

## Terms of reference for: **IC Decision-making Protocol**

The steering group will clarify the terms of reference by considering the following questions to arrive at the appropriate decision-making process:

Define the nature of problem

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| a. | What is the problem that needs to be addressed?   | Currently, the IC makes decisions on the basis of the loosely defined term 'consensus'. It needs a clearly defined and widely agreed protocol for making decisions that is incorporated into its working arrangements.  |
| b. | Why does this problem need to be addressed?   | The lack of an agreed decision-making protocol potentially brings into question, and undermines, the legitimacy and authority of any decisions made by the IC.  |
| c. | Is it acceptable to drop the proposal in the case of lack of agreement, without significant detriment?  | No. If the IC is to be an efficient and effective body, it needs to have an agreed, clearly laid out decision-making protocol.  |
| d. | Is there a necessary timescale/deadline for the decision?   | At the latest, this needs to be agreed before the next in-person IC meeting in 2026.  |
| e. | Are there any legal/statutory/governance implications?  | The implications directly concern the governance of the IC (because they will form part of its working arrangements) but there are no obvious wider legal/statutory implications.   |
| f. | How great is the impact of the decision: long- or short-term effects? Does it involve a change to recognised principles or Triratna lore? Does it affect a few or many people? Might it have an impact on the unity of the Order? | <p>The impact of the decision is important to the credibility and positive reputation of the IC. It clarifies what the IC understands by the term 'consensus' which is widely but loosely used across Triratna as the basis for decision-making.</p> <p>This decision will not impact the unity of the Order.</p> <p>This decision, if effectively implemented by the IC, may be adopted and/or adapted by other Triratna institutions for their own decision-making.</p> |

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| g. | Who will the decision affect: ie who are the stakeholders? Who has already been consulted and still needs to be consulted?  | The stakeholders in this decision are current and future IC members, the three Strands, and Area Councils. So far, the IC members at the in-person meeting at Nagaloka have been consulted and their suggestions for improvements have been taken on board. The most important constituency for consultation (and agreement) is quorate Area Councils.  |
| h. | Will any further consultation take place? Who will be consulted? What will be the status of their input (advisory, co-creating etc)?  | Area councils will be consulted for their consent to adopt the recommended decision-making protocol as it stands.   |
| i. | Is it advisable to seek specialised advice? If yes, then from whom?   | There have been previous IC (and other Triratna institutional) attempts at creating decision-making protocols. Prior to the IC's online meeting exploring decision-making in 2023, Arthavadin pulled together a paper which referenced previous attempts and sought the input of those who have an interest in this topic. No further advice is needed.   |
| j. | Does the decision require consent from other bodies beyond the IC before ratification?  | No.   |
| k. | Based on the information above, what will be the minimum level of consent required for the decision to carry and be effective? (e.g. All members must agree within the range of 1-3 on the Gradient of Agreement Scale). Does the decision require the consent of all parties or will a majority vote be acceptable? If the latter, by what margin – simple majority or super-majority? Is a majority vote needed in each Area? | <p>All six <u>quorate</u> Area Councils are required to give consent within the range of 1-3 on the scale below for this recommendation to carry. If this is not achieved, a majority or supermajority vote will <u>not</u> be acceptable.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Full support - Strongly Agree: I completely accept the proposal.</li> <li>2. Moderate support - Agree - I accept the proposal.</li> <li>3. Mild support - Somewhat agree: On balance, I accept the proposal.</li> <li>4. Mild opposition - Somewhat disagree: On balance, I reject the proposal.</li> <li>5. Moderate opposition - Disagree: I reject the proposal</li> <li>6. Full opposition - Strongly disagree: I completely reject the proposal.</li> </ol> |