

CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

The name of the Panel shall be the **Alibon Ward Neighbourhood Panel**, hereinafter referred to as AWNP

2. AIMS

The aims of the AWNP shall be as follows:

- a) In agreement with the Metropolitan Police, there will be a team of police officers dedicated to Alibon ward in the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham, which shall be known as the Alibon Safer Neighbourhoods Team, (hereinafter referred to as ASNT). The AWNP shall identify and set local priorities for this Team, and monitor its work, in accordance with the Terms of Reference agreed in Appendix 1.
- b) To represent all communities and groups, including individuals in Alibon ward in the above pursuit, in an equal partnership with this community, Barking & Dagenham Council, and the Police.
- c) To uphold equal opportunities and foster good relations amongst all members of the community.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- a) The structure of the AWNP shall be that of a democratic assembly of community representatives. Full (voting) membership shall be open to all community representatives (or their substitutes – see (h) below) who live in Alibon ward (the area covered by the AWNP).
- b). The area covered by the AWNP shall be within the boundaries of Alibon ward in the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham.
- c). The size of the AWNP shall be no more than fifteen members.
- d) Admission to full membership may be considered at any meeting, when it will be decided by a simple majority vote of existing members who are satisfied that the new member:
 1. supports the aims of the AWNP, and agrees with the Terms of Reference in Appendix 1
 2. In order to maintain diversity, memberships must be renewed every 12 months. They will lapse 18 months from the previous application if not renewed.
- e) Individuals may be admitted to the AWNP as members with full voting rights if existing members are satisfied a particular area, or the community in that area, is not represented on the Panel.
- f) A member may resign at any time by informing the Chair in writing.
- g) If a member does not attend three consecutive meetings without giving an apology to the satisfaction of the AWNP, the Panel will have the right to remove that member from the AWNP by a two third majority vote of members present in a meeting. Please see de-selection criteria in Appendix 1.
- h) A member may provide a substitute, provided that substitute adheres to the Terms of Reference as agreed in Appendix 1.
- i) Councillors representing Alibon ward shall be invited to send one member to attend the meetings to assist and advise the AWNP, but they shall have no voting rights.

- j) Council, and other statutory service providers and agencies, may from time to time be invited to the meetings to assist and advise the AWNP

4. ORDINARY MEETINGS

- a) The frequency of ordinary meetings shall be every 10 weeks unless decided otherwise by the AWNP.
- b) Not less than 14 clear days' notice shall be given to all members of an Ordinary Meeting.
- c) The quorum for ordinary meetings shall be not less than 6 members.

5. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- a) A member may at any time call a Special General Meeting of the Panel, either for the purpose of altering the Constitution or for considering any matters which the officers may decide should be referred to the members in general. A Special General Meeting shall be called at the written request to the member, countersigned by not less than 5 other members who must give reasons for this request. Any matters received by the Secretary 14 clear days before the Special General Meeting shall be discussed at the meeting.
- b) Not less than 14 days notice of the Special General Meeting shall be given to all members.
- c) The quorum for Special General Meetings shall be not less than 8 members.

6. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

- a) Offensive behaviour, including racist, sexist or inflammatory remarks, shall not be permitted at any meeting, and shall constitute a breach of reasonable behaviour. If the unreasonable behaviour persists then, following a vote, the member or members responsible shall be excluded from the remainder of the meeting. Also see Code of Conduct in Appendix 3.
- b) All meetings shall be open to members of the general public for whom the opportunity to speak shall be at the discretion of the Chair. This will be subject to a "part two" section of the agenda as per the Terms of Reference of the AWNP relating to confidentiality, as referred to in Appendix 1.
- c) Members may not use their position on the Panel for party-political purposes either during meetings or as a representative of the AWNP outside meetings.
- d) At all meetings except those dealing with alterations to the Constitution, decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of those members present and voting. Any alteration to the Constitution shall be taken by the approval of a 2/3rds majority of members present and voting.
- e) Except for AGM business, the Chair shall have a second casting vote in the eventuality of a tie vote at any meeting. The Chair shall also have a representative role of the AWNP entering in to correspondence with councillors, council and other statutory service providers and agencies, and members of the public. The Chair shall also be responsible for setting the Agendas of meetings.
- f) The Secretary shall be responsible for:
 - ◆ Issuing the appropriate notices for all meetings
 - ◆ Either delegating or personally preparing and despatching agendas, minutes of all meetings, and all other relevant paperwork subject to the approval of the Chair, and within the appropriate notice periods.

- ◆ The reporting of all correspondence to meetings of the AWNP, subject to the prior approval of the Chair.
- ◆ Reporting to the AWNP any new membership applications to fill vacancies and verifying the criteria requirements of potential applicants, ensuring membership criteria is reported to the AWNP, maintained and followed
- ◆ Maintaining an appropriate filing system for all the above.

All secretarial and administration expenses shall be met by the ASNT (the Metropolitan Police), or Barking & Dagenham Council.

7. DISSOLUTION

- a) If the Panel, by a simple majority, decides at any time to dissolve itself, it shall give at least 21 days' notice of a meeting to all members.
- b) If such a decision is confirmed by a simple majority of those present and voting at the meeting, the AWNP shall have the power to dispose of any assets it holds.

This Constitution was adopted as the Constitution of Alibon Safer Neighbourhoods Panel at a public meeting held at Rogers Road church in Rogers Road, RM9 on 1st April 2008

Signed (Chair)

Signed (Vice-Chair)

Signed (Secretary)

Date

APPENDIX 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE AWNP

- 1) These “terms of reference” will form the guidelines for the work of the AWNP
- 2) Provided any proposals of amendment have been circulated in advance and within the appropriate notice periods to all members, these Terms of Reference may be altered during any meeting by a simple majority vote of members present.
- 3) The AWNP shall receive regular update reports from the ASNT and based on these reports and the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) of the ASNT surveys, shall follow the criteria below. (See paragraph 2.a. of the Constitution, under “Aims”)
- 4) No person or persons regardless of their status, on or outside the AWNP membership, shall receive preferential treatment with regards to the work of the ASNT.
- 5) The work of the ASNT shall be to benefit all members of the public, living, working, and passing through the ward of Alibon.
- 6) The AWNP in its endeavours to fulfil its task shall consult and seek advice from officers working in the council, other statutory sector service providers and agencies, councillors, and members of the public pertinent to any particular issue within its own remit.
- 7) The AWNP shall have the right to ask for and receive the update work reports of the ASNT, including those submitted to higher management within the Metropolitan Police
- 8) The “criteria” to be followed to prioritise works shall be:
 - a. The work of the ASNT shall be both reactive and proactive, and based on strategic planning
 - b. Both, reactive and proactive work shall be based on the following priorities depending on the resources of the team at the time - for example:
 - i. Drug related anti-social and unacceptable behaviour
 - ii. Youth related anti-social and unacceptable behaviour
 - iii. Street drinking related anti-social and unacceptable behaviour
 - iv. Graffiti related anti-social and unacceptable behaviour
 - v. Any other activity, causing emotional harm to members of the public

(The above priorities are only examples and not necessarily in the same order, and depending on circumstances at any one time are subject to change by a simple majority vote of those present during a meeting of the AWNP)
- 9) **Confidentiality**
 - a. As a member of the AWNP information may be acquired that has not been made public, and will remain confidential until decided by the Metropolitan Police. It will be regarded as a betrayal of trust to breach such confidences. Members must never disclose or use confidential information arising from the work of the AWNP for personal advantage or for the advantage of anyone known to them, or to the disadvantage of the AWNP or the Police.

- b. If necessary, meetings shall be closed to members of the public and other non-voting members, in a “part two” section agenda, to consider confidential matters.
- c. Apart from the breach of trust, there may be cause for prosecution under the data protection act for the breach of confidential information

10) Disclosure of Interests

- a) If members have an interest in a matter arising at a meeting of the AWNP or through its work, in which the member concerned may benefit as a result, they should always disclose it. Having declared an interest, it will be up to the AWNP to determine on a case by case basis, whether or not that member should withdraw from that part of the meeting.
- b) The opportunity to declare an interest will be given at the start of each meeting. However, members can declare an interest at any point during a meeting when it becomes apparent that they have one.
- c) Members should at all times avoid any occasion for suspicion and any appearance of improper conduct. They should not allow the impression to be created that they are, or may be, using their position to promote a private or personal interest, rather than forwarding the general public interest. They should always be aware of public perceptions, knowing all the facts of the situation, would the public reasonably think that a member might be influenced by it.
- d) Members who may have doubt about disclosing an interest should disclose it anyway and seek the advice of the AWNP on whether they should continue to take part in the business under consideration.

11) De-selection Criteria

- a) All Panel members shall agree to abide by the Code of Conduct in Appendix 3. De-selection of a member shall require a two third majority of those present and voting. One or more of the following to be used by the AWNP for the de-selection of any member:-
- b) Failure to fulfil designated actions or prepare for meetings
- c) The member’s representation, skills and expertise are unnecessarily duplicated on the AWNP
- d) The member no longer demonstrably represents their community and/or has their respect
- e) The member has failed to attend three consecutive meetings of the AWNP without giving an apology to their satisfaction
- f) The representative’s membership would undermine the credibility and legitimacy of the AWNP or fundamentally weaken aspects of its work; and
- g) The member has broken the Code of Conduct or the conditions of these “terms of reference”
- h) Panel members shall have a right to a hearing against any decisions to deselect. In this instance the AWNP shall hear the appeal in a special meeting and its decision will be final.

12) Gifts and Hospitality

- a) Each member is personally responsible for treating with caution any offer or gift, favour or hospitality that may be made, in the knowledge that the member is on the Panel of the AWNP. The person or organisation making the offer may be doing so to obtain information or trying to influence a decision.
- b) Members are personally responsible for all decisions connected with the acceptance or offer of gifts or hospitality and for avoiding the risk of damage to the public confidence in the AWNP

All members are required to sign the disclosure below that they will abide by the conditions set out above

Signed **Name** **Date**

Organisation

APPENDIX 2

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

An Informal Chat

Most complaints may easily be resolved by talking the problem over with the person involved. An informal chat may resolve the problem or clear up any misunderstanding. If this action is inappropriate or if after a chat you are still not satisfied with the way that your complaint has been handled please follow the procedure outlined below.

Making a Formal Complaint

NB: All complaints must be put in writing. Anonymous complaints and, unless there is a special reason, complaints not in writing will be disregarded.

Stage 1

Send your complaint in writing to the AWNP Chair. If the complaint is against the Chair, then send it to the Secretary.

Upon receipt of the complaint the Chair/Secretary will:

- send an acknowledgement (within five days) that the complaint has been received
- investigate your complaint and reply, in writing, within 28 days of receipt of your complaint.
- (As part of her/his investigation, the Chair/Secretary may arrange to hold a meeting with you [and, where appropriate, the person against whom the complaint has been made] in an effort to resolve the issue.)

Stage 2

If you are still not happy after receiving the Chair's/Secretary's response, you can ask that your complaint is referred to the AWNP. Such a request should be made in writing to the Chair and be received within 21 days of the written reply to Stage 1.

You will be invited to attend the meeting of the AWNP at which your complaint is to be considered and will be entitled to bring a friend or companion with you if you wish.

The decision of the Panel will be given to you in writing within seven days of its meeting, and will be final as far as the AWNP is concerned.

At all stages the time limits can be altered by mutual consent.

APPENDIX 3

CODE OF CONDUCT

This code of conduct applies to all panel members of the AWNP, including invited guests, and those in attendance at meetings. Any breach of this code of conduct shall be dealt with under Paragraph 11 of the Terms of Reference of the AWNP.

1. If a panel member experiences any concern or dissatisfaction with another panel member, this should be dealt with under procedures in Appendix 3.
2. Panel members and workers should not denigrate colleagues in the presence of third parties, nor adversely criticise a colleague in the presence of others save in the context of the appropriate procedures.
3. Panel members and the ASNT should not impose on each other excessive and unreasonable amounts of work of any kind, and the AWNP should not impose work on ASNT outside the remit of their job.
4. Panel members should not seek to undermine, outside constitutional procedures, agreed policy of the AWNP, nor work against the interests of the AWNP, nor seek to bring the AWNP, its officers, its members into disrepute.
5. Panel members should not harass, discriminate against or oppress any group or individual by reference to their religion, race, gender, sexuality, disability, age, health, political beliefs, or any other grounds.
6. Panel members should be committed to providing services to its members that do not discriminate on the above grounds, and to providing services that will positively contribute to the elimination of discrimination.
7. In the event of any proven breach of this code of practice by a Panel member, the AWNP reserves their right under clause 11 (f) of the Constitution to terminate the membership of the member who has breached this policy. Under clause 11 (g) any such accused member will have the right to a hearing by the Panel before any decision to expel is taken.

APPENDIX 3 (For information)



Statement of Intent to Barking & Dagenham Community and Police Consultative Group

In recent years the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) has achieved significant reductions in crime. Despite these successes, many Londoners continue to believe that crime is rising and perceive an increased feeling of risk. The **Safer Neighbourhood** programme has been established to close the 'gap' between falling levels of crime and the public's perception of crime.

It aims to deliver a dedicated neighbourhood policing team to every neighbourhood in London by 2008. This programme introduces community focussed policing to target visible crime and disorder in order to make neighbourhoods more secure by both reducing crime and the fear of crime.

Each ward will have a dedicated Team consisting of at least a Police Sergeant, 2 Police Constables and 3 PCSO's.

This is in addition to current community based officers.

These dedicated teams will patrol in uniform to provide a clear and visible police presence together with other uniformed staff. They will normally patrol their neighbourhoods on foot or on a bicycle.

These teams are citizen focussed and are locally accountable. Representatives of the wards community come together to set up a ward based focus group called a citizen panel.

The panel will be run by local people who will be supported by police and partners. The panels will decide on the problems it wants it's team to focus their attention on, but also monitor its effectiveness and impact.

So the **Safer Neighbourhood Teams** will be tasked by the panel with solving local issues relevant to that ward.

The feedback form the pilot sites across the UK is that communities living and working in these areas gain confidence in their local police services. They recognise their local officers and have increased confidence in their understanding and knowledge of local issues and problems affecting their day-to-day lives.