

East Tilbury Ward:

The Welcom Forum

Constitution

1) Title The Welcom Forum

The name of the association shall be known as The Welcom Forum

2) Objectives

The Welcom' Forum is established to represent all those with an interest (ie residing or working) in The East Tilbury Ward encompassed within the catchment area defined by the general committee, by working in partnership with all relevant interest groups, volunteer/community groups, government departments, statutory authorities and individuals, The Welcom Forum seeks to provide for improvements within the local environs for an involved and valued community.

The Welcom 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 those with Thurrock Council and other relevant bodies/organisations.
- ❖ Provide information to the local residents, businesses, groups and all interested parties 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 other relevant bodies/organisations as appropriate.
- ❖ Form links with health and education providers alongside other service providers within the community.
- ❖ The Welcom Forum will be non-political, non -religious and non -sectarian

3) Membership

Associate Membership

Associate membership is open to any individual who lives or works within the area of Thurrock covered by the any org boundaries as defined in Section 2. Associate membership entitles members to attend all public meetings and only requires proof, if requested, of living or working in the Forum Area. Associate Members are not entitled to vote but can take part in all public debates.

Full Membership

Full membership of The Welcom Forum shall be open to individuals, community groups, voluntary organisations and business representatives that are based in, or have an interest in, the area previously defined

Individual Membership

Any Associate Member will be entitled to apply to the General Committee for Full Membership after attending 2? Public meetings of any org within a 6? Month period, Full Members will be asked to read and accept the any org Constitution in force at the time of applying for Full Membership.

Each member organisation shall appoint one representative entitled to attend and vote on its behalf at general meetings of The Welcom Forum. 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 Trusts and local ward Councillors. Honorary members shall not be entitled to vote.

Full & Associate Members shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner acceptable to the General Committee when attending meetings or any functions in connection with Welcom Forum. Failure to meet the required standard may result in the exclusion from the Forum by agreement with the General Committee.

Voting members should express a declaration of interest on financial matters and any vested interest, whether direct or indirect, should be declared at the start of any relevant meeting and the member will abstain from any voting.

4) Conduct

All members and visitor will conduct themselves in a proper and respectful manner. Any foul language, acts of aggression, behaviour that might cause alarm or distress or any form of discrimination towards another person in regards to their age, gender, religion, sexual preferences, race, class, or any other preferences **WILL NOT** be tolerated and the offenders will be asked to leave the meeting and face being banned and a report will be submitted to the authorities.

5) Forum Officers

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

Elected Councillors are ex officio members but will not have a vote and will not be eligible to stand for the position of Chair

Only full members shall be eligible to serve as officers.

If any officer fails to attend more than three (3) consecutive committee meetings without recorded apologies, they will be deemed to have resigned by default.

6) Forum General Committee

The affairs of The Welcom Forum shall be directed by a General Committee which shall comprise of the officers (min 5 max 12) elected full members.

The members of that committee shall be elected at the AGM of The Welcom' Forum and shall hold office for a period of one year. Members shall be eligible for re-election excepting that no member shall hold office for more than five (??) years. On the expiry of such period one full year should elapse before any member can again be eligible for re-election. The exception to the re-election clause will be if there are no other candidates for election.

Honorary and associate 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 (3) consecutive committee meetings without recorded apologies, they will be deemed to have resigned by default.

7) Meetings of The Welcom' Forum

An annual General meeting shall be held at a time and a place determined by the general committee giving the public at least 21 days notice of such. No more than fifteen (15) months shall elapse since the preceding AGM.

All committee members will be elected to form the General Committee, and officer roles will be agreed by election from the elected committee by the forum's Full Members. In the event of more than one (1) nomination for a 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 five (5) full members of

The Welcom' Forum giving the reasons for the request.

The General Committee will meet not less than twice (2) a year, the actual frequency and timing to be determined by the Committee. All meetings will be opened 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 six (6) public meetings a year at a time giving

the public at least fourteen (14) days notice. One of these meetings is to include the AGM.

Quorum – For a valid meeting to take place there must be at least two (2) of the Officers present plus one (1) other full member or a minimum of 50% of the elected members, whichever is the greatest. In the absence of the elected Chair a meeting Chair will be elected from the officers present by way of a simple majority vote.

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

Any voting from those present will only be accepted from the members who have attended at least two (2) meetings in the previous six (6) months.

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

In times of a Crisis, for example a Natural Disaster/Pandemic, the deadline for holding an AGM may be extended or emergency measures may be adopted for remote attendance, proxy voting and/or adjourning, postponing or cancelling the meeting on the basis that it is impossible to hold it

8) Finance a bank account in the name of Welcom Forum shall be opened with a bank approved by the General Committee. Not less than two (2) Officers from the accepted signatories list will be required to authorise payments and sign cheques and they shall not be related in anyway either by birth, marriage or common partnership or reside at the same address.

The Treasurer shall maintain accounting records and produce an annual summary for the AGM.

A current financial report will be made available at each meeting. Subject to the request of two (2) or more Committee Members, the accounts must be made available at ten (10) days' notice.

Amendments to Constitution

Once adopted the constitution may only be amended by reference to an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting, at which a majority of three quarters ($\frac{3}{4}$) of those present, and eligible to vote, is required for ratification.

Constitution Ratified

..... **Chair****Date**

..... **Witnessed by****Date**

..... **Position**

Thr Welcom Forum operates an Equal Opportunities Policy