



## **North Hertfordshire District Council**

### **Animal Establishment Licensing Consultative Forum**

## **Terms of Reference**

#### **1. Purpose of the Forum**

- 1.1 The Animal Establishment Licensing Consultative Forum (“the Forum”) will enable representatives of the trade to meet regularly with Council Officers and other relevant authorities to consider and recommendations in relation to animal establishment licensing matters.
- 1.2 The Forum shall endeavour to further the licensing objectives stated in the Animal Licensing Policy.
- 1.3 The Forum will be responsible for the completion of the Forum Workplan, utilising smaller working sub-groups where appropriate.
- 1.4 Individual grievances are not issues for the Forum and should be raised with the Council on an individual basis.
- 1.5 The Forum will act as a representative body for the whole animal establishment licence trade, ensuring consultation with all licence holders to enable the Council to make fully informed decisions.

#### **2. Membership of the Forum**

- 2.1 Membership of the Forum is open to all North Hertfordshire animal establishment licence holders. Initial membership will be determined by a public invitation, membership being restricted to those persons who respond to the invitation and agree to regularly participate in the Forum and the delivery of the Forum Workplan.
- 2.2 To ensure that membership is fully representative, additional members may be co-opted at any time by the council.
- 2.3 Forum membership will be reviewed periodically by the Council.
- 2.4 The Council will ensure that appropriate Officers attend the Forum to enable the Forum Workplan to be delivered.

- 2.5 The Head of Housing and Public Protection and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Environmental Health will not be members of the Forum as they will be considering the Forum's recommendations. They may, however, attend the meetings where deemed appropriate by the Council.
- 2.6 The Council can co-opt members of the Forum from outside authorities, such as the constabulary or fire authority, and other local authority services, such as Environmental Health or Planning and Building Control.
- 2.7 Members that fail to attend without good reason for three consecutive meetings will forfeit their place on the Forum.
- 2.8 Members must attend in person to contribute to the meetings, or send a nominated representative in their absence. Voting by proxy is otherwise not permitted.

### **3. Role of Forum Members**

- 3.1 To assist with representing the views of the trade as a whole.
- 3.2 To assist with disseminating information to the trade to ensure that all licence holders are fully informed of latest policy and procedural developments.

### **4. Chairperson**

- 4.1 The Forum will be chaired by the Licensing Manager or a nominated deputy in his/her absence.
- 4.2 The chairperson will ensure that all views are heard and recorded in a fair and accurate manner.
- 4.3 The chairperson will ensure that the recommendations of the Forum are forwarded to the Head of Housing and Public Protection and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Environmental Health
- 4.4 Working sub-groups can appoint their own chairperson who will be responsible for reporting back to the main Forum.

### **5. Frequency of Meetings**

- 5.1 The Forum will meet at least once per calendar year and at other times deemed necessary by the chairperson.
- 5.2 Full Forum meetings will be primarily held at the Council Offices or at alternative venues with appropriate notice and agreement of the chairperson.
- 5.3 Working sub-groups can meet at venues chosen by the sub-group chairperson.

## **6. Secretarial Support**

- 6.1 Secretarial support for full Forum meetings will be supplied by the Council.
- 6.2 Minutes of full Forum meetings will be published on the Council's website at the earliest opportunity following a meeting.
- 6.3 The agenda for each full Forum meeting will be posted on the Council's website at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
- 6.4 Items for the agenda must be received by the chairperson no later than two weeks prior to the meeting

## **7. Sub-Groups**

- 7.1 Working sub-groups can be appointed to consider specific Forum Workplan issues in detail.
- 7.2 Sub-groups must report their findings back to the full Forum for final consideration.
- 7.3 Sub-groups may co-opt members who are particularly relevant to the sub-group's area of investigation.
- 7.4 Secretarial support for working sub-groups will be a matter for the sub-group members.

## **8. Reporting Mechanisms**

- 8.1 Once an issue on the Workplan has been completed, the Forum will make a recommendation for consideration by the Council.
- 8.2 Where appropriate, the recommendation will include a full report of the issues considered and the reasons for the recommendation. This may involve details of the consultation undertaken with the trade as a whole.
- 8.3 Once the Council have considered a recommendation, a response will be reported to Forum members for dissemination to the trade.
- 8.4 Any amendments to policy or procedures will be posted on the Council's website.

## **9. Forum Workplan**

- 9.1 The Workplan will consist of issues that the Forum consider necessary for consultation, with time-scales for completion.
- 9.2 Issues may include policy amendments or procedural changes, but equally may cover new legislative or statutory requirements.

## **10. Transparency**

- 10.1 The Forum is a public body and its minutes will be public documents.
- 10.2 The Forum is expected to be open, transparent and accountable. The Forum should ensure that all interests have a voice where appropriate and that hard to reach groups are engaged and represented.

## **11. Conduct**

- 11.1 Forum members will be expected to conduct themselves in a professional and responsible manner at all times. Inappropriate conduct may result in suspension or expulsion from the Forum.