



# Roles and Responsibilities for Community Panel Co-Opted Members

Thank you for your interest in the role of co-opted member on one of Cumberland Council's Community Panels. Before you return your expression of interest, please read this document, which outlines the role, eligibility and recruitment criteria.

It is important to us that co-opted members have a strong commitment to the Community Panel area to which they are applying. If your local panel is not listed on the expression of interest document, that panel is not currently recruiting co-opted members. Other panels may recruit in the future.

We are keen to invite a range of experiences and backgrounds, and you may feel that your own experience is not accounted for in the outline below. There is no one template for a Co-opted member, so if you believe you can bring something to the role, whether or not it is outlined here, we encourage you to apply.

We are keen to invite people with a range of experiences and backgrounds to support the Community Panels' priorities. Please visit [co-opted \*\*Community Panel members\*\* | Cumberland Council](#) for details of the panels' priorities.

## Core role

### As a co-opted member you will:

- Contribute to discussions, bringing any specialist or local knowledge, skills, experience and expertise to the development of the panel's decisions.
- Ensure there is effective independent challenge to the Community Panel and that this challenge is constructive, supporting the panel in carrying out its role.
- Act as a non-party-political voice for those who live and/or work in the panel area.

## Responsibilities

- Attend all formal meetings of the Community Panel (four each year). Meetings are held during the day and in the evenings. This varies across Community Panels.
- Establish good relations with other members and officers.
- Attend induction and training sessions as required.
- Prepare for meetings by reading the agenda and additional information to familiarise yourself with the issues.
- At meetings you will be encouraged to take part in conversations, ask questions in a non-judgemental way, respect confidentiality and help the panel to reach decisions which are for the good of the local community.
- Keep abreast of local issues and be an advocate for less heard voices when shaping Community Panel decisions.

Co-opted members are not able to vote on decisions, but will be treated equally in all other respects, and will have the same level of support and information as elected panel members.

## Required competencies, personal skills and qualities for co-opted Community Panel members.

### Who is eligible?

- You must be at least 16 years old by 1 April 2025.
- You should ideally live or work in the Community Panel area to which you are applying. If you work in one area and live in another, you should apply to the area with which you believe you have the strongest connection, and explain the rationale for this in your application.

You must not be:

- A current employee of Cumberland Council.
- A serving elected member of a Community Panel.

### What qualities do I need?

As well as being of good character, you should be able to:

- **Think strategically** - have breadth of vision, rise above detail, and see problems and issues from a wider, forward-looking perspective.
- **Make good judgements** - take a balanced, open-minded and objective approach – in, for example, evaluating the priorities of a Community Panel and the varied needs of the local community.
- **Be open to change** - challenge accepted views constructively, without confrontation, and recognise and respond positively to the need for change.
- **Scrutinise and challenge** - rigorously scrutinise and challenge constructively, and put the needs of the local community at the heart of all decision making.
- **Communicate effectively** - communicate effectively both verbally and in writing, and interact positively with other members of the panel, officers and members of the public.

The following personal skills and qualities are also very important:

- Team working
- Community focus
- Self-confidence
- Enthusiasm and drive
- Respect for others
- Integrity
- Decisiveness