

WEST THURROCK AND SOUTH STIFFORD PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY FORUM CONSTITUTION

1) Title

The name of the association shall be known as West Thurrock and South Stifford People's Community Forum.

2) Objectives

West Thurrock and South Stifford People's Community Forum (WTSSPCF) is established to represent all those living or working in West Thurrock and South Stifford encompassed within the catchment area defined by a general committee. By working in partnership with all relevant interest groups, voluntary/community groups, government departments, statutory authorities and individuals, WTSSPCF seeks to provide for improvements within the local environs for an involved and valued community.

WTSSPCF Community Forum will strive to:

- Strengthen local community networks and develop constructive and effective partnerships between local people and the Council.
- Provide an additional route for the public to raise concerns and issues on local matters and communicate these to Thurrock Council, and to other relevant bodies/organisations.
- Provide information to local residents, businesses, voluntary/community/faith groups, within the local area, and work towards developing a community spirit by holding local events that will bring the community together.
- Achieve funding for local initiatives from Thurrock Council, and from other relevant bodies/organisations as appropriate.
- Form links with local health and education providers, alongside other service providers within the community.
- WTSSPCF will be non-political, non-religious and non-sectarian.

3) Membership

Full membership of WTSSPCF shall be open to individuals who live in West Thurrock/South Stifford, community groups, voluntary organisations, and business representatives that have a permanent base in the area as previously defined.

Each member organisation shall appoint one representative entitled to attend and vote on its behalf at general meetings of WTSSPCF. A deputy may be appointed where necessary.

Honorary members may be appointed at the discretion of the General Committee, and may include such bodies as Police Authorities, Primary Care Trust, and Local Ward Councillors. Honorary members shall not be entitled to vote.

Members shall at all times conduct themselves in a manner acceptable to the General Committee when attending meetings or any functions in connection with the

Community Forum. Failure to meet the required standard may result in exclusion from the Forum by agreement of the General Committee.

Voting members should express a declaration of interest on matters that directly affect them. Any vested interest should be declared at the start of any relevant meeting, and the member will abstain from voting.

4) Community Forum Officers

A Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Draft Community Forum and shall hold office to the conclusion of the following AGM, but shall be eligible for re-election.

Only full members shall be eligible to serve as officers.

If any officer fails to attend more than three consecutive committee meetings without recorded apologies, they will be deemed to have resigned by default.

5 Community Forum General Committee

The affairs of WTSSPCF shall be directed by a General Committee, which shall comprise of the Officers plus a minimum of three and maximum of twelve other elected full members.

The members of the Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the WTSSPCF and shall hold office for period of one year. Members shall be eligible for re-election excepting that no member shall hold office for more than three years. On the expiry of such period one further year must elapse before any member again becomes eligible for re-election, unless there are no other candidates for election.

The WTSSPCF may also co-opt committee members at a general meeting in the event of a vacancy on the committee.

Honorary Members shall be invited by the Committee to attend meetings but shall maintain a 'non voting' status.

If any committee member fails to attend more than three consecutive committee meetings without recorded apologies, they will be deemed to have resigned by default.

6) Meetings of the Forum

An Annual General Meeting shall be held at a time and place determined by the General Committee giving the public at least 21 days notice of such. No more than 15 months shall have elapsed since the preceding AGM.

All committee members will be elected to form a General Committee, and officer roles will be agreed by election from the elected committee by the forum's membership. In the event of more than one nomination for an officer post, an election by a simple majority vote will determine the post holder.

In exceptional circumstances, the Chair of the Committee may call a Special General Meeting if so requested in writing, signed by a minimum of ten full members of Draft Community Forum and giving reasons for the request.

The General Committee shall meet not less than four times a year, the actual frequency and timing to be determined by the Committee. All meetings shall be open

to the public and should include an "Open Session" for questions and issues to be raised by the public.

The General Committee will convene at least four public meetings a year at a time giving the public at least 14 days notice. One of these meetings may include the AGM.

Quorum - For a valid meeting to be held there must be at least two of the Officers plus three other full members in attendance.

Voting - At all times matters shall be decided by simple majority voting of the forum's membership. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

Minutes - Minutes of all meetings shall be maintained by the Secretary and approved by the General Committee.

7) **Finance**

A bank account in the name of West Thurrock and South Stifford People's Community Forum shall be opened with a bank approved by the General Committee. Not less than two out of four authorised signatories must sign all cheques.

The treasurer shall maintain accounting records and produce an annual summary for the AGM. An independent witness who has looked at the accounts with the treasurer and is confident that they are an accurate record should sign the summary.

A current financial report will be made available at each meeting. Subject to the request of two or more committee members, the accounts must be made available at 10 days notice.

8) **Amendments to Constitution**

Once adopted, the constitution may only be amended by reference to a Special General Meeting, or AGM, at which a majority of two thirds of those present, and eligible to vote, is required for ratification.

9) **Dissolution**

If the General Committee decide by a majority vote that the Forum is to dissolve, a Special General Meeting shall be called to ratify that decision. A majority of two thirds of those present and eligible to vote will be required to endorse the committee decision. Any excess funds held at that time and available for distribution shall be donated to an agreed charity.

Constitution Ratified

By.....(Name)

Date.....

Position.....

The Draft Community Forum operates an Equal Opportunity Policy