

RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT PANEL : XXXXXX ESTATE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Purpose of the Resident Engagement Panel

Resident Engagement Panels are an important part of how Lambeth Council engages with residents affected by the estates regeneration programme. Each Resident Engagement Panel will be different depending on the each estate; however there are common factors that apply to all which are set out below. The specific details for the estate in the above title are set out on Page 7.

2. Objectives of Resident Engagement Panel

Panel objectives are:

- That the Council can give information to the Panel to enable them to understand the background to regeneration options – subject to data-protection and Freedom of Information restrictions.
- To empower residents to have their say at every step of the process
- To act as a sounding board for Council officers and Council Members so they can understand issues from a resident perspective.
- To provide feedback and where possible documented feedback from a resident prospective regarding the Council's proposals and engagement activities.
- To question the Council on its proposals, analysing all relevant documents and testing whether courses of action have been explored, providing new ideas, alternatives, plans and projects that could be considered.
- To advise on how best to engage with residents generally and with different resident groups.
- To ensure that the rights of the different groups of residents on the estate tenants, leaseholders and homeowners and potentially the more vulnerable resident groups are considered.
- To highlight issues and sensitivities arising from a resident's perspective.
- To help to identify how residents can influence processes and proposals.
- To comment on and monitor the design process from RIBA Stage A to RIBA Stage L.

The panels are not decision-making bodies within the Council structure. Nevertheless, they have an important role to play in relation to resident engagement.

While individual members of the panels may not always agree with formal Council decisions to regenerate an estate, the role of the Panel is to consider how those decisions have been properly reached and how they will be executed in the best interests of current and future residents.

Panel meetings should provide a positive environment, which encourages attendance and participation at meetings, and promotes discussion by all its members. This does not preclude members from disagreeing with issues, but it does require that discussions (particularly controversial ones) be conducted in manner so that members feel comfortable presenting a different view to the group.

Appendix 1 MEMBERSHIP & ROLES

1. Membership of the panels will vary for different estates. However, the following principles should apply to membership of all Panels:

- Membership of the Panel should be representative of the different groups living on an estate (tenants, resident leaseholders and resident freeholders) and, where applicable, any other major group of residents.
- The Panel should be represented in proportion to the different tenure groups on the estate; and where a number of representatives of tenants and leaseholders has been agreed, any vacant positions must be filled by a resident from that tenure – ensuring that both tenant and leasehold interests are considered.
- Panels will also consist of Councillors and Council officers, including officers from the estate regeneration team and housing management.
- The Chair of the panel can be selected by majority election from the members of the panel and could be a resident, a Council Officer, a Council Member or an independent person - so long as they have a recognisable interest in the local area.
- Panels should identify a normal deputy for the Chair, on occasions when the elected Chair is unable to be present.
- If the Panel identify issues affecting a particular group of residents, the Panel may form sub-groups, with all the interests represented, and invite other residents to participate in such sub-groups. These subgroups should be formed in agreement with all the members of the Panel. Invitations for other attendees should be agreed with Panel members at a prior meeting
- Other attendees will be invited to participate in Panel meetings from time-to-time, including consultants working for the Council, other local stakeholders and external advisors in order to make meetings more productive. Invitations for other attendees should be agreed with Panel members at a prior meeting.
- Panel members may nominate a stand-in for themselves, on the following conditions:
 - they notify the Chair and Council officers administering the Panel at least a week in advance of a meeting;
 - they notify their stand-in of this Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct; and,
 - any breach of the Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct by the stand-in will reflect on themselves.

2. Role and Responsibility of the Chair and Panel Members

2.1 The Role and Responsibilities of the Chair are as follows:

- To act in an open and impartial manner, ensuring that the principles of the Code of Conduct (Appendix 2) are met at all times.
- To attend the Panel meetings, where failure to attend three in a row will result in an election of a new Chair.
- To ensure the Council organises the meeting for the day chosen by the Panel on the previous meeting.

- To be involved in the preparation of the Minutes and the Agenda for the next meeting.
- To conduct the business of the meeting in a fair, open and transparent manner and to encourage a forum that allows members to speak without criticism or judgement.
- To represent the Panel on other bodies as agreed by the panel as a whole.
- As appropriate, to liaise with Council officers to ensure the panel meetings are able to function and meet the overall purpose of the project.
- To ensure that members of the Panel keep to an agenda and only considering new items if they are deemed to be urgent.
- To ensure all the actions and resolutions agreed during the meeting are fulfilled inside the given period of time. (Where this hasn't been possible formal notification and reasons have to be given for any delay).
- To ensure all the documents requested are provided to the Panel in the agreed timeframe.
- Wherever possible, to ensure that each discussion has an end-point – whether it be a resolution; a commitment to undertake; or a deferral to a subsequent meeting; or the like.
- To ensure the meeting runs to time and to provide a reasonable amount of time for the discussion of items identified on the agenda (generally 10 to 15 minutes per item).
- To extend the meeting time if important subjects are still being considered or have yet not being discussed, subject to representation from different interests being available.
- To allow speakers to read reports, address matters arising, or new business in full, without interjection from the floor, unless otherwise sought by the speaker.

2.2 The Role and Responsibilities of Panel Members are as follows:

- To attend or to nominate another to attend (see nomination criteria above) the Panel group meetings and associated meetings as agreed by the Panel, where failure to attend three panel meetings in a row may result in membership being withdrawn and invitations for a replacement member to be requested.
- To represent the Panel on other bodies as agreed by the Panel.
- To act as impartial and objective resident representatives, recognising that those who they represent will not all be in the same circumstances nor be of the same opinion.
- To feedback to other residents, presenting factual and accurate information.

3. Organisation and Administration of Meetings

The organisation and administration of the meetings will be carried out by the Council.
The Council will:

Before the meeting:

- Make sure the meeting has a clear purpose/aim and arrange the meeting at a time that is convenient to as many people as possible.
- Organise the meeting on the day the Panel has agreed and liaise with the Chair to prepare the Agenda and Minutes.
- Give suitable period of notice and inform people of the agenda.

- Arrange a comfortable, accessible venue.
- Try not to change the date, but advise everyone if a change is necessary.
- To provide refreshments, if required.

At the meeting:

- Help to make sure the meeting is chaired properly and advise attendees of ground rules, the code of conduct or rules for meetings.
- Record minutes of the meeting, ensuring in particular that the following are recorded:
 - Panel-wide observations or where there is no agreement setting out the different opinions;
 - votes on general issues (whether by show of hands or secret ballot);
 - agreed actions;
 - agreed recommendations.
- record important questions and answers
- Provide documents requested by the panel within a 14 day timeframe. Where this will not be possible, the Council and/or Residents should explain why.
- Agree a date and time for the next meeting.

After the meeting:

- The Council will take the formal minutes of the meeting recording the general Panel positions, outcome and agreed action points – these are not a verbatim record of the meeting and but will recall relevant points of a discussion, statements and, information exchanged . The minutes recorded by the Council must be agreed at the next Panel meeting... Circulate draft minutes to everyone who attended within agreed timescales and make them available to other panel members who did not attend.
- Review how the meeting went and raise any issues and concerns to members.
- Consider items to be discussed at future meetings.

Once minutes have been approved by the Panel at a subsequent meeting, then they will be publicised and posted on the project website.

4. Training of Panel Members

The Council will also identify with the Residents what skills Panel members would like to develop to enable them to contribute better to Panel meetings and help to make this happen, whether it be through training, mentoring, shadowing or on-going support to build their capacity.

Appendix 2 CODE OF CONDUCT

A Code of Conduct has been developed under the Lambeth Residents Compact, (agreed by Tenant and Leaseholder Councils) which details the standards expected of residents, officers, councillors and anyone else that attends meetings or otherwise take part in resident involvement. The Code of Conduct is as follows:

Attendees MUST:

- attend panel meetings;
- act in a courteous manner, maintain a balance of mutual respect and act in a way that is fair and unbiased;
- ensure that other attendees can take part without interruption or intimidation and treat all other group members equally;
- ensure that no discrimination of any kind takes place within the rules laid down in the constitution, where one is provided;
- be clear and honest about whether they are giving a personal view or the views of the organisation or wider group that they represent; and,
- declare any conflicts of interest.

Attendees MUST NOT:

- act or speak in a way that may be perceived as bullying, abusive or derogatory;
- discuss identifiable individuals, individual circumstances or disclose confidential information regarding individual and/or personal cases;
- prevent anyone getting information that they are entitled to;
- attempt to dominate the meetings for their purpose or the purpose of other groups or organisations they are representing;
- speak or write on behalf of the panel without the prior agreement of the group;
- any correspondence sent on behalf of the panel should be agreed in advance by the panel and copies provided to all panel Members; and,
- make audio and visual recordings of meetings without the consent of all present.

Failure to work within the principles of the Code of Conduct is considered under item 7 below.

In addition to the above, panel members MUST:

- adhere to Councils commitment to equality and diversity; and
- not attribute (verbally, in writing or on social media) the specific comments made by panel Members to any others outside the panel, other than those comments that are formally recorded in the official minutes of the meeting.

Raising Issues and Concerns

Below is a process by which concerns can be considered if a panel member's behaviour has compromised the principles of the Code of Conduct - above.

- In the first instance, it is recommended that any cause for concern is raised informally and verbally with the Chair and/or Council officers (or Councillor, as appropriate).

- The complainant can then raise the concern/complaint in writing, outlining the reasons and examples of the basis of the issue.
- The written concern or complaint is then formally presented to the Chair and Council officers.
- The Chair and/or Council officers will discuss the issue with the individual(s), against whom the complaint is made, in order to reach a resolution.
- If it is not possible to reach a resolution the individual may be asked to resign from the panel.
- The panel will be asked to consider withdrawal of membership.

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