one year.

Then at the 2009 AGM, those who were elected in 2008 for one year only will stand down (but can stand for re-election). The three year cycle is then under way.

However, this is all limited by a provision that no one can serve more than six consecutive years. Those currently on the SG in 2007/08 will need to take this into account in considering how much longer they can serve – for example someone elected at the Inaugural General Meeting in 2003 and who has been an SG member since then will have served five years in 2008 and can only therefore stand for one more year.

*Note on Implementation Timing

This change is purely administrative and does not therefore require approval by the Charity Commission. It will therefore take effect immediately if carried (and will therefore apply with effect from the 2008 AGM).