

Scottish Borders Council

Colleague Community Constitution

1. Name

The Name of the group shall be “Scottish Borders Council Colleague Community”.

2. Definitions

“Discussion” means the exchange of views and the establishment of a dialogue between the Colleague Representatives and the Council Management

“Council” means Scottish Borders Council

“Corporate Management Team” means the Chief Executive and all other senior managers as included in the Council’s Scheme of Delegation

“Employee/Colleague” means anyone employed by the Council, whether on a full time, part time, permanent or temporary basis, and also includes employees of arms’ length bodies wholly owned by the Council.

“Colleague Representatives” means the employees/colleagues who have volunteered to represent the members on the Colleague Community

“Community” means the Scottish Borders Council Colleague Community

“Officers” means any member of the Council’s Management Team.

“Colleague/employee” means employees of the Council

3. Objectives

The primary objectives of the group shall be :

- To provide an opportunity for all colleagues to provide information to decision makers to allow them to make better informed decisions through dialogue between Colleague Representatives, senior managers and elected members.
- To meet regularly to further these discussions.
- The work of the Colleague Community will not impact on the works of the recognised Trades Unions, or their elected representatives, nor any existing negotiating or consulting processes.
- The Community shall not affect the rights and responsibilities of the Council Management in any business decisions, but may influence that decision.

4. Scope

The Colleague community shall invite the opportunity for employees/colleagues and management, out with formal Union negotiations, for matters relating to employment and Council plans. These may include, but are not limited to :

- Employee benefits
- Public sector reform
- Council activities, financial and economic
- Corporate restructures
- Budget proposals
- Employment arrangements

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5. Participation

All employees employed by Scottish Borders Council are automatically members of the Forum during their term of employment with the Council or relevant arms' length body, irrespective of whether this is on a full time, part time, permanent or temporary basis or where they are based. Elected members of the Council are regarded as employees in this respect.

Community participation shall automatically terminate upon termination of employment with the Council or relevant arms' length body.

6. Management Committee

The community shall be managed by a Management Committee, which comprises the following members.

Chairperson – This shall be the Executive Member for Service Delivery and Transformation of the Council or their delegated representative

The Chief Executive and the Corporate Management Team

Director for People Performance and Change or their nominated depute.

Colleague Representative Chairperson

Colleague Representatives – up to a maximum of 15

Elected Members –the Leader, the Executive Member for Service Delivery and Transformation the Leader of the Opposition and two other appointed members

No Colleague Community meeting shall take place without a quorum of:

2 Elected Members

2 Corporate Management Team members

2 Employee Representatives

Director for People Performance and Change or their nominated depute.

The Management Committee will have the power to set up sub-committees where required.

7. Finance

The forum shall have no direct finance responsibilities. Where finances are required for agreed purposes, these shall be funded, on the agreement of the Community, from existing Council budgets with the agreement of the relevant budget holder.

8. General Meetings

All members are permitted to attend the Community meetings but, other than management committee members, shall only be able to address the meeting with prior arrangement unless otherwise directed by the Chairperson.

Meetings shall be advertised to all staff members in advance and shall be held at least three times during the year. Staff members can contact their Colleague Representative by

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emailing them directly or contacting employeeecouncil@scotborders.gov.uk. Meetings will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams, to encourage participation.

Extraordinary meetings (including those that are not held virtually) shall be arranged when required with the approval of the Chairperson, the Chief Executive and the Chairman of the Colleague Representatives.

The Council's Democratic Services Department shall be responsible for the support associated with the meetings.

Attendance at any Community meeting by an external expert shall only be for the item for which they have an input. They shall not be present at the meeting for the discussion of other business.

9. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to this Constitution may only be made after agreement has been obtained at a quorate Community meeting.

10. Confidentiality

Members of the Management Committee, Colleague Representatives, deputies and experts shall not reveal any information passed to them or discussed at any Community meeting to any other party including other employees/colleagues, third parties or the media, which has been expressly provided in confidence. This obligation shall continue until such times as the information is deemed public by the Council, whether or not the employee remains a representative. Any breach could be deemed a disciplinary matter and may be subject to further investigation.

Colleague Representatives and Officers attending any Colleague meeting shall be bound by the Code of Conduct for Employees of Scottish Borders Council.

Elected Members attending any Community meeting shall be bound by the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

11. General

The Colleague Representatives shall elect a Chairperson

The agenda for each Community meeting shall be agreed between the Chairperson, the Colleague Representatives Chairperson and a member of the Management Team. This shall be confirmed at a meeting prior to each Forum meeting and circulated with the relevant notice by the secretariat.

The Council's Democratic Services Department shall be responsible for preparing an accurate minute of the Forum meetings and circulating these as appropriate.

The Council shall cover all reasonable operating costs of the Community

Colleague Representatives shall be entitled to paid time off for attending Community Meetings.

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With the prior agreement of the Director People Performance and Change, Colleague Representatives shall be granted reasonable paid time off to carry-out duties associated with their role as a Colleague Representative.

Where appropriate, the Colleague Representatives shall be supported by training activities, the costs of which shall be met by the Council from the appropriate budget with the agreement of that budget holder.

All Colleague representatives will have access to the Colleague Community mailbox (employeecouncil@scotborders.gov.uk).