

Code of Conduct

For All Resident-led Panels, Groups and Forums

This is the Code of Conduct for all members and attendees of resident-led panels, groups and forums. It lays down guidelines to help members and attendees maintain the values and objectives of the Council, and to protect individuals from misunderstanding or criticism. Failure to follow this Code of Conduct may result in the withdrawal of membership of the group and/or permission to attend future meetings or forums.

1.0 General Behaviour

- 1.1 Members are required to act with honesty and integrity at all times
- 1.2 Members must behave in a polite, respectful and appropriate manner at all times
- 1.3 Members should value diversity and not discriminate against any person on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation
- 1.4 Members should not write, speak or act on behalf of the group without permission from or at the request of the Chair
- 1.5 Members should not use informal channels to influence other group members on matters of the group's business
- 1.6 Members should ensure that any expense claims are accurate and evidenced and only include expenses that were incurred in carrying out the group's role

2.0 Meetings

- 2.1 Members should come prepared for meetings, having read all relevant documents and bringing the relevant paperwork
- 2.2 Members should arrive on time for meetings and send apologies if they are going to be late or absent. Meetings should start on time
- 2.3 Members should ensure that they do not routinely miss meetings
- 2.4 Members must not attend meetings under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances

- 2.5 Members should turn off their mobile phones during meetings, except with the permission of the Chair
- 2.6 Members should listen to each other during meetings and not have 'meetings within meetings'
- 2.7 Members must follow the agenda
- 2.8 Members must not discuss any individual personal issues, or raise complaints, within a meeting unless it is to give an example that applies generally to residents
- 2.9 Members should take part in decision making and share responsibility for group decisions
- 2.10 Members must respect the role of the Chair in leading and keeping order in meetings. Anyone wishing to speak shall indicate by raising their hand and the Chair shall invite contributions
- 2.11 Members who have to leave a meeting early should do so with a minimum of disruption and having advised the Chair at the start of the meeting
- 2.12 Members should leave meeting rooms on time (unless they have permission to stay on) and leave the room clean and tidy

3.0 Obligations

- 3.1 Members should strive to ensure that positive relationships are maintained within the group, the wider body of residents and with the Council, its staff and contractors
- 3.2 Members who participate as designated representatives (e.g. of TRAs or Sheltered Housing Forums) must ensure they work in the best interests of those they represent
- 3.3 Members should strive to ensure that the Council's money and resources are not wasted
- 3.4 Members should aim to achieve value for money in all their activities and in their recommendations
- 3.5 Members should make sure their recommendations are based on evidence wherever possible

3.6 Members should make sure their recommendations aim to make improvements for residents

3.7 Members should make sure they carry out any agreed tasks within the agreed time frame

3.8 Members must attend and participate in any required or agreed training

4.0 Conflict of Interest

4.1 Members must declare any conflict of interest e.g. putting forward a recommendation that they would benefit from directly, financially or otherwise. The rest of the group will then make a decision whether the member should or shouldn't participate in any related activities. If in any doubt, the advice of the appropriate Director or the Chair should be sought

4.2 Members should ensure that any personal relationships/friendships do not adversely affect the activities of the group

4.3 Members must not use their role in the group to further personal issues or interests e.g. trying to get a repair done more quickly

5.0 Gifts and Hospitality

5.1 Members should not accept, or give, any gift or excessive hospitality from, or to, staff members, contractors or residents. Members should be aware that doing so is a criminal offence

6.0 Confidentiality

6.1 Members must keep all information they obtain through their role confidential until it is in the public domain

6.2 Members must not use any information obtained through their role for personal gain nor pass it on to others who might use it in such a way

6.3 Members must keep any non-public information or paperwork they receive in a secure place. This includes documents or information held electronically. Such paperwork should be disposed of via shredding or confidential waste disposal and not through general/household waste and recycling

Adopted July 2015

Responsibilities of the Chair

The Chair of the group has particular responsibilities and should always remember that she or he is acting on behalf of the group and not in isolation

The responsibilities of the Chair of the group include:

- 1 Ensuring efficient conduct of the group's business, both in and outside meetings
- 2 Ensuring that all group members are given the opportunity to express their views before any important decision is taken and that appropriate standards of conduct and behaviour are maintained. Any member using a meeting as a vehicle to raise complaints should be directed to the Council's complaints procedure
- 3 Establishing a constructive working relationship with, and providing support for, the Council and ensuring that the group as a whole works in constructive dialogue with the Council and its staff
- 4 Ensuring that the group receives professional advice when it is needed, either from senior staff or external sources
- 5 Representing the group on occasion
- 6 Reviewing the composition of the group and the skills of its individual members, ensuring action is taken to remedy any deficiencies
- 7 Undertaking appropriate training in order to meet their obligations as Chair

Adopted July 2015