



ROLE PROFILE – AREA BOARD

As an Area Board (AB) member, your role is to carry out in-depth scrutiny of service performance and use the findings to challenge and shape the activities of the Area Housing office.

You must be:

- Honest, open, and able to listen without being judgemental ie keep an open mind about things until you have collected all the facts and evidence.
- Able to work with other Board members by allowing all to have their say & not being dismissive of others' contributions.
- Choose the right time, place, and way to feed back your thoughts and findings. Do not share your impressions and ideas with people while you are still collecting evidence from them.
- Keep to any relevant rules or policies including the Code of Conduct.

BEING OBJECTIVE

Your direct experience as a resident is what makes you special and unique as an Area Board member. Your own experience and views should inform, but not dominate or dictate how you work. You need to stay impartial and avoid conflicts of interest. You should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with the Governance Manager. An example of where a conflict might arise would be if you have any personal connection with any part of the service that you are scrutinising eg family member(s), paid work.

HANDLING INFORMATION

As an Area Board member, you will have access to a lot of information about Lambeth Housing and its customers and suppliers. Much of this information will be personally or commercially sensitive. The Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act control how information may be shared and used. Some information you receive will be **confidential** (eg commercially sensitive or involves named staff). This will not be allowed to share with others.

It is possible that you may come across something during a scrutiny exercise that really worries you (for example, if you think there is fraud going on, or any other sort of criminal or serious undesirable behaviour). If this happens, you must tell the Governance Manager.

Aside from these formal protocols, you will need to be **tactful and diplomatic** in all your dealings with people you come into contact with on scrutiny reviews. Only you can judge this, but always think about how you say what, to whom, and what impact it will have.

BEING FAIR

In your work as an Area Board member, you must have and show respect for all the people you deal with. This is about putting equal opportunities into practice in your work. The key is simply to respect differences fairly, so that you do not exclude anyone from your work, or treat anyone inappropriately or unfairly.

TRAINING

You are required to undergo appropriate training to the role. Currently, attending an induction session is mandatory, and Board members are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the additional training on offer. An accredited training course has been specially commissioned for Area Board members and tailored to the work you will do, so as a Board member you have priority when registering for the course, although it is open to other interested residents as well.

Even members who have a background in scrutiny or have been involved in resident engagement for a long time should find the course useful, and it will provide a useful common ground for Board members.

CONTACT WITH STAFF AND CONTRACTORS

All Area Board members, Housing staff and contractors should observe high standards of courtesy in their dealings with each other. You should uphold Lambeth Council's Code of Conduct when dealing with staff and/or contractors. You should carefully consider the potential impact of any comments you make. Remember your comments reflect on the Area Board because you are an ambassador for residents.

As an Area Board member there may well be occasions when you need to consider whether you are acting as a customer or as a Board member and whether the situation presents you with a conflict of interest. It is not appropriate to use the Area Board to raise individual issues unless anecdotally.

EXPENSES

You are entitled to claim reasonable expenses for travel and child care. If undertaking scrutiny reviews you may be entitled to a subsistence allowance if refreshments are not available.