

REPRESENTATIVE BODY STANDING ORDERS

The following procedures apply to meetings of the Representative Body of Rochdale Boroughwide Housing.

A. First Meeting

At the first meeting following each Annual Members Meeting of Rochdale Boroughwide Housing, the Representative Body will:

- 1) Receive apologies;
- 2) Receive any declarations of interest from Representatives;
- 3) Welcome new Representatives;
- 4) Appoint the Chair and Vice Chair for the coming year. Votes can be cast prior to the meeting by a postal vote or at the meeting; and
- 5) Receive the calendar of Representative Body meetings.

B. Ordinary Meetings

Ordinary meetings of the Representative Body will take place according to the timetable agreed at the first meeting following the Annual Members Meeting. Ordinary meetings will:

- 1) Receive apologies;
- 2) Receive any declarations of interest from members;
- 3) Make reference to the Good Meeting Guide (see code of conduct);
- 4) Approve the minutes of the last meeting;
- 5) Review the status of previous actions;
- 6) Receive verbal updates on the key business of the Board, Representative Body groups and any other relevant groups represented by members;
- 7) Consider business included in the notice convening the meeting; and
- 8) Representatives will be able to raise items that are not elsewhere on the agenda though it remains the decision of the Chair as to the manner in which they will be addressed.

C. Participation at Representative Body meetings

Usually meetings will take place around a table which maximises participants' ability for clear face to face discussion although Representatives can participate in a meeting by telephone, video or computer if these facilities are available. The Representative Body can review the suitability of a venue and the timings of meetings in its annual self-assessment.

Priority for seating is: Representatives, Secretary, minute-taker, the observing Board Members, members of EMT, guest speakers, employees involved in reporting, observing members.

Where there is not sufficient room at the table for some, they will be seated as closely to the table as possible in order to enable their participation in the meeting.

In accordance with the Rules, the Chair of the Board of Directors (or Deputy Chair in their absence) and at least one other Non-Executive Director should be in attendance as observers. The Chief Executive and other Executive Directors are to attend meetings as requested to do so by the Representative Body.

When speaking, all contributors to the discussion are to make their inputs succinctly having full regard for the time available for the agenda item and the need for all Representatives to have their opportunity to contribute. Contributors to the discussion may only speak when invited to do so by the Chair.

When presenting reports, presenters will be advised that the time allocated for the agenda item and any presentations should be succinct and just address the main issues and recommendations within the report. Timings provided on the agenda are for the whole agenda item, including time for any discussion and for the decision to be made. Sufficient time must be allowed for items to be properly discussed.

Members may attend (but not speak at) meetings of the Representative Body. If confidential matters are to be discussed at the meeting, any non Representative Body members will be asked to leave the meeting. Meetings of sub-groups and working groups of the Representative Body are not open to members.

Disturbance of a meeting will not be tolerated and will result in exclusion.

The agenda for meetings will highlight any agenda items which are confidential and to be considered in closed session. During a meeting previously unforeseen confidential items may arise, however these events should be minimised through proper planning.

Confidential cover sheets will be included in meeting papers detailing what the title of the item is and the reason it is confidential. An item could be confidential for the following reasons:

- 1) The report details personal matters about an identifiable individual (including tenants and employees);
- 2) The report is in relation to a proposed or pending acquisition of land for RBH purposes;
- 3) The report relates to employment issues;
- 4) The report provides information relating to the financial or business affairs of RBH or a particular individual;
- 5) The report is in relation to litigation or potential litigation affecting RBH; and/or

- 6) The report is in relation to the receiving of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege.

It is not anticipated that the Representative Body will generally receive reports of such a nature, although they will from time to time and they may also be privy to Board reports which do contain such information.

D. Agenda, Forward Plan and Calendar of Meetings

Responsibility for approving the Calendar of Meetings and Agenda lies with the Chair, in consultation with the Agenda Planning Group and the Secretary.

The Agenda Planning Group, comprising the Chair and Vice Chair of the Representative Body and if necessary, one Representative from the other constituency to the Chair and Vice Chair, will meet two weeks before every planned Representative Body meeting to review the forward plan and the proposed agenda for the coming meeting.

The Calendar of Meetings and Forward Plan will be reviewed and extended quarterly so that they always reach no less than 12 months into the future.

Agendas consist of routine annual items, three yearly reviews and one-off items which have been identified in the Forward Plan.

Below is the process by which the Calendar of Meetings and Forward Plan is agreed:

- 1) Taking input from relevant teams, Heads of Service and previous Board and Representative Body discussions, the Governance Team will generate a draft Forward Plan;
- 2) The Executive Management Team will meet with the Secretary and make any necessary changes;
- 3) The Secretary will present the suggested Forward Plan to the Agenda Planning Group for final approval;
- 4) Any subsequent changes to time and place of meeting or content of the Agenda, Calendar of Meetings or Forward Plan are to be agreed by Chair with the Secretary and communicated to the Governance Team;
- 5) The updated Calendar of Meetings is to be circulated to all Representatives and put on the Society's website;
- 6) The Forward Plan is presented to the Representative Body at every meeting.

Representatives may request items to be placed on the Agenda/Forward Plan in line with agreed timescales for submission and circulation of information prior to meetings.

Items on the agenda will provide the name and contact details of the employee who can be contacted for clarification or further information before the meeting takes place

E. Notice of Meeting

Save for in the case of emergencies or the need to conduct urgent business (to be decided by the Secretary in discussion with the Chair of the Representative Body), the Secretary must give at least fourteen days' written notice of the date and place of every meeting.

Usually this information will be circulated at least a year in advance via the meetings calendar. Meeting papers will be sent to the members of the Representative Body at least 7 days before the date of the meeting. This will confirm the date, time and place of the meeting and will specify the business to be conducted. Where unavoidable, and only in exceptional circumstances, late reports may be tabled with the permission of the Chair.

F. Chair of Meeting

The person presiding at the meeting may exercise any power or duty of the Chair.

G. Duration of the Meeting

There is no agreed maximum duration for meetings of the Representative Body, however there is an expectation that the main business of the meeting will last for approximately two hours, with a break scheduled if necessary.

H. Minutes

The Chair will sign the minutes of the proceedings at the next meeting. The Chair will move that the minutes of the previous meeting be signed as a correct record.

Minutes will record the discussion and debate of all items and record all decisions made and any actions arising.

I. Declaration of Interests

Any Representative having an interest in any arrangement between the Society and another person or body will, before the matter is discussed by the Representative Body, disclose that interest to the meeting regardless of whether or not it has been previously declared on the individuals register of interest. Such disclosure must comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Representative Body. Unless it is expressly permitted by the Rules of the Society they will not remain present (unless requested to do so by the Representative Body), and they must not have any vote on the matter in question.

Representatives are responsible for immediately notifying the Secretary if for any reason their Register of Interest needs updating.

J. Access to Information

These rules apply to all Representative Body meetings of Rochdale Boroughwide Housing.

- 1) Members may attend all meetings of the Representative Body subject only to the exceptions in these Standing Orders.
- 2) Minutes, which are available for member access and inspection, will include:
 - The minutes of the meeting or records of decisions taken for all Representative Body meetings, excluding any part of the proceedings which was confidential.
 - A summary of any proceedings which are not open to the public.

K. Representative Body Reports

Reports to the Representative Body will:

- 1) Identify the title and date of the meeting;
- 2) Identify whether the contents are for decision, consideration or information;
- 3) Identify whether the report is confidential;
- 4) Be succinct and to the point; and
- 5) Identify the lead author and point of contact for further information

From time to time, the Agenda Planning Group may decide on areas of the business they wish to receive an update on. In this instance, the wishes of the Agenda Planning Group will be communicated to the Executive by the Secretary.

L. Non attendance

Representative Body members and relevant employees who are unable to attend Representative Body meetings are expected to notify the Governance Team as soon as possible.

In line with the Code of Conduct and the Rules of the Society, Representative Body members failing to attend on average 80% of meetings over any 12 month period without valid reason or refusing to undergo any training prescribed by the Representative Body, will automatically be in serious breach of the Representative Body Code of Conduct.

If a Representative is absent from three consecutive meetings or three in a six month period, this absence will be discussed by the Secretary and the Representative concerned, other than if the Representative Body had given approval to the absence or if the personal circumstances leading to the absence are known to the Chair.

M. Conduct of Business

At the start of the Representative Body meeting, the Chair will welcome any visitors.

The meeting will, (unless previously agreed by the Chair), follow the agenda and discussions will focus on the issues raised in the reports.

The role of employees at Representative Body meetings is to support the Representative Body and assist in the decision-making process.

Representatives will abide by their agreed Code of Conduct, including respecting the views of others.

Representative Body decisions are normally reached by consensus. In the event of a vote being taken, it will be decided by a majority vote, each Representative present will have one vote. In the event of a tie, the Chair of the meeting will have a second or casting vote. Whatever the final decision the Representative Body will report this decision as a consensus and every member of the Representative Body will be expected to support that decision.

The Representative Body will have access to and will take independent advice through the Secretary as required and appropriate.