

TERMS OF REFERENCE

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL LEASEHOLDER LIAISON BOARD

1. Name

- 1.1 The organisation shall be known as the Leaseholder Liaison Board (LLB).

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The Leaseholder Liaison Board is a city-wide consultative partnership of Birmingham City Council and its leaseholders, working together to improve services for leaseholders and achieve value for money. It provides a forum for leaseholders and Birmingham City Council to share ideas and information and for collaborative working for mutual benefit.
- 2.2 The LLB is in addition to and separate from the Council's consultation with all its residential leaseholders on specific matters, as required by Statute.
- 2.3 The co-regulation of service provision for leaseholders is provided by Housing Liaison Boards and the City Housing Liaison Board and is not part of the LLB's remit.
- 2.4 The LLB is not empowered to discuss the accounts, disputes or other similar matters relating to individual leaseholders, and such matters should be referred to Leasehold Services and/or the Council's disputes procedures.
- 2.5 LLB members should refrain from any action which brings the Leasehold Liaison Board or Birmingham City Council into disrepute.

3. Membership

- 3.1 Membership of the group will be open to the following:
- 20 (maximum) Birmingham City Council leaseholders from the 10 Parliamentary Constituencies of Birmingham, 2 from each Constituency.
 - 3 (maximum) City Council Officers with authority to act on behalf of the Directorate.
- 3.2 Members will be recruited to fill vacancies as they occur. Opportunities to join the LLB will be publicised on its web page and in Birmingham City Council publications.
- 3.3 Members may resign from the LLB at any time. Resignations should be in writing and sent to Leasehold Services. Resignations will be reported to the next meeting of the LLB and will be effective from that meeting.
- 3.4 If a member misses three consecutive meetings without informing Leasehold Services it will be assumed that they have resigned from the LLB.

4. Management of the Leaseholder Liaison Board

4.1 QUORUM

The attendance of at least one-third of members is required to hold a meeting of the LLB.

4.2 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- a) An Annual General Meeting will be held each year within 13 months of the previous Annual General Meeting.
- b) The Annual General Meeting will:
 - approve the Annual Report of the LLB
 - agree the time and date of LLB meetings and topics for discussion over the next 12 months
- c) Every 2 years the Annual General Meeting will elect from its membership
 - a Chairperson
 - a Vice Chairperson
 - a representative to the City Housing Liaison Board
 - a substitute representative to the City Housing Liaison Board

4.3 CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON

- a) The Chairperson will chair the meetings of the LLB, ensuring that discussions
 - Are managed to ensure completion of the agenda and that everyone has an opportunity to speak and be heard
 - Are within the remit of the LLB's Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct and Equalities Policy.
- b) The Vice Chairperson will deputise in the absence of the Chairperson.

4.4 THE CITY HOUSING LIAISON BOARD (CHLB)

- a) The LLB is a special interest group and is a sub-group of the CHLB as defined by the CHLB's Terms of Reference. The LLB's Terms of Reference are agreed and reviewed at least annually by the CHLB.
- b) The LLB will provide a written report of its activities to the CHLB at a frequency determined by the CHLB.
- c) The LLB representative to the CHLB will be subject to the CHLB's Terms of Reference and will act as a communication link between the LLB and the CHLB.

4.5 MEETINGS AND SECRETARIAT

- a) The LLB will meet at least six times a year.
- b) Members of the LLB who are unable to attend a meeting should inform Leasehold Services before the meeting in order that their apologies can be recorded.
- c) Birmingham City Council will provide a secretariat to the LLB. The secretariat will:
 - maintain records of meetings
 - prepare agendas in consultation with the Chairperson
 - provide a venue for meetings
 - circulate agendas and other papers to all members at least seven days prior to each meeting.
- d) The LLB will publicise its activities to all Birmingham City Council leaseholders, primarily through its web page.

4.6 VOTING

- a) No member shall exercise more than one vote.
- b) In the event of a tie, the status quo will be maintained.

5 Code of Conduct

5.1 The LLB will operate within the requirements of:

- The Leasehold Liaison Board's Code of Conduct (appendix 1)
- The Leasehold Liaison Board's Equal Opportunities Policy (appendix 2)

5.2 Any LLB member who breaks the Code or otherwise brings the LLB into disrepute may be suspended from taking any part in the business of the LLB. The CHLB's process and procedures will be used should a breach of the Code of Conduct be alleged.

6. Amendments to the Terms of Reference

6.1 Proposals for change to the Terms of Reference should be made in writing to the Chairperson and Leasehold Services. Proposals will be circulated to all members of the LLB and discussed at the next meeting. Any proposal that is acceptable to at least 75% of the LLB will be agreed, subject to ratification by the CHLB.

7 Dissolution

- 7.1 The LLB may be dissolved following consultation by the Senior Service Manager (Home Ownership) with the LLB, the CHLB and Birmingham City Council and with due regard to the results of that consultation. A proposal to wind-up will be published with meeting papers and circulated to members, and discussion of the proposal will be included as an item in the meeting agenda.
- 7.2 The LLB may dissolve itself if 75% of its members at the meeting vote in favour of such a recommendation.
- 7.3 The CHLB has the authority to dissolve the Leasehold Liaison Board, giving its decision in writing and detailing its reasons. The LLB has the right to appeal against this decision to the Chairperson of the CHLB, setting out its reasons in writing. The Chairperson of the CHLB will report the matter to the next meeting of the CHLB and will convene an Appeals Panel which will review their decision.

8 Declaration

This Terms of Reference was adopted/ratified by the Leasehold Liaison Board at the Annual General Meeting held on (*insert date.....*).

Chairperson	_____	Date:	_____
Vice Chairperson	_____	Date:	_____
Directorate Officer	_____	Date:	_____

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LLB MEMBERS

Section 1 - Principles

Members of the Leasehold Liaison Board shall uphold the principles set out by the Nolan Committee for Standards in Public Life:

Selflessness

LLB members should act solely in terms of tenants', leaseholders', and the wider public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity

LLB members should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including influencing or playing a role in public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, LLB members should make their choices on merit.

Accountability

LLB members are accountable for their decisions and actions to local residents and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate and set out in the LLB Terms of Reference and its agreed policies.

Openness

LLB members should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.

Honesty

LLB members have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

LLB members should promote and support the adoption and use of these principles through leading and setting an example.

Section 2 – Standards of Behaviour at Meetings

Members of the Leasehold Liaison Board commit to the following standards of behaviour at meetings and while on LLB business:

- By following the Code, our board will operate smoothly.
- The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to ensure all LLB members are fully aware of what is expected of themselves and each other.
- The Code is for everyone, and it's everyone's duty to comply with the Code and have mutual trust and respect for each other in their roles.

Behaviour at meetings or while on LLB business

- a) All comments should be made through the Chair of the meeting.
- b) Only one person should speak at any one time.
- c) Individual LLB members should not enter into discussion during the meeting. The Chair should regain order if necessary.
- d) No offensive language or raised voices should be used.
- e) There should be no separate discussions during the formal LLB meetings.
- f) No one attending an LLB meeting or conducting LLB business should be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- g) All staff and residents have a responsibility to respect each other and should not behave in an aggressive or confrontational manner.
- h) Mobile phones should be switched off or turned to silent during meetings.
- i) Every LLB member is entitled to offer their opinion and have it heard at the meeting.

Confidentiality

- a) At times, it will be necessary to keep information confidential, particularly that of a personal sensitive nature.
- b) The LLB should have an awareness of data protection issues and be familiar with the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act.
- c) Any information or item shared with the council that is confidential must not be disclosed to anyone other than board members. This allows the business of a meeting to proceed, subject to the provisions of the Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation, and the council's own access to information policies and procedures. Information must not be given to third parties unless they are entitled to receive it.

Right of expression

- a) All LLB members should have the right to speak and their views should be respected. The Chair will challenge any offensive remarks.
- b) All LLB members must comply with this code of conduct and ensure that they understand their duties, rights and responsibilities.
- c) Party political statements and literature supporting any political party are not to be used in LLB business.

Personal issues

The LLB is not a forum for raising individual issues unless they have implications for the wider area. If an LLB member wants to raise an individual issue, this can be done privately after the meeting has closed with an officer of BCC housing service.

The LLB should not allow, facilitate or agree any special favours to relatives, friends or associates in the award of funding from any budgets that the LLB controls, or any other areas where a conflict of interest may arise.

LLB members must disclose any interest, whether personal or on behalf of any group they represent, that they consider may affect or influence their approach to any matter under discussion. They must not vote and must normally withdraw from a meeting whilst such matters are being considered. The golden rule is 'if in doubt, declare'.

It may be appropriate for an officer to set time aside at the end of the LLB meeting to allow personal issues to be raised separately from the main meeting. Alternatively, LLB members can contact the Leasehold Service or local housing office.

Declaration

I have read and understood the Code of Conduct and agree to be bound by its terms.

Signed:.....

Print Name:.....

Date:.....

LLB EQUALITIES POLICY

Anti- discrimination

The LLB does not allow discrimination or harassment on the grounds of racial origin, gender, age, sexuality, sexual orientation, disability, religion or any other factor.

Promotion of involvement and equalities

The LLB has a duty to promote and encourage the active involvement of service users and residents **of all communities** in decisions about their area including through its own membership.

Compliance with legislation

The LLB will act to prevent any direct or indirect discrimination in all of its activities and will ensure it complies with the relevant legislation including the Equality Act 2010.