

## **RESIDENTS' FORUMS TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **1. PURPOSE**

The Residents' Forums ("the Forums") are part of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's ("the Council") governance arrangements that exist to provide assurances that there are robust structures, processes and accountabilities in place for engagement with local people around the decisions and decision-making processes of the Council.

### **2. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Terms of Reference of the Forums are as follows:

- 2.1. To enable local residents to oversee, scrutinise and hold the Council to account regarding its decisions and decision-making.
- 2.2. To provide a conduit between the Council and the local community.
- 2.3. To ensure that positive engagement with the wider community is undertaken to gather information and views and inform decisions.
- 2.4. To offer practical advice and support to new projects where community engagement is required.
- 2.5. To highlight areas of concern raised by the wider community and enable potential need for change, where appropriate.
- 2.6. To listen to, discuss and suggest new proposals and changes that are required.
- 2.7. To ensure that any proposals and/or decisions regarding Council services, service change or redevelopment etc. have had appropriate community involvement.
- 2.8. To support the Council's arrangements for compliance with equality and diversity requirements in all engagement activities.

### **3. MEMBERSHIP & PARTICIPATION**

- 3.1. Membership of the Forums is primarily intended for residents, constituted groups and people who work or have businesses within the area which the Forum represents.
- 3.2. The Forum will be an open and accessible platform for community participation and the opportunity for all Forum members to present and share their views individually or collectively.
- 3.3. To achieve the broadest possible levels of participation, the Council will make best use of its various communication channels to promote the Forum meetings.

### **4. THE CHAIR, MEETING FORMAT & VOTING**

- 4.1. The Residents' Forums will be chaired by an elected-Member appointed by the Council at its Annual General Meeting for each ensuing municipal year.

- 4.2. The Forum meetings will take the format of an informal discussion led by and through the Chair.
- 4.3. Where an item requires approval by way of a vote, that vote will be by a show of hands.
- 4.4. Any vote will be determined by a simple majority of those Forum members present and entitled to vote.
- 4.5. Elected-Members will not be entitled to vote on any item at Forum meetings.
- 4.6. Decisions of the Forums will be advisory only and not binding on the Council.

## **5. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT & CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

- 5.1. Where any member of the Forum believes that he or she has a conflict of interest in relation to one or more agenda items, he or she must declare this at the meeting and in advance of the agenda item being discussed.
- 5.2. It will be responsibility of the Chair to decide in his or her ultimate discretion how to manage the conflict and decide upon an appropriate course of action.

## **6. FREQUENCY, DURATION & VENUE OF MEETINGS**

- 6.1. The Residents' Forums will meet quarterly.
- 6.2. Forum meetings will be scheduled to last for no longer than two hours, with any extension to the duration of the meeting to be decided at the Chair's discretion.
- 6.3. The dates, times and venues for Forum meetings will be planned for the municipal year ahead and will endeavour to be as accommodating as reasonably possible to maximise the opportunity for participation for all.

## **7. AGENDA-SETTING, MINUTES & REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS**

- 7.1. The Community Engagement Officer will provide administrative support to the Forums and be responsible for the preparation and circulation of meeting agendas, minutes and any other resources as necessary.
- 7.2. The items of the agenda will be determined by the Chair having due regard to any specific requests made by members of the Forum raised at or before meetings.
- 7.3. The minutes will contain a brief summary of the discussions held at Forum meetings and a record of any action points raised and the outcome of any vote taken.
- 7.4. The consideration of the minutes of previous Forum meetings will be limited to points of any factual or typographical inaccuracies within the text as written only.
- 7.5. A 'matters arising' item will be included on the agenda for Forum meetings to facilitate any further and necessary discussion on minutes of previous meetings.
- 7.6. The minutes of the Residents' Forums will be reported to the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Development Committee for information.