

# **COMMUNITY FORUM PROCEDURE RULES**

## **C O N T E N T S**

1. Secretary to the Community Forum
2. Start and Finish Times of Meetings
3. Quorum
4. Voting Powers and Time Limits on Speeches
5. Membership
6. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair
7. Power to Co-opt
8. Attendance at Meetings
9. Representatives of Local Organisations
10. General Power to Adjourn
11. Order of Business
12. Questions from Members of the Public
13. Questions on Agenda Items from Members of the Public

# **COMMUNITY FORUM PROCEDURE RULES**

## **1. Secretary to the Area Forum**

- 1.1 The Chief Executive shall act as Secretary to each Community Forum and shall be responsible for preparing and circulating agendas and reports for meetings, and preparing the minutes.
- 1.2 The agenda for each Community Forum meeting will be published on the Council's web site and circulated to all persons and organisations on the circulation list by ten working days prior to the meeting.

## **2. Start and Finish Times of Meetings**

- 2.1 Meetings will be held at a suitable local venue which may rotate as appropriate and will commence at 7.00pm, in the spirit of encouraging as many local people as possible to attend.
- 2.2 No business shall be transacted later than 9.00pm, at which time any business, which remains to be transacted, shall be deferred to a future meeting.

## **3. Quorum**

- 3.1 Business shall not be transacted at a meeting of a Community Forum unless there are present at least two Members of the Forum who are Borough Councillors and who represent a ward within the area. If the Chair declares that there is not a quorum, the meeting shall stand adjourned until a date and time to be fixed by the Chair or to the next ordinary meeting of the Forum.

## **4. Voting Powers and Time Limits on Speeches**

- 4.1 It is not envisaged that any formal vote would need to be taken on any matter relating to the operation of the Borough Council's functions.
- 4.2 The Chair may at any point in the meeting ask for a show of hands by the public present to indicate support or otherwise for a particular issue.
- 4.3 No member of the Forum may speak for more than five minutes on any one agenda item, unless the Chair expressly agrees otherwise for the purpose of enabling the meeting to be better informed and the adequate dispatch of business on the agenda.

## **5. Membership**

- 5.1 The core membership of each Community Forum shall be the Borough Councillors for the electoral wards within the geographical area of each Forum

## **6. Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair**

- 6.1 The Council will determine the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair of each Area Forum at a Council meeting and thereafter at the Annual Council meeting from amongst those persons sitting on their membership.
- 6.2 In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, the Borough Councillors present at the meeting will appoint another Borough Councillor to preside as Chair for that meeting.

## 7. **Power to Co-opt**

Community Forums may co-opt any persons who are either:

- (a) Members of the Lancashire County Council who represent all or part of the area of the Forum;
- (b) Members of a Parish Council within the area of the Forum; or
- (c) Representatives of Lancashire Constabulary, Central Lancashire Primary Care NHS Trust or any other partner organisation recognised by the Council for this purpose.

The members of the Community Forums may at any time revoke a co-option.

## 8. **Attendance at Meetings**

8.1 Attendance at the Community Forum meetings is open to all persons who reside in or have a business interest in the geographical area of the Forum. Such persons can request that they be included on the circulation list for agenda papers.

## 9. **Representatives of Local Organisations**

9.1 Each Community Forum may invite organisations operating within the area of the Forum to send representatives to meetings of the Forum. Organisations may also request representation. Names will be included in the circulation list for agenda papers and these will be sent to the named individuals who will represent their organisation at the meetings.

9.2 The representatives referred to in 9.1 will not be members of the Community Forum but their attendance and contribution will be recognised by them being circulated with details of the dates and agendas for meetings.

## 10. **General Power to Adjourn**

10.1 The Chair may adjourn a meeting of the Forum for such a period as he or she shall consider expedient.

## 11. **Order of Business**

The order of business at every meeting of the Forum (subject to the Chair's discretion to re-prioritise any issues) shall be:

- (a) To choose a person to preside if the Chair or Vice-Chair is absent.
- (b) To announce any apologies for absence.
- (c) To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the last meeting of the Forum.
- (d) Any matters arising from the previous minutes (if any) not elsewhere on the agenda.
- (e) To dispose of business (if any) remaining from the last meeting.
- (f) Public consultation issues, e.g. Community Plan, Local Policing Plan, Primary Care reforms, budget proposals
- (g) Local issues – e.g. as identified at the inaugural and subsequent meetings
- (h) Any other business specified in the summons.

- (i) Questions from members of the public (30 minutes maximum).
- (j) To confirm the date of the next meeting.
- (k) Items for future meetings. At the discretion of the Chair, any person present at the meeting shall be entitled to suggest any such items.
- (l) Any other urgent matters at the Chair's discretion.

## 12. **Questions from Members of the Public**

- 12.1 At each meeting a period of up to 30 minutes (the "Open Forum") shall be set aside for questions to be put in person to the Forum by members of the public who reside, work or have an interest in the area covered by the Forum on any matter within the powers and duties of the Borough Council or any Partner Organisation.
- 12.2 The purpose of the "Open Forum" is to discuss local concerns and issues. It will provide an opportunity to consult and receive feedback, not only on the Council's policies and services, but also on wider issues of local concern including crime and disorder, community safety and environmental issues, which in turn will facilitate the Council's partnership working with other agencies and organisations.
- 12.3 It is not a substitute for Members' own surgeries and will not therefore be able to deal with individual cases or concerns, although members of the public will be welcome to attend and make contact with their local Ward Councillor.
- 12.4 The Chair will ask each person who addresses the Forum to give their name and the area where they live or the organisation they represent.
- 12.5 A question may not be asked related to:
  - (a) a matter which is the subject of legal proceedings or an appeal to a tribunal or to a Government Minister or to an investigation by the Local Government Ombudsman; or
  - (b) the appointment, promotion, dismissal, salary, superannuation or conditions of service, or the conduct or ability of any individual employed by the local authorities or the conduct of any member of the local authorities.
- 12.6 The Chair shall be entitled to rule that a question shall not be answered because:
  - (a) it requires investigation so that a full reply can be given in writing to the next meeting;
  - (b) the preparation of the answer would require the expenditure of a disproportionate amount of time, money or effort; or
  - (c) in his or her opinion it is improper, irrelevant or otherwise objectionable, or defamatory, or is in the same or similar terms to a question asked at the previous meeting.
- 12.7 A question must be a genuine enquiry and not a statement.
- 12.8 Questions may be raised orally during the meeting, or a question may be submitted in writing to the Community Forum.
- 12.9 At the meeting, an oral response to all questions raised will be made by the Borough Councillors or representatives of the Partner Organisations present.

- 12.10 In the case of questions submitted in writing, The Secretary of the Forum will send the question to the appropriate Service Unit/Organisation with a request that a response is sent to the person who submitted the question within ten working days if possible.
- 12.11 Details of the questions which have been submitted in writing and by whom, together with the purport of the answers given, shall be recorded in the minutes.
- 12.12 The Chair shall have discretion to regulate the amount of discussion on any question and to extend the period of public questions if deemed necessary.
- 12.13 In the event of there being insufficient time to deal with all the questions of which notice has been given, a response to any unanswered questions shall be sent to the questioner in writing by the Chair.

13. **Questions on Agenda Items from Members of the Public**

- 13.1 Members of the public attending the meeting may speak for up to 5 minutes on any item on the agenda, at the time that item is being considered by the Forum. This is in addition to the 30 minute question time.