Terms of Reference for Leaseholder Meetings
Terms of reference

The meeting is open to all leaseholders who own the residential lease to a property that Stevenage Borough Council owns the freehold to.

The terms of reference for this group can be found on the Council’s website at http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/content/15953/21310/112620/112624/Leaseholders-Draft-TOR-November2014.pdf

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 The aim of the Leaseholder Meetings is to review, monitor and make recommendations for the improvement of leaseholder services.

2.2 The objectives of the Leaseholder Meetings are to:

☐ Represent the majority view of the leaseholder attendees

☐ Promote and support the interests of all Stevenage Borough Council leaseholders

☐ Promote, support and work towards improving the way Stevenage Borough Council manages and delivers leasehold services

☐ Promote, support and work towards achieving change and improvement to all leaseholders rights and the maintenance and improvement of housing conditions, amenities and the environment

☐ Ensure all leaseholders are consulted on all policies and procedures (that affect leaseholders) being reviewed or considered by SBC

2.3 Monthly Leasehold Surgery Appointments

All Leaseholders have the opportunity to book evening appointment to meet with a member of the Leasehold Team. This gives leaseholders the option to discuss any individual concerns in relation to their particular block or service received.

These evening appointments should be booked in advance, and a list of possible dates will be made available annually. Should you wish to meet with a member of the team on one of these dates, please contact the team in advance to make an appointment. Please allow 7 days’ notice prior to the date, so that staff can investigate your queries before the meeting, enabling us to be able to provide you with a response at your appointment. Email: leasehold@stevenage.gov.uk or telephone 01438 242666.

The Leasehold Team will feed back to the group annually how many leaseholders take up this offer for a surgery appointment.
3.0 Attendance

3.1 All Council leaseholders can attend the meetings.

4.0 Links from the Leaseholder Meeting to other involved groups

4.1 The Council is committed to involving customers in how housing services are delivered and to facilitate this various involved groups of tenants and leaseholders have been set up. Membership opportunities for these groups are limited. Because of this and to maintain fairness and accountability, membership of these groups are subject to recruitment and selection mechanisms. Selection is usually made by other housing customers who have been trained in recruitment. These groups include the Housing Management Board (HMB), Customer Scrutiny Panel (CSP) and Housing Forum (HF). Other involved groups are open to leaseholders and this includes some internal groups and resident groups (subject to the code of conduct and/or terms of reference of these groups being adhered too).

4.2 The HMB, CSP and HF will report to the leaseholder meetings annually about their work. Information on these groups can be found on the website at http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/housing/council-housing/110971/110995/

4.3 The Leaseholder Meeting can raise issues with any of these groups via their email at HousingManagementBoard@stevenagegov.uk or CustomerScrutinyPanel@stevenage.gov.uk Note: Housing Forum inbox due to be set up in 2015/16. Alternatively write to the group/s c/o the Chair of the group/s via the Resident Involvement Team, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage, SG1 1HN. Please mark your envelope as confidential and it will be passed directly to the group concerned.

5.0 Meetings

5.1 Each meeting will be given a set time limit. Agenda items can be carried forward to the next meeting if necessary. Attendees can request agenda items to be included at a meeting. These requests can be verbal or in writing and should be received by the leasehold team at least 2 weeks before a planned meeting date so that staff can discuss with the chair. Telephone 01438 242236 or email leasehold@stevenage.gov.uk.

5.2 The number of meeting held will be agreed annually and relate to the meeting’s work plan for that year.

5.2 The agenda of the meeting will be made available one week before the meeting and the team will strive to meet this timescale for relevant reports for the meeting.
5.3 The Leaseholder Meeting will agree an annual work plan, this will help the Meeting determine how many meetings need to be held that year.

5.4 If required an additional meeting can be arranged to discuss specific issues.

6.0 **Communication**

6.1 The Leaseholder Meeting will adopt and abide by SBC’s Communications Strategy which can be found at: 

7.0 **Conduct of business**

7.1 At all meetings, decisions will be taken by a simple majority of the leaseholder attendees who are present. Each leaseholder attendee has one vote.

8. **Minutes**

8.1 All decisions will be minuted. Minutes will be taken by an agreed minute taker.

8.2 All meetings will be minuted. The minutes must be formally approved by the next meeting.

8.3 Draft minutes of meetings will be made available to leaseholders 10 working days after the meeting.

9.0 **Section two: Code of conduct**

9.1 Leaseholders, staff and contractors must abide by the code of conduct at all times.

9.2 To ensure that the meetings are productive all in attendance must behave in an agreed manner.

9.3 All present at the meetings must address each other in a polite manner. Personal or abusive comments are not acceptable.

9.4 All attendees must respect each other’s views and opinions.

9.5 The meeting should be chaired so that only one person speaks at a time and questions should be directed through the chair. The chair will ensure that all speakers keep to the subject under discussion.
9.6 Individual issues will not be discussed at the meeting. These issues can be raised by the individual with the team or raised as a comment, compliment or complaint via ‘have your say’ on the website at http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/have-your-say/complaints/

9.7 Racist, sexist, inflammatory remarks, offensive or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.

9.8 The Chair will warn attendees if their behaviour breaches the code of conduct and this may result in them being asked not to attend future meetings.

9.9 The Chair will make this decision with the support of members of the meeting.

9.10 All mobile phones must be switched off or turned to silent during meetings.

9.11 All attendees at the meeting will respect the premises used for the meeting.

10.0 Section three: Equal opportunities

10.1 The Leaseholder Meeting abides by SBC’s Equality and Diversity framework, see the website at: http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/about-the-council/plans-and-performance/25705/

10.2 We will make sure that our meetings and any other meeting activities are accessible and welcoming to all leaseholders.