

Constitution For The Dartford Borough Council Tenants & Leaseholders' Forum

Name of The Organisation

The name of the group shall be **The Dartford Borough Council's Tenants & Leaseholders' Forum**. For the purpose of this document it will be referred to as 'the Forum'. Tenants and Leaseholders will be jointly referred to as 'Tenants'.

Aims

To develop our ability to work as a group to make our voices heard by the Council.

To raise issues of mutual interest to tenants and the Council and to contribute to their successful resolution.

To make comments on issues raised by the Council and for the Council to report back to the Forum on where those comments go to and what changes as a result.

To closely monitor the Housing Departments service performance on Repairs, Heating Servicing, Window Cleaning, Street Scenes, Anti Social Behaviour, Enforcement of Tenancy Conditions and Voids Turnaround Times. Forum will send an officer to the Best Value Review Committee. This list is not exhaustive.

To promote more ethnic minority involvement in the Forum, to defend the principal of Equal Opportunities and generally to make the Forum representative of people in the borough.

Membership

Any Tenant or Leaseholder of Dartford Borough Council (DBC) can become a member of the Forum.

Quorum

The minimum combined number of tenants and leaseholders who need to be available before a meeting can take place shall be **eight**.

Changes to the Constitution

The constitution can only be altered at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) or at an extra ordinary meeting called for that purpose.

Any suggested changes to the constitution must be received by the Tenant Participation Officer or Assistant no later than twenty one days before the AGM.

Changes to the constitution must be agreed by two thirds of the members present at the meeting. **Changes must not conflict with the terms and aims of the DBC Tenants' Participation Compact.**

Voting

No more than two members of any household shall be eligible to vote at any given meeting.

In the event of a tied vote, the Chair shall have the casting vote.

Annual General Meeting

An AGM should take place once a year (not being more than thirteen months after the date of the preceding AGM).

Not less than fourteen days notice of the AGM shall be given to all members.

A representative of DBC must be invited to attend the AGM.

AGM Business

The AGM business shall include:

Report from the Chair

Report from a Best Value Officer

Report from Monitors of Council contracts

The Chair stands down

An Officer from DBC shall preside over the election of the Chair

The Chair shall preside over the election of Officers

Any other business at the discretion of the Chair

The minutes of the AGM shall be submitted to DBC together with the names and address of the Forums' Officers.

Behaviour At Meetings

Rules for speaking at meetings:

- a. All contributions must go via the Chair.
- b. Members must adhere to the agreed agenda
- c. Members must respect requests for confidentiality
- d. Any disagreements will be resolved amicably
- e. The Chair has the ability to rule out of order any member who....
 - Uses offensive language or makes personal remarks.
 - Attempts to interrupt or intimidate another member.
 - Tries to undermine or frustrate decisions, which Forum has already made.
- f. Any repetition of the above behaviour during a meeting may result in that person being asked to leave, by the Chair.

The same standard of behaviour should apply when members of Forum are communicating with Councillors, Council Officers or representatives of any agencies. Forum expects this to be reciprocated.

The Organisation of Meetings

There must be a minimum of six meetings per annum.

Length of time devoted to each agenda item will be at the Chair's discretion

At each Forum, arrangements for refreshments and tidying up afterwards will be agreed.

The Chair is responsible for organising/approving agenda and guests.

The standard layout of the agenda will be as follows:

Present

Apologies

Minutes From Previous Meeting

Matters Arising

Correspondence

Reporting Back from Contract Monitoring & Best Value Review Officer

Any Other Business

Date and Time of Next Meeting

Each Forum will be minuted and be a true and accurate record of that meeting. Minutes will be taken by the Forum Secretary or agreed deputy. The minutes will be distributed direct to members along with the agenda for the next meeting.

Any proposals should be seconded and voted upon and this shall be the method for reaching decisions.

Members who are monitoring Council contracts should report to each meeting of the Forum, either in person or in writing.

Any officer who misses three consecutive meetings without an apology, which is acceptable to the Forum, will lose his or her status.

Outside Meetings

Names and addresses of members will not be distributed outside of the Forum without express permission of that member.

Tenants who cannot attend the meeting can make contact via the Tenant Participation Officer, Tenant Participation Assistant or any Forum member.