



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITIES GROUP

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Neighbourhood and Communities Groups purpose is to work in partnership with the Housing Service to monitor and review the Housing Management service that all tenants and license holders receive.

2. Duties and responsibilities

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood and Communities Group must work in accordance with all Tenant Involvement policies and procedures and all Wokingham Borough Council policies and procedures in relation to Housing Management.

3. The specific remit of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group will be:

- To review monthly performance in regards to anti-social behaviour, complaints and compliments (Housing Management specific), rents, mutual exchanges, tenancy sustainment, unauthorised encampments, voids and walkabouts
- To be involved and make suggestions on housing management policy reviews
- To appraise neighbourhood management and community issues
- To help organise walkabouts and neighbourhood events
- To work in partnership with the Housing Service to respond to any changes in national or local policy and governance, in relation to housing management
- To be involved in the interviews of new staff

4. Meeting frequency

- 4.1 The Neighbourhood and Communities Group will meet formally on a monthly basis.

5. Membership

- 5.1 The Neighbourhood and Communities Group is free to select its own membership, however, the core group will be:

- Involved Tenants – these will be self-selecting based on an individual's interest in joining the group
- Officers from Wokingham Borough Council to include the Housing Manager, Tenant Involvement Manager and any other invited officers as required

5.2 At the Chairpersons discretion, a person or organisation may attend to observe the Neighbourhood and Communities Group. The meetings are not public meetings.

6. Appointment of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

6.1 When required, the appointment of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson will be held after the Annual General Meeting. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson will be in position for a maximum of 3 years plus 3 months (this will ensure that there is a hand over period between the old and new Chairperson and / or Vice Chairperson). It is possible for an individual to be elected as Chairperson or Vice Chairperson more than once.

6.2 These posts are not open to staff.

7. The Neighbourhood and Communities Group Chairperson will:

- Plan each meeting effectively, ensuring they are run in accordance with the Terms of Reference and that matters are dealt with in an orderly, efficient manner
- Ensure all members of the group have an equal opportunity to participate
- Ensure that minutes of any formal meeting are agreed and sent to the members of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group within ten working days of the end of the meeting
- Ensure that the members of the group are updated (where appropriate) of matters which may affect them
- Be the main representation for the Neighbourhood and Communities Group at meetings, events, conferences etc
- Take any urgent business if agreed outside of the meeting but should update the panel at the next available meeting
- Be a member of the Tenant and Landlord Improvement Panel

8. The Vice Chairperson will:

- Act as Chairperson during periods of sickness, holiday or other unforeseen circumstances
- Represent the Neighbourhood and Communities Group at meetings if the Chairperson is unable to attend

9. Election Process for the Chairperson – when election is due

9.1 The election process is:

- After the Annual General Meeting, Involved Tenants on the group will be invited to submit their self-nomination as Chairperson of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group
- The candidates will be asked by the Tenant Involvement Team to submit some supporting details as to why they feel they would be a suitable candidate
- All nominations will be collated by the Tenant Involvement Team
- If there is only one candidate, this person will be notified and will be elected into position at the next Neighbourhood and Communities Group. The formalities of this will be undertaken by a member of the Tenant Involvement Team
- In the event of there being more than one candidate, an election will take place
- Ballot papers will be distributed to all members of the group for them to cast their vote
- All votes will be counted and verified by the Tenant Involvement Team
- The winner will be notified and duly elected at the next Neighbourhood and Communities Group
- In the event of there being a tie, there will be a ballot distributed to the tenant members of the Tenant and Landlord Improvement Panel. As above, following the ballot the elected person will be notified and elected in at the next Neighbourhood and Communities Group

10. Election Process for Vice Chairperson – when election is due

10.1 The election process is:

- Members of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group will be invited to submit their self-nomination as Vice Chairperson
- The candidates will be asked by the Tenant Involvement Team to submit some supporting details as to why they feel they would be a suitable candidate
- All nominations will be collated by the Tenant Involvement Team
- If there is only one candidate, this person will be notified and will be elected into position at the next Neighbourhood and Communities Group. The formalities of this will be undertaken by a Chairperson of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group
- In the event of there being more than one candidate, an election will take place
- Ballot papers will be distributed to all members of the group for them to cast their vote
- All votes will be counted and verified by the Tenant Involvement Team
- The winner will be notified and duly elected at the next Neighbourhood and Communities Group

- In the event of a tie, the Chairperson of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group will have the casting vote
- 10.2 In the event of the Chairperson stepping down, the Vice Chairperson will carry out the position on an interim basis until a new Chairperson is elected. If there is no Vice Chairperson, the Neighbourhood and Communities Group is free to nominate an interim Chairperson from its current membership, until a new Chairperson is elected.

11. Responsibilities of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group members

11.1 Each member of the group is responsible for:

- Adhering to the Terms of Reference of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group
- Keeping any protected information or material received whilst attending a Communications Group meeting confidential. This information may be from other group members, Involvement Tenants or be contained within reports or minutes of meetings.
- Ensuring all members of the group are treated fairly and with respect
- Providing feedback on any action they have been given by the Chairperson of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group
- To promote the work of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group and be proactive in encouraging new members to join Tenant Involvement

12. Administration and support

12.1 Administration and support of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group will be undertaken by the Tenant Involvement Team.

13. Circulation of minutes and other documents

13.1 Any papers for a meeting will be circulated to all members of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group at least 5 working days in advance of meetings.

13.2 Any formal minutes will be publicised on the Wokingham Borough Council website.

14. Training and Development

14.1 Members of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group will be offered and encouraged to take part in training on a regular basis to ensure that they are sufficiently capable of carrying out the work required of them.

14.2 The Chair of the Tenant and Landlord Improvement Panel and the Tenant Involvement Manager also offer 1-2-1 with each member of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group. The purpose of these meetings is:

- An informal discussion between the Chair of the Tenant and Landlord Improvement, a group member and the Tenant Involvement Manager
- An opportunity to highlight and praise any successes
- An opportunity to discuss current and future work priorities
- An opportunity to identify any support, advice or guidance
- An opportunity to identify any additional training
- To identify any continuous improvement opportunities

15. Review of the Terms of Reference

15.1 A review of the Terms of Reference will be conducted on an annual basis following the Annual General Meeting.