

# Income Management Focus Group

## Terms of Reference

A number of keen resident activists together with South Essex Homes are committed to the development of resident involvement to ensure that the service is continuously improved. To this end it was agreed that a Focus Group would be formed which would look specifically at Income Management issues.

### **Statement:**

We acknowledge that South Essex Homes have a responsibility to provide an efficient service to residents that will assist them in managing their own rent account.

### **Name:**

The name of the group will be the Income Management Focus Group.

### **Objectives:**

- Improve communication
- Improve the provision of information
- Develop payment methods
- Work with South Essex Homes to improve income management
- Encourage a good working relationship between residents and South Essex Homes and promote a joined-up approach.

### **Membership:**

Shall be open to all tenants and leaseholders with an interest in developing income management.

The group also reserves the right to invite and involve organisations from both the voluntary and statutory sector that can assist in achieving its overall objectives.

The group will be facilitated by an officer from the Income Management Team of South Essex Homes or their nominee.

The Resident/Leaseholder members of the existing group shall be solely responsible for inviting further members, to join if there becomes a vacancy. Any resident wishing to join a focus group should be invited to attend a meeting as a guest, so they can see if it is right for them and the existing members can see if they will fit the group's Terms of Reference.

The minimum number of tenants attending this group to enable decisions to be made will be no less than 4. For reasons of practicality, the maximum number of members will be 8. If a member misses 3 meetings consecutively with no apologies, then they will be removed from the membership register.

It reserves the right to formulate a sub-group to operate ad hoc to take forward specific tasks and projects.

### **Meetings:**

Meetings shall be held every 6 to 8 weeks.

Agendas for meetings will be decided at each preceding meeting however additional agenda items can also be passed to the Support Services Team/Income Management Team prior to the forthcoming meeting.

### **Administration Support:**

The Income Management Team will prepare, collate and issue information on behalf of the group as well as book venues and undertake other duties as deemed necessary for meetings.

A member of the Income Management Team will attend to chair the meeting and provide updates.

## **Code of Conduct:**

1. Residents are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly fashion, always respecting other Residents, both in meetings and on the premises.
2. Offensive, disruptive, threatening or abusive behaviour and language including racist, sexist, disabled or homophobic inflammatory remarks shall not be permitted and will constitute a breach of reasonable behaviour.
3. Residents will be aware of the equal opportunities policies of South Essex Homes and will at no time act in a manner which is intentionally contrary to the spirit of these policies.
4. In their roles as Residents, Residents should not act in a manner that might bring the group into disrepute. Residents who have high levels of rent arrears or have been or are a perpetrator of anti-social behaviour cannot attend this group.
5. Residents wishing to speak should indicate to the Chair, and then wait to be called upon to speak. All speakers should address the Chair. The Chair's role is to make certain everyone has the opportunity to speak. Residents should be careful not to dominate the discussion.
6. Resident speakers should stick to the subject matter in hand and not stray from the point.
7. Only one person shall speak at a time and there should not be any private debates within the meeting.
8. Any breach of reasonable behaviour will result in a vote of no confidence being called against the offending member and the member will be asked to leave. The meeting will be stopped until that person has removed themselves from the meeting.