

## **RESIDENTS' WORKING GROUP: MARCH – JUNE 2019**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Wandsworth Borough Council is committed to involving residents in the management of its social housing stock meaningfully and at a level of their choosing. The Council is undertaking a review of its current participation structures to ensure these are effective and meet the needs of residents. A group of resident representatives have been recruited to help the Council with this review and make recommendations. The group will examine all aspects of the Council's current participation structure, relevant constitutions and opportunities to further encourage residents to get involved with decisions about their housing.

The purpose of the Residents' Working Group (RWG) is to:

- Consider all aspects of the Council's resident participation structures including:
  - **Overall participation structure**
  - **Constitutions and formal structures** (e.g. Residents' Associations, Area Housing Panel, Borough Residents' Forum.)
  - **Informal participation routes and encouraging participation** (e.g. Housing Community Champions, estate walkabouts.)
  - **Performance reporting and communications**
- Consider how the Council can address matters raised in the Government's Social Housing Green Paper.
- Consider how the Council can enhance the opportunities for resident participation at different levels.
- Look at examples of best practice in the social housing sector relating to resident involvement.
- Build upon the work of the RWG in 2015 and consider whether any recommendations need to be revisited.

### **Objectives**

- To review the Council's participation structures with a focus on empowering residents to get involved.
- To develop a Resident Participation Strategy to meet the needs and aspirations of residents.

### **Membership**

The RWG will consist of one tenant and one leaseholder representative from each of the Area Housing Panels (AHPs), one representative from the Co-op Forum and the two co-vice chairs of the Borough Residents' Forum (BRF). The following Council officers will attend the RWG: Head of Policy and Performance, Policy and Performance Officer, Head of Operations, Resident Participation Officer. As appropriate, the RWG may appoint additional representatives, either residents or officers, to contribute towards specific areas of work.

The RWG shall be chaired by the co-vice-chairs of the BRF on an alternate basis.

## **Frequency of Meetings**

The RWG will meet once a month from March to June with the first meeting at 6pm on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and subsequent dates and times to be agreed by its members.

The meetings will take place at Wandsworth Town Hall unless an alternative accessible venue is agreed by the members of the RWG.

Meetings will not exceed a two-hour period unless previously arranged by agreement. A meeting may extend beyond the two-hour time limit where those present at the meeting are in agreement.

## **Decision making**

The quorum for each meeting shall be six group members of whom a minimum of four must be tenant or leaseholder members. If this number is not reached, the meeting will not take place.

Decisions shall be taken on a consensual basis wherever possible. When consensus cannot be reached, a decision will be taken by voting.

## **Administration**

The Housing Policy and Performance Team will provide administrative services to the RWG which will include taking of minutes and circulating minutes/paperwork two weeks before the next meeting date.

RWG members will read the appropriate paperwork ahead of the meeting and prepare themselves for discussions on each topic.

Contact details of all RWG members will be made available to all members.

## **Code of conduct**

RWG must observe the following behaviour while taking part in meetings:

- Be courteous to each other and allow each other the opportunity to speak
- Follow the guidance of the Chair in the conduct of the meeting
- Remember that the purpose of the meeting is to benefit residents in general and is not a forum to discuss individual matters.
- Discussions must be appropriate to the scope of the review.
- The RWG is representative of the Council's housing stock (50:50 split of tenants and leaseholders) and as such discussions must be considerate of the needs of both tenants and leaseholders.
- No member will discriminate on any ground against any other member and discriminatory language will not be used in discussions.
- Participants will have due regard for confidentiality and any personal information discussed will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.