

# BEDMINSTER TMO



## CODE OF CONDUCT

### INTRODUCTION:

A Code of Conduct is a formal document that describes the way people are expected to carry out their duties as Board Members. It explains how Members are expected to behave not only in meetings but also in other situations when they represent the Board in any way. It is also a useful tool when holding Open or General meetings to which the wider community or other stakeholders are invited to attend.

### THE CODE OF CONDUCT:

#### Meetings:

Members should **at all times** observe accepted practice while taking part in a meeting.

- Meetings should have a start time and abide by an agenda.
- Late arrivals should enter quietly and disrupt the meeting only with apologies.
- The Chair should welcome Members and others to the meeting.
- Mobile phones should be switched off during the meeting unless prior arrangements have been made with the rest of the group.
- Only one person should speak at any one time. Individual Members should not enter into any cross-discussion within the meeting itself. The Chair should regain order if necessary.
- Members should make points factually and concisely – taking no more than 5 minutes to make points, or as at the Chair's discretion.
- Members should be courteous to each other and other stakeholders at all times – using appropriate names/titles.
- Threatening behaviour, language or body language must be refrained from.
- Members should allow each other the opportunity to speak and comment fully without interruption.
- Members should follow the guidance of the Chair in the conduct of the meeting.

- The Chair should use his/her chairing skills and knowledge to enable effective decision to take place.
- Members must remember to follow the agenda and to help each other to reach effective decisions.
- Members should remember that they are representing the Group at all relevant meetings and times, and should subsequently observe appropriate conduct with regard to language, dress, personal hygiene, social manner, etiquette etc.
- Members should remember that the purpose of meetings is to benefit tenants & leaseholders in general - not specific individuals.
- Members should remember to operate within the rules laid down in the Constitution / Terms of Reference.
- A five-minute time-out can be called at the discretion of the Chair.
- Wherever possible the use of jargon should be avoided.
- It is the responsibility of each Member to ensure that they are prepared for the meeting by reading all of the relevant papers and bringing them to the meeting. Members should ensure they know when meetings are taking place.
- Members must adhere to all agreed policies e.g. office, volunteer, equal opportunities and confidentiality.
- Persistent failure to attend meetings without reasonable cause will result in the Committee meeting to decide on a ruling regarding the status of the individual member(s) in question.

### **Discrimination:**

No Member will discriminate on any ground against any other Member. Discriminatory language will not be used in discussions.

All those who attend meetings have the right to be treated with dignity and respect regardless of their race, colour, ethnic or national origins, nationality, gender, marital status, age, sexuality, mobility, religion or any other matter, which causes people to be treated with injustice.

### **Conflicts of Interest:**

Individual members:

- Must disclose any interest, whether personal or on behalf of any group they represent, that may affect or influence their approach to the matter under discussion.

- Must not expect to receive more or less favourable treatment by any stakeholder because of their membership of the Group.
- Must use the normal procedures for reporting repairs, complaints etc.

### **Confidentiality:**

Members should respect all individuals' confidentiality, whether present or not and refrain from mentioning specific individual cases (unless absolutely necessary) which may cause embarrassment or identification of the individual. Any information or items shared of a confidential nature must not be disclosed to anyone else apart from Members of the Board in order to allow the business of the meeting to take place. All Board members should sign a Confidentiality Statement.

### **Political Affiliation:**

Individual members may be affiliated to a political party but they may not represent a political party in their role as a Member of the Board.

### **Breach of Code of Conduct:**

- If a Member does not abide by the Code of Conduct, the Board will take action at its discretion – with written follow-up clarification. More than one breach of a Code of Conduct could lead to dismissal of the offender for a set period of time (e.g. one year).

### **RATIFICATION:**

Printed name, signature & date:

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June 2011