



## **LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN TENANT & LEASEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The aim of this Code is to help those tenants and leaseholders who engage with the Council about how we manage their homes to get the most out of their voluntary efforts.
- 1.2 This code sets out the behaviours we expect of all tenants and leaseholders involved in our formal and informal engagement activities; including but not exclusive to:
  - Tenant & Resident Associations
  - District Management Committees
  - Sheltered scheme and Forum meetings
  - Fire Safety & Compliance Advisory Panel
  - Housing Security Monitoring Panel
  - Focus Groups
  - Works group meetings
- 1.3 It covers expected standards of behaviour when participating in resident involvement activities, both in at and outside of formal meetings.
- 1.4 The chair of any meeting is responsible for enforcing this Code of Conduct, with the support of the other people present. For other tenant and leaseholder engagement activities, the organiser or staff member will be responsible for enforcing this Code. If the Chair breaks the code, the vice-chair or any other member can call the Chair to account under this code of conduct.
- 1.5 To be recognised and supported by Camden Council, tenants and residents' groups must abide by this Code.

### **2 CHAIRING CODE**

The Chair should:

- 2.1 Consult members in advance on the content of agendas.
- 2.2 Run the meeting in accordance with the rules of the group.
- 2.3 Encourage and allow all to participate during meetings.

- 2.4 Sum up at the end of each discussion/agenda item.
- 2.5 Appropriately manage the agenda and timing of meetings.
- 2.6 Take appropriate action in cases where there is a breach of this Code of Conduct.

### **3 PERSONAL CONDUCT FOR THOSE TAKING PART BEFORE MEETINGS**

- 3.1 Send apologies by the time the agenda appears if you cannot come.
- 3.2 Read the papers and bring them to the meeting.
- 3.3 Arrive by the time the meeting is due to start.
- 3.4 Switch off or silence mobile telephones and similar devices.

### **4 PERSONAL CONDUCT FOR THOSE TAKING PART DURING MEETINGS**

- 4.1 Treat people with dignity and respect and always demonstrate good manners.
- 4.2 Do not record the meeting unless the meeting allows you to do so.
- 4.3 Declare any specific interest you might have in any item which would affect your views on it.
- 4.4 Do not disturb the meeting by conversations with other individuals.
- 4.5 Seek permission to speak from the Chair.
- 4.6 Co-operate with the Chair in dealing with the business and keeping to the agenda and time available for the meeting/ agenda items.
- 4.7 Do not interrupt others when they are speaking and value their contributions.
- 4.8 Refrain from behaviour which others could perceive as aggressive, racist, sexist, abusive, defamatory or otherwise offensive.
- 4.9 Avoid what could be seen as party political speeches.
- 4.10 Speak to the agenda item being considered, concisely and to the point.
- 4.11 Listen to other views and not dominate discussions.
- 4.12 Do not use a position as a representative to seek preferential treatment for yourself, your family or particular friends.
- 4.13 Seek a consensus acceptable to the meeting wherever possible.

- 4.14 Respect votes if they are taken.
- 4.15 Ensure that confidentiality is always maintained in relation to matters of a personal or sensitive nature, or anything which has been shared in confidence.

## **5 PERSONAL CONDUCT FOR THOSE TAKING PART BETWEEN MEETINGS**

- 5.1 Do not claim to represent a group or Camden Council tenants and leaseholders, unless specifically sanctioned do so by the group itself.
- 5.2 Do not seek preferential treatment by virtue of status as a representative.
- 5.3 Respect the privacy of contributions others make to the meeting.
- 5.4 Do nothing to those who attended (or later via social media) which could be seen as bullying or harassment, as defamatory or as anti-social behaviour.
- 5.5 Attend training or other events signed up to, unless there are unavoidable circumstances, in which case the Chair or Camden Council should be informed immediately.
- 5.6 Use email and social media appropriately.

## **6 BREACHES OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT**

- 6.1 All members of the group or activity are responsible for abiding by the Code of Conduct and helping to ensure that others do so.
- 6.2 On becoming aware of a breach, the Chair will notify a meeting and issue a warning.
- 6.3 If a meeting is getting heated a five-minute time out can be called at the discretion of the Chair (who may consult the lead Housing Officer present). Any member of the group can suggest this option to the Chair.
- 6.4 Group members or Council representatives attending a meeting who believe the Code is being breached may ask the Chair to propose to the meeting that:
- It moves to next business (abandons the debate completely); or
  - The debate stops and a vote is held on a resolution to be defined.

This resolution might be:

- That *a person or persons* be no longer heard (that the named individual(s) takes no further part in the debate); or
- That the meeting breaks for five minutes (to allow for private discussion to resolve an issue).

- The Chair will then seek a seconder for the proposal.
- If the motion is seconded it is put to a vote without debate and by secret ballot unless all are content to vote openly; the decision is then implemented with no further discussion of it.

6.5 The Chair may also ask an individual to leave and (on Council premises) seek Security assistance if required.

6.6 Where a meeting is online, the Chair may ask the host to mute or remove a participant from a meeting.

## **7 ROLE OF THE COUNCIL DURING A MEETING**

7.1 Where staff are present at meetings chaired by a resident where serious or persistent breaches of the code of conduct occur, the role of the Council is to:

- Provide advice and support to a Chair/ group in taking its own action where appropriate;
- step in in cases where personal conduct of a member (or members) breaches the code and the Chair's instructions are not respected or the Chair does not take appropriate action when breaches occur. Action would include stepping in to remind perpetrators to abide by the Code of Conduct or muting those involved if online and where problems persist;

and where meetings become seriously disruptive due to the behaviour of participants;

- advise the Chair to bring forward a motion, asking voting participants to take immediate action to sanction the individual(s) responsible; or agree that they should be removed from a meeting (if online); or ask a member or members to leave the meeting; or suspend / end a meeting.

7.2 Should officer advice not be followed and inappropriate behaviour persists or the perpetrator(s) refuse to comply with instructions, the lead officer may after first issuing a warning, announce that all staff in attendance will leave the meeting and ask the Chair to close the meeting immediately.

## **8 ROLE OF THE COUNCIL AFTER A MEETING**

8.1 Following a meeting where breaches of the Code of Conduct have occurred in the presence of staff, the following action may be considered appropriate:

- Advice to the Chair on how an organisation might take its own action against the perpetrators.
- Notify other resident bodies represented by those breaching the code of conduct and ask them to take their own action in response to their member's behaviour.

- Writing to / speaking to perpetrators directly.
- Exploring training and mediation as options if appropriate.
- A suspension or ban on engagement activity of individual's or their organisations.

8.2 In very serious cases, the Council will investigate and take further action. This action could include:

- Action against the tenancy or lease should the behaviour of an individual(s) result in a breach; and / or
- A referral to the Police should a crime have been committed.

## **9 ABOUT THIS CODE OF CONDUCT**

9.1 Further information or advice about this Code of Conduct can be obtained from the Council's Tenant Participation Service

Tenant Participation Service  
Town Hall, Judd Street, London, WC1H 9JE  
[TP@camden.gov.uk](mailto:TP@camden.gov.uk)

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