

Resident Board Member Code of Conduct

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- **Reviewed by:** Tosin Adewumi (Interim Resident Engagement Manager)
- **Approved by:** Tony Turnbull (Neighbourhood Manager) **Date Approved:** 28 June 2024

This Code of Conduct provides a set of guidelines that all members of the Resident Board agree to adhere to whenever they are carrying out their role. Acceptance of the role offered assumes acceptance of these guidelines. This document should be read in conjunction with the terms of reference and role profile for Resident Board membership.

1. General

1.1 All Board Members will:

- Promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully or otherwise against any person.
- Treat others with respect.
- Work for the benefit of all residents, setting aside personal interests.
- Not use their position as a Resident Board member to gain or seek undue favour, influence or benefit.
- Attend at least six Resident Board meetings during any 12-month period.
- Continue to meet the eligibility criteria for Board membership.

2. Confidentiality

2.1 The business of the Board may involve dealing with issues, which are controversial, sensitive or confidential in nature. Members of the Board must therefore, exercise discretion and care in performing their duties. Any confidential information that is presented to or discussed by the Board must not be disclosed to anyone apart from members of the group to allow the business of the meeting to take place.

2.2 Members of the Board should never disclose or use information they have received by virtue of their membership of the Board for their own personal advantage or that of anyone known to them or to the disadvantage or discredit of the Council or anyone else.

2.3 Board members should also respect all individual tenants' confidentiality and should refrain from mentioning specific matters, which may cause embarrassment or the identification of any individual. Prior consent should be obtained from any tenant if it is necessary to make a personal reference to them at any meeting.

2.4 Personal information volunteered during any meetings or training sessions must remain confidential.#



2.5 Members of the Board shall ensure that all paperwork provided to them in connection with this membership should be kept in a secure place and returned to the Council when they cease to be a Board member.

3. Conflicts of Interest

3.1 Board members must ensure that private or personal financial interests never influence their decisions and never use their position for personal gain of any sort.

3.2 They should disclose to the Council's Resident Involvement Manager and Chair, any direct or indirect financial interest or other interest that could influence their judgement or give the impression that the member is acting for personal motives.

3.3 Withdraw from any discussion at a meeting in which the member could be seen to have an interest. If, during a meeting, an item arises in which a member could be regarded as having an interest, they must declare an interest and offer to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of that item.

3.4 If asked by the Board to remain, they must not participate in any discussion or voting, unless permitted to do so by agreement of the group.

3.5 Members should not gain any special advantage by virtue of their membership if they use the services of a consultant, contractor, professional advisor or other individual or firm employed by Slough Borough Council.

4. General Conduct

4.1 Be considerate. You are working with others as a team so be considerate of how your actions or contribution affects your colleagues and the community.

4.2 Be respectful. Treat one another and members of the community with respect and consideration. Members should recognise and respect that some may have more time to participate than others and that all members can make a valuable contribution to the Board.

4.3 Be collaborative. When you disagree, consult others. When you are unsure, ask for help. Nobody knows everything and nor are you expected to be perfect. Asking questions can avoid many problems in the future and so questions are encouraged. If you are, asked for help, you should be responsive and helpful.

4.4 Be available. Check your e-mails regularly and answer them promptly - even if it is just to say when you will be able to respond fully.

4.5 Be honest. Sometimes the hardest thing to say is "no" or admit you have forgotten to do something. Be honest with each other and yourself concerning what you say and what you can realistically commit to.

4.6 Be tolerant. Differences of opinion are bound to occur from time to time and members should recognise this and respect the differing views. Be prepared to talk the differences through and accept majority decisions made after discussion. Disagreement is no excuse for poor behaviour or poor manners.

5. Conduct of/at meetings (Ground Rules)

5.1 For Board meetings to be conducted effectively and, in recognition that members are giving their time on a voluntary basis, the following 'Ground Rules' will apply:

- Read meeting papers before the meeting and bring all relevant papers to the meeting.
- Aim to arrive in good time for the start of the meeting.
- Meetings should start on time and finish at the specified time unless the meeting agrees to carry on.
- Late arrivals should enter quietly and not interrupt the meeting with apologies.
- Put mobile phones on silent and if a call is expected due to emergency during the meeting, inform chair at the start of meeting.
- If you need to leave before the finish of a meeting, inform the Chair at the start.
- Speak through the Chair do not interrupt or talk over others and keep to the agenda.
- Follow the guidance of the Chair in the conduct of the meeting.
- Follow the agenda and help each other reach effective solutions and decisions to the issues being discussed.
- Members are there to give their own views and are not representing the views of others.
- Remember that the purpose of the meeting is to benefit residents generally and not specific individuals.
- Respect the views and opinions of other members (even though they may differ from your own views)
- Be courteous and allow each other the opportunity to speak and comment.
- Respect the collective decisions made at meetings.
- Focus on issues and not individuals – do not personalise issues.
- Do not hold side conversations whilst the meeting is in progress.
- You can disagree without being disagreeable – behaviour and language that is deemed offensive or abusive to others is unacceptable.
- Avoid jargon and explain acronyms.
- Do not record meetings or any part of meeting using any audio/video devices without the full consent of all present
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect

6. Attendance

6.1 Members of the Board should make every effort to attend meetings and to send apologies in advance of the meeting to the Chair and the Resident Involvement team via



email if they are unable to attend. A Board member's attendance will form part of the annual appraisal process.

6.2 People on every project come and go and the Board is no different. When members leave or disengage from the Board, in whole or in part, they should do so in a manner that minimises disruption to the group. This means they should inform the Resident Involvement team (ideally a month's notice) they are leaving and take the proper steps to ensure that others can pick up where they leave off including all paperwork in their possession and briefing, where appropriate, those who will take over from them.

7. Residents' concerns

The nature of being a resident committee member means it is likely that members will occasionally be approached by other residents and asked to represent or be involved in, individual concerns.

It is crucial that committee members recognise the need to behave impartially, and not to get involved in detailed operational matters except where it is relevant for them to do so.

In dealing with matters raised by individual residents therefore, Board members should operate as follows:

- Encourage the enquirer to approach the relevant staff member or team.
- Never take sides with the enquirer – there are always two sides to a story.
- Do not get involved with any lobbying for allocations or transfers.
- On complaints about service, encourage the enquirer to raise the matter through the Council's Complaints Procedure.
- If the enquirer raises issues about Council policies, raise the policy issue at a Board meeting or with a member of staff for discussion.
- If you are uncertain how to proceed, contact a member of the local staff team or the Chair of the Board.

8. Breaches of the Code of Conduct

8.1 If a member breaches the Code of Conduct at a Board meeting, the Chair may warn him/her that, if they break the code again, they may be asked to leave the meeting. If the member continues to breach the Code of Conduct the Chair may ask the meeting to vote on whether the member should be asked to leave the meeting.

8.2 Should an issue arise, which means that an existing Board member does not meet the eligibility criteria for Board membership, the council (SBC) may notify the Board Chair that the member is to be suspended or removed from the Board.

8.3 SBC will require suspension if a Board member is being prosecuted by SBC for Anti-Social Behaviour or other legal action where SBC believe that the Board member could not effectively carry out duties commensurate with the role for the duration of the prosecution. The instruction will come from the Service Lead to the Chair of the Board. Suspension should be considered a neutral act and does not imply any judgement about the legal case.

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8.4 Any decisions regarding disciplinary and suspension of the Chair of the Board will be made by the Service Lead with input from board members.

8.5 The Board member may be offered reinstatement to the Board if the prosecution is determined in their favour. If the prosecution is found in SBC's favour, the Service Lead may require the Board member to step down.

8.6 Any other complaints about breaches of the Code of Conduct will be referred to the Chair and Resident Involvement Manager who will investigate and decide whether to recommend that the member should be issued with a warning or whether their membership of the Board should be revoked.

8.7 Any such warnings or proposal to end the person's membership of the Board shall be referred to the next Board meeting for decision and the member will be able to present their own case at that Board meeting.

8.8 Should board member or chair wish to appeal any decisions they have the right to appeal to the Director of Housing within a month of the decision.

I agree to comply with this Code of Conduct.

Name:

Date:

Signed by: