



Constitution of the Association of Tree Officers (ATO)

January 2020

Contents

1. Aim of ATO
2. Membership
3. Definition of terms
4. Directors
5. Associate Directors and Co-opted Advisors
6. Directors vote
7. Finance and Host Authority
8. Constitutional amendments
9. Code of conduct
10. Dissolution of ATO

1. Aim of ATO

To represent and promote UK tree officers at a national and international level and to support the work of the regional tree officer groups

2. Membership

2.1 Paid membership of the Association of Tree Officers will fall in two categories:

- Local Authorities
- Individual tree officers.

More detail can be found in Appendix A and B.

3. Definition of Terms

3.1 For the purposes of this document the following definitions of terms are to be used.

3.2 The Directors: The governing body of the organisation, responsible for decisions pertaining to the overall running of ATO.

3.4 National Co-ordinator: The individual responsible for the management, organisation and administration of ATO, amongst other necessary duties.

4. Directors

4.1 Directors need to be a member of ATO. As defined in Appendix A.

4.2 A prospective Director must be nominated for a Directorship by a member of ATO, seconded by another member of ATO, and the proposal is then to be agreed by Directors vote.

4.3 Directors have equal status and representation of the organisation.

4.4 The management, organisation and administrative duties of ATO and Directors decisions will be undertaken by the National Co-ordinator. The LTOA Executive Officer will also be the ATO National Co-ordinator, unless other arrangements are made and agreed by ATO Directors and the LTOA Executive Committee. Appointment to the role will be in line with the host authority's recruitment process.

4.5 It is the duty of a Director to ensure that ATO fulfils the stated aims of the organisation.

4.6 Directors will meet as often as is deemed necessary, but no less than four times per calendar year.

4.7 A Director is expected to attend a minimum of 60% of Director meetings held in the calendar year. Directors unable to meet this level of commitment are invited to discuss their circumstances with the other Directors and, if appropriate, consider resigning as a Director.

4.8 A Director is expected to actively participate in ATO activities over and above attendance at Directors meetings and follow the members code of conduct. Directors unable to meet this level of commitment are invited to discuss their circumstances with the other Directors and, if appropriate, consider resigning as a Director.

Directorship may be terminated on the majority vote of Directors.

4.9 The maximum number of individuals as Directors at any time is seven.

4.10 The minimum number of individuals as Directors at any time is five. If the number of Directors falls to five or fewer, more Directors must be recruited.

4.11 The Directors will comprise of three LTOA Executive Committee members and the Host Authority will have one representative. The aim for the remaining Directors is that they are geographically spread from the various regions across the country.

4.12 Governance and relationship between ATO and LTOA

The decision-making hierarchy will be in line with definition in Appendix F. Any decisions regarding the following will be for a LTOA Executive Committee to determine:

- Agreeing the ATO business plan
- Strategic direction and aims of the organisation
- Changes to the constitution, (except for minor changes to the constitution appendices, see Appendix F).
- Finances (except for expenditure up to £1,000, see Appendix F)
- Recommendations for new Directors, Associated Directors and co-opted advisors

5. Associate ATO Directors and Co-opted Advisors

5.1 Associate Directors are co-opted as required to:

- Represent tree officers from the various regions across the UK
- Assist in meeting ATO aims as deemed necessary by ATO Directors and LTOA Executive Committee
- Advise on financial and business planning

A prospective Associate Director must be nominated for an Associate Directorship by an existing Director, seconded by another existing Director, and the proposal is then to be agreed by Directors vote.

5.2 Non-Members of ATO would not ordinarily be considered for an Associate Director role, but under certain circumstances this might be deemed appropriate at the discretion of the Directors.

5.3 Associate Directors do not have voting rights in Director votes.

5.4 Associate Directors will be invited, in writing, for as long a period as is necessary to complete the specific task for which they have been recruited. The expected length of appointment is to be outlined in the initial invitation. The appointment period will be reviewed at the end of the initial appointment period, and redefined if necessary, in writing for an additional period of time.

5.5 A Co-opted Advisor would be recruited in the same way as an Associate Director, they will be nominated by a Director and seconded by another Director. The position is then agreed by Directors vote. An Advisor does not have voting rights and will be invited in writing with the expected length of appointment, as in 5.4 above.

6. Directors vote

6.1 The method of voting at Director meetings will be a show of hands by those Directors present and entitled to vote, unless it is felt by a majority of the Directors that a particular issue is sensitive enough to warrant a closed ballot. Voting via a closed ballot will be by email to the National Co-ordinator.

6.2 In order for a decision to be binding, a minimum of 5 Directors must be present at the vote. Directors will be expected to have participated in the debate leading to a vote on that decision.

6.4 In the event of a tied vote, the final decision will be made by the LTOA Executive Committee.

6.5 Under certain circumstances it may be appropriate for voting to be undertaken via email. In such cases a Director or the National Co-ordinator will submit a question for consideration, and each Director will be given an opportunity to respond within a stated timeframe. At the end of this timeframe the votes will be counted, and provided a minimum of 5 Directors have voted, the decision will be considered binding. If less than 5 Directors have voted, then the decision will be postponed.

7. Finance and Host Authority

7.1 The finances of ATO are to be managed through a nominated Host Authority, currently London Borough of Camden. All details pertaining to finances and to the Host Authority can be found in Appendix C & D.

7.2 A representative of the Host Authority will be a Director. This individual is likely to be the holder of the most senior Arboricultural role at the Host Authority, and within the ATO will have the role and title of Treasurer. The Treasurer is the budget holder for ATO and the Line Manager of the National Co-ordinator.

8. Constitutional Amendments

8.1 The constitution will be reviewed within one year and every year thereafter unless ATO Directors and the LTOA Executive Committee agree to a longer period.

8.2 The constitution will be agreed by Directors vote and ratified by the LTOA Executive Committee.

8.3 Minor amendments to the appendices of the Constitution will be agreed by a majority Directors vote.

9. Code of Conduct

9.1 Any Member operating on behalf of, or in the name of ATO, is expected to uphold the standards of the ATO, (as indicated by the Code of Conduct in Appendix E) and ensure that the reputation of the organisation is maintained.

10. Dissolution of ATO

10.1 ATO may only be dissolved as an organisation by a majority vote of Directors at a meeting held specifically for the purpose of dissolving the organisation and ratified by the LTOA Executive Committee. Such a meeting may only be called by a majority Director's Vote.

10.2 In the event of dissolution, the Host Authority will settle any outstanding accounts and will distribute any excess funds amongst the membership in proportion to the subscription paid.

10.3 Should ATO be in deficit at the time of dissolution, then the deficit will be borne by the LTOA.

Appendices

Appendix A: Membership

Appendix B: Benefits of Membership

Appendix C: Benefits of Supporters

Appendix D: Finance and Host Authority details

Appendix E: Code of Conduct

Appendix F: Governance and relationship between ATO and LTOA