

**SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT BETWEEN MAIDSTONE AND WEST KENT MEDIATION SCHEMES AND TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL FOR THE PROVISION OF MEDIATION SERVICES FOR THE BOROUGH FOR THE PERIOD 2015/16**

Introduction

The services provided by the two mediation schemes make a valuable contribution to both quality of life and to community safety. In addition the Schemes are a resource for Council officers to enable them to meet their statutory requirements.

This Service Level Agreement seeks to:

1. recognise the ongoing working relationship between Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) and the mediation schemes Maidstone Mediation Scheme (MMS) and West Kent Mediation (WKM)
2. set service standards for clearer public scrutiny
3. provide financial stability for the Mediation Schemes.

It has been agreed that Maidstone Mediation Scheme should represent the two mediation schemes for the purposes of this SLA.

Service to be Provided by the Mediation Schemes

- 1.1 The Mediation Schemes will provide staff and volunteers trained in mediation skills to deliver mediation services to Tonbridge & Malling residents for dealing with neighbour disputes and problems of anti social behaviour within the neighbourhood.
- 1.2 The service provided by the Mediation schemes will be free, impartial, confidential and to the standards set by the Community Legal Services Commission Quality Mark for mediation.
- 1.3 The Mediation Schemes will accept up to 100 cases per year across the area. These can be self referrals or referrals from other agencies e.g. Police, Council Officers, Housing officers, CAB
- 1.4 The Mediation Schemes reserve the right to turn down cases if they do not meet the requirements for mediation
- 1.5 The Mediation Schemes will facilitate access to the Service by all sections of the community by publicity, working with partners and outreach work.

- 1.6 The Mediation Schemes will process referrals from T&M officers and will report back to the referrer as per the confidentiality policies of the mediation schemes.
- 1.7 The Mediation Schemes will ensure that their services are made available at times that meet the needs of T&M residents including, where necessary, outside normal working hours.
- 1.8 The Mediation Schemes will provide training and information for Council members and officers as required.
- 1.9 The Mediation Schemes will operate from principles of equal opportunities for staff volunteers and clients.
- 1.10 The Mediation Schemes will monitor and evaluate their work and produce an annual report, which will be made available to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. The report will include details of financial accounts, numbers of cases and outcomes. Also included with the report will be details of numbers of cases in Tonbridge and Malling.
- 1.11 The Mediation Schemes will where applicable, assist the Council's work regarding the welfare reform and the health improvement agendas.

#### Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council's commitment to the Mediation Schemes

The Borough Council will ensure that;

- TMBC officers working in Environmental Health and the Community Safety Team will recommend mediation as a first intervention for unresolved neighbour disputes.
- Provide funding to the two schemes of £6000 in total for 2015/16.
- TMBC will communicate regularly and effectively over information of mutual interest
- TMBC will promote the use of mediation as a means of resolving conflicts by displaying posters and leaflets advertising the Service.

#### Termination

The SLA may be ended if the Mediation Schemes are in serious breach of the Agreement and in the case of breach, which is capable of being remedied, fails to remedy such breach within 28 days of receiving notice from TMBC as follows:

- The Mediation Schemes consistently fail to meet the requirements of the service specification.
- The Mediation Schemes are convicted of a criminal offence which has a direct result on the fitness to provide a service
- The Mediation Schemes become bankrupt, insolvent or are wound up by the courts.

#### Grant Support

For the year 2015/16, the Council shall pay a grant totalling £6,000.00 by direct transfer into Maidstone Mediation bank account to be shared with the West Kent Mediation Scheme.

Signed on behalf of Maidstone Mediation Scheme and West Kent Mediation

Signature

Name

Date

Position

Signed on behalf of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

Signature

Name

Date

Position