



RESIDENT
SCRUTINY GROUP
YOUR VOICE. POSITIVE CHANGE

Code of Conduct

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Resident Scrutiny Group plays an important role in reviewing services, influencing decision-making, and making recommendations that help improve services for all tenants and leaseholders.
- 1.2 Group members are expected to act professionally, respectfully, and in the best interests of all residents. By joining the Resident Scrutiny Group, members agree to uphold the following standards of conduct.

2. Attendance and Preparation

- 2.1 Group members will:
 - 2.1.1 Prepare for meetings by reading all relevant papers and information in advance.
 - 2.1.2 Attend meetings, training sessions, and review activities wherever possible.
 - 2.1.3 Provide apologies in advance if unable to attend a meeting.
 - 2.1.4 Arrive on time and remain engaged throughout meetings and activities.Repeated failure to attend meetings without a reasonable explanation may result in a review of Group membership in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

3. Respect and Behaviour

- 3.1 Group members will:
 - 3.1.1 Treat fellow Group members, residents, councillors, staff, contractors, and guest speakers with courtesy and respect.
 - 3.1.2 Listen to and value the views and experiences of others, even when opinions differ.
 - 3.1.3 Respect the role of the Chair in facilitating meetings and ensuring all members have the opportunity to contribute.
 - 3.1.4 Promote a positive, welcoming, and inclusive environment.
 - 3.1.5 Treat everyone fairly and with dignity, supporting equality, diversity, and inclusion at all times.

4. Unacceptable Behaviour

- 4.1 The following will not be tolerated:
 - 4.1.1 Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or disruptive behaviour.
 - 4.1.2 Offensive, abusive, or discriminatory language.
 - 4.1.3 Personal attacks on individuals.
 - 4.1.4 Any member displaying inappropriate behaviour may be asked to leave the meeting. Repeated breaches may result in a review of their membership of the Resident Scrutiny Group.

4.2 Group members must not discriminate against any person on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership status.

5. Working in the Interests of All Residents

5.1 Personal issues must not be brought to meetings, and membership of the Group will not result in any preferential treatment as a Tenant or Leaseholder.

5.2 Group members will:

- 5.2.1 Act in the interests of all Dover District Council tenants and leaseholders rather than pursuing individual concerns.
- 5.2.2 Focus discussions on service improvement and achieving positive outcomes for residents.
- 5.2.3 Recognise that individual experiences can be shared where they help identify wider issues or opportunities for improvement.
- 5.2.4 Undertake their responsibilities fairly and objectively.

6. Scrutiny and Decision-Making

6.1 Group members will:

- 6.1.1 Provide constructive challenge based on evidence, resident feedback, and service performance information.
- 6.1.2 Consider information objectively and make recommendations that are fair and evidence-based.
- 6.1.3 Support collective decision-making and accept majority decisions made by the Group.
- 6.1.4 Share responsibility for recommendations and outcomes agreed by the Group.

7. Confidentiality and Data Protection

7.1 Group members will:

- 7.1.1 Not share confidential information, documents, reports, personal data or meeting discussions with anyone outside the Group unless expressly authorised to do so.
- 7.1.2 Comply with relevant data protection requirements.
- 7.1.3 Store and dispose of documentation securely.

The duty of confidentiality continues after a member leaves the Group.

8. Conflicts of Interest

8.1 Group members will:

- 8.1.1 Declare any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.1.2 Withdraw from discussions or decisions where a conflict of interest could influence, or be seen to influence, their judgement.

8.2 Any declared conflict of interest will be recorded, and the Chair will determine whether the member should take part in the discussion or any vote relating to that matter.

9. Representing the Group

9.1 The “One Voice” rule: While healthy debate is encouraged within meetings and members may express personal views and bring forward different ideas during meetings, members are expected to support the Board’s collective decisions publicly once agreed.

- 9.2 Members must not speak to the press or post on social media as a representative of the Group unless specifically authorised by the Chair and the Council.
- 9.3 Members must not use social media to undermine, criticise or misrepresent the decisions of the Group, or disclose confidential information obtained through their role as a Group member.

10. Use of Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices

10.1 Group members will:

- 10.1.1 Ensure mobile phones and other devices are switched off or set to silent during meetings.
- 10.1.2 Only use devices during meetings where this supports participation, such as taking notes, or researching, or where permission has been given due to exceptional circumstances.

11 Breaches of the Code

- 11.1 **Informal resolution:** Minor issues will be addressed through a private discussion between the member and the Chair.
- 11.2 **Formal action:** Serious or repeated breaches of this Code may result in a formal review by an appointed Council officer. The member concerned will be given an opportunity to respond before any decision is made. Following the review, the Council may issue a warning, suspend the member, or remove them.
- 11.3 **Resignation:** Members wishing to resign should provide written notice to the Chair and the Resident Engagement Team.

12 Breaches of tenancy agreement and leases

- 12.1 Where a Panel member is subject to legal action, possession proceedings, or a serious investigation relating to their tenancy agreement or lease, the Council may temporarily suspend the member from their Panel duties while the matter is considered.

Agreement

I have read and understood the Dover District Council Resident Scrutiny Group Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its principles and requirements.

I understand that failure to comply with this Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference may result in my membership of the Resident Scrutiny Group being reviewed and, where appropriate, ended.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Contact Officer: For more information, please contact Beth Becks, Principal Tenant Engagement and Monitoring Officer, beth.becks@dover.gov.uk.