

ELECTION PROCESS AND VOTING GUIDELINES

This section outlines the formal procedure for conducting elections to the Executive Committee of the **Cooke Town Residents Association (CTRA)**. The election process shall be conducted under the supervision and authority of the **Returning Officer**, who is entrusted with the impartial and efficient administration of the electoral proceedings, in accordance with the Association's Bye-laws.

Conduct of Election Proceedings

The **Returning Officer** shall be responsible for conducting the election process at the **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**. The Returning Officer shall call the meeting to order, ensure orderly seating of Members, and maintain decorum throughout the proceedings.

Declaration of Unopposed Candidates

Prior to the commencement of voting, the Returning Officer shall announce the names of those Members who have been **elected unopposed**, having received no opposing nominations for their respective offices. Such candidates shall be declared **elected unanimously**, subject to confirmation of eligibility.

Announcement of Valid Nominees

For posts that are contested, the Returning Officer shall announce the names of all **valid nominees**, along with the office for which they are contesting. This information shall be made available to all Members present at the meeting.

Management of Proxy Votes Submission and Scrutiny

All duly executed proxy forms, submitted to the Secretary **at least seven (7) days prior to the scheduled meeting**, shall be handed over to the Returning Officer for verification. The proxy forms may be submitted at the registered office of the Association, No. 19, Lewis Road, Cooke Town, Bangalore – 560 005 (next to State Bank of India, Cooke Town Branch), or those submitting the proxy forms electronically, should ensure that the form is completed in its entirety, printed, duly signed, scanned and mailed in PDF format to cooketown@outlook.com.

Conditions Governing Proxy

A proxy may only be appointed in favour of another **eligible Member** of the Association.

No individual Member shall act as proxy for **more than ten (10) Members**.

Invalid, incomplete, or improperly submitted proxy forms shall be rejected.

6. Candidate Address (Optional)

The Returning Officer may, at his/her discretion, permit each nominee to briefly address the General Body. The purpose of this address shall be limited to presenting their credentials and vision. This provision is **discretionary** and not mandatory.

7. Separate Voting for Each Office

The election for each office of the Executive Committee shall be conducted **separately**. Members shall cast distinct votes for each individual office (e.g., President, Secretary, EC Member), in accordance with the prescribed procedures.

8. Voting Methodology

a. For Offices with Two (2) or Fewer Contestants

At the discretion of the Returning Officer, elections may be conducted either:

- i. By a **show of hands**, or
- ii. Through **ballot papers** or any other method deemed appropriate.

In all cases, the number of votes (including valid proxy votes) cast for each candidate shall be **accurately recorded**.

b. For Offices with More Than Two (2) Contestants

The election shall be conducted through a **secret ballot**. The following rules shall apply:

- i. Ballot papers in physical or electronic format, shall list the names of all contestants and the specific office being contested.
- ii. Each Member shall cast **only one vote per office**.
- iii. **Multiple votes** cast for a single office shall render the ballot **invalid** for that office.
- iv. The Returning Officer shall explain the format and layout of the ballot paper or the electronic voting format before voting begins to prevent invalid markings.

- v. Alternate voting methods such as **electronic or computer-based voting** may be employed, subject to feasibility.

9. Counting of Votes and Declaration of Results

- i. Upon conclusion of the voting process, all votes shall be counted by **two (2) scrutinizers** appointed by the Returning Officer.
- ii. The scrutinizers shall verify the count and report the results to the Returning Officer.
- iii. The candidate who secures the **highest number of valid votes** for each respective office shall be declared **elected** to that position.

10. Tie-Breaking Procedure

In the event of a **tie** between two or more candidates for a single office, the Returning Officer shall declare the need for a **fresh round of voting** limited to the tied candidates only. The process shall be conducted immediately, following the same voting and counting procedures.

11. Preservation of Election Records

Upon completion of the election process, the Returning Officer shall return all ballot papers, nomination forms, proxy forms, and other related documents to the **Secretary of the Association**, who shall retain them for record-keeping and audit purposes, in accordance with the rules of the Association.