

# Terms of Reference

## Beeches Community Group

### 1. Mandate

1.1 In August 2009, at a meeting to which all residents of the Ward were invited, those present agreed to form a Community Group.

1.2 This public meeting was preceded by a series of small, local meetings – each one targeting residents of 3-5 streets in the Ward.

1.3 Issues and concerns were identified at the local meetings.

1.4 The open meeting discussed shared priorities based on the findings from the local meetings.

1.5 The Community Group has met once a month since it was formed

### 2. Purpose

2.1 To work as a unified group to represent the interests of those who live, work, visit or use services including schools in the ward of Beeches and to improve the quality of life in the area.

### 3. Aims and Objectives

3.1 To research and explore the needs of the Ward

3.2 To oversee the gathering of information and to carry out analysis in order to ensure that the interests of the whole community are considered

3.3 To consult as widely as possible and to listen to all community voices

3.4 To prioritize activities and to try to ensure that only those where it is realistic to expect to influence or to bring about changes are pursued.

3.5 To work in active partnership, and for the good of the community as a whole, with other community stakeholders including any relevant service provider, group or individual.

3.6 To hold meetings at least 6 times per year which are open to all potential members. To use a range of methods to publicize these meetings as widely as possible.

### 4. Membership

4.1 All of those who live or regularly work, or use services (including schools) in the ward of Beeches will be entitled to join the Community Group. Upon joining they will have voting rights.

4.2 Others involved in the provision of services in the Ward will be welcome to attend meetings of the Group but will not have voting rights.

## **5. Chair and Vice-Chair**

5.1 A Chair and one Vice-Chair shall be appointed at meetings of the Group, from among those members present ?

5.2 The Term of Office being 12 months with the Chair and Vice-Chair being appointed at each Annual General Meeting of the Group

5.3 In the absence of the Chair or Vice-Chair, any member present shall be appointed to preside at that meeting.

## **6. Quorum**

6.1 In order to be quorate and for the Group to be able to conduct business a minimum of 5 members must be present.

6.2 Changes to these Terms of Reference must be agreed at a meeting by at least 10 members.

## **7. Decision Making**

7.1 The preferred way of reaching decisions shall be by consensus, however, where a consensus is not reached decisions shall be made by a clear show of hands by those members present

7.2 In the event of a vote being required the Chair has a casting vote.

## **8. Delegated Authority**

8.1 'If a meeting of the Group is not quorate and a decision is required as a matter of urgency and without delay members will be contacted by e-mail for their comments; any subsequent decision made on behalf of the Group would be done so under delegated authority to the Chair, taking into consideration the comments of those who have responded and in consultation with the Churn Project/Town Council. Feedback relating to the comments and decision would be reported to the next meeting of the Group.'

## **9. Co-option**

9.1 To draw on the diverse range of skills and knowledge within the town and its surrounding area, the Group may invite others to attend meetings and co-opt a maximum of 3 non-voting members at any given time for a period to be determined by the Group but for no more than 12 months.

## **10. Schedule of Meetings**

10.1 The Group shall meet and work towards achieving the aims and objectives. A schedule of open meetings will be decided at the annual meeting of the Group. This should take in to account member availability and due consideration of time, venue and frequency and should be publicized as widely as possible.

10.2 Notice of any meeting where changes to these Terms of Reference are to be discussed, and potentially agreed, must be given at least 10 days before the meeting and should be publicized as widely as possible.

## **11. Working/Sub Groups**

11.1 The Group may establish working/sub groups to assist with achieving the overall aims and objectives of the Group.

11.2 The size and make-up of each group, including co-option, will be determined according to the remit of the sub group being established.

11.3 Each group established will report recommendations and advice directly to the Group within 3 meetings.

11.4 If required, and for the benefit of achieving the Group's aims and objectives, the Steering Group may give delegated authority to a working/sub group to complete specific tasks.

11.5 Unless otherwise agreed, the Steering Group shall appoint the lead of any working/sub group established. Any other roles may be agreed by the established working/sub group.

## **12. Member Protocol**

12.1 Members (with or without voting rights) of the Group are asked to act within the interests of the initiative and to declare any personal interests they may have, as individuals, an employer or member of another organisation or local authority at the start of the meeting or at the earliest opportunity.

12.2 All members who wish to be kept informed of the Group's activities must provide current contact details, including an email address wherever possible. No member (with or without voting rights) should share this information with other individuals or organisations without the express permission of the individual concerned. Information should be kept confidential.

## **13. Resources**

13.1 The Group may apply for funding on behalf of the community they represent.

13.2 The Group will consider and agree on the most appropriate way to hold any funds. This could include using facilities offered by the Churn Project or the Town Council or using the services of a bank or building society. Details of any such holdings should be made available at all open meetings and be scrutinized and accepted at least every three months.

13.3 Whilst there are members of the Group (with or without voting rights) who will be acting on a voluntary basis 'out of pocket' expenses incurred directly for the benefit of the Group can be claimed subject to approval in advance of the expenses to be incurred.

#### **14. A Living Constitution**

14.1 The Terms of Reference are a living constitution which must reflect the work of the Group at any given time and as such the Group has the power to propose and effect any amendment felt necessary.

#### **15. Dissolution**

15.1 In the event that a majority of members consider that the aims and objectives have been met in full and there is no further business to be transacted as a Group, in its current format, the Group has the power to propose and effect its dissolution.