



Appendix 1 of Governance Framework

Kent LINK Governing Group Information Pack

Introduction

Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) – Background

Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) were introduced from April 2008 to help communities influence the way health and social care services are delivered. LINKs were established by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Later Regulations have provided more detail on specific aspects of the role and powers of a LINK.

LINK – Roles

The roles of the LINK are to:

- Promote and support the involvement of people in commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local health and social care services
- Obtain the views of people about their need for, and experiences of, local health and social care services
- Convey views to the providers and commissioners of those services and scrutinisers (such as the local Overview and Scrutiny Committees)
- Monitor and review the commissioning and provision of health and social care services.

LINK – Powers

The powers of the LINK relate to the information it may need to undertake its role and its ability to enter and view specific places where health and / or social care are provided. LINKs can

- Ask for information from health / social care services providers and commissioners
- Receive such information in a specified time
- Make reports and receive a reply within a specified time
- Visit services to see and review what they do

- Tell elected politicians on an Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) what they have found about services and get a response.

What is Governance?

Governance is the process of overseeing an organisation. It is about having overall responsibility. This involves ensuring that an organisation's work contributes to its mission and purpose and its resources are used wisely and effectively.

Host

The legislation that introduced LINKs gave Local Authorities the role of contracting with a Host Organisation that will set up and then support the LINK in their area. The Host's role is to help the LINK determine its priorities, facilitate and support the activities of the LINK and enable the volunteers to fully participate.

The Kent LINK

Purpose

The Kent LINK (Local Involvement Network) exists to provide a voice for the community of Kent - a flexible mechanism for providing a stronger voice for local people in the planning, design or redesign, commissioning and provision of health and social care services.

Current activities

The Kent LINK's priorities for the next two to three months are to:

- Develop the arrangements by which the activities of the LINK will be governed
- Raise the profile of the LINK through publicity, networking, holding events, attending other organisations' events, issuing newsletters, use of the local media
- Encourage more voluntary participation in the work of the LINK – increase the number of individuals / groups involved
- Identify the priority areas for the LINK to address – develop a work programme
- Build partnerships / relationships with key stakeholders
- Build a Kent LINK web site for providing information on the LINK and electronic opportunities for more people to become involved.

Setting up a Kent LINK

During a transitional period the Kent LINK Project Board and Kent LINK Steering Group identified a model structure for the Kent LINK – a Group with external groups based on geography or topic. Both agreed that the next step is to seek the input of volunteers with the appropriate expertise to work with the Host (KMN) to develop the LINK's governance arrangements. Such a group of people will form the Governing Group and have a collective responsibility. Also they will bring to the group their own experiences and skills to take a lead in a specific area.

This information pack contains the terms of reference of the Governing Group and the roles and responsibilities within that Group. The first priority for those appointed to the Group will be to agree their terms of reference, if the definitions provided are appropriate, whether there are any gaps and agree the specific roles.

Host – Kent & Medway Networks Ltd (KMN)

Kent County Council has contracted Kent & Medway Networks Ltd (KMN) to set up and then support the Kent LINK. The immediate priority for KMN is to ensure that a Kent LINK is set up with appropriate and sustainable governance arrangements that ensure that the LINK is accountable for its decisions and activities and the use of the funds allocated.

Application and Selection Process

How to apply

A completed application form must be returned to KMN by 22 September 2008.

An electronic version can be emailed to KMN at info@kmn-ltd.co.uk

Large print version of this information pack and the application form are available on request.

Process for Selection

A selection process will be established

- Each application will be evaluated on the basis of the applicant meeting the role criteria. A short list of candidates will be produced. This will happen in the week commencing 22 September 2008 (after the closing date for applications and subject to the panel's availability)
- A panel will then interview short-listed candidates – in week commencing 29 September 2008 (subject to the panel's availability)

- The selection panel (for short-listing and interviews) will comprise a Member of the Kent LINK Project Board, a Member of the former Kent LINK Steering Group and a representative from the community / voluntary sector in Kent. The panel will be accompanied by Jessie Cunnett, an independent consultant, who will provide advice and independent assessment of the process
- All applicants will be notified of the panel's decision by 1 October 2008
- Selected candidates will receive an induction session in the week commencing 13 October 2008. This will be provided by KMN with external input as required
- Selected candidates will meet for the first time in week commencing 20 October 2008
- Additional training will be provided as required
- KMN will provide all organisational and administrative support to the process
- KMN will not take part in any of the selection, interview or decision making processes.

Use of your personal information

Data Protection

The Department of Health is required to retain information about people who apply for public appointments and make this information available for audit purposes, if requested to do so.

If you would like your personal details to be deleted from our records as soon as this process is complete please write or email KMN or call 01303 297050.