



Appendix 2 of Governance framework

Kent LINK Governing Group Terms of Reference

Introduction

The Governing Group of the LINK is a group of people with a range of skills, knowledge and experience, which when combined, can be used to guide the LINK effectively. The Governing Group will be accountable to the LINK for its activities.

The Governing Group will provide the Kent LINK with the separation of its governance from the LINK's key roles; direct public involvement, obtaining and passing on views, monitoring and reviewing services. This arrangement will ensure that a small group of people are not put in the position of, or being seen as, speaking on behalf of the community of Kent.

The Group's key role will be to support the activities of the wider LINK, not necessarily lead it or participate in its main activities. The Group will be responsible for ensuring that

- The Kent LINK's purpose and values are agreed by the people of Kent
- It, and the LINK, operates in an open and transparent manner
- It, and the LINK, complies with the law
- It, and the LINK, respects the role of the Host staff
- All LINK activities comply with its statutory obligations and published governance arrangements
- It develops and sustains the LINK's public engagement systems / structures
- It maintains budgetary control of the LINK's expenditure
- LINK projects are delivered on time, within budget and to the highest standard possible
- It develops and keeps under review strategies, policies and systems to enable effective partnership working between the LINK and health and social care organisations and with the community and voluntary sector in Kent

- It prepares for public consultation and approval at a LINK event, constituted in accordance with its governance rules
 - A LINK governance framework
 - A LINK communication strategy
 - A LINK equality and diversity policy
 - A LINK PR strategy
 - A LINK work programme.
- LINK reports are sent to the appropriate statutory bodies and responses disseminated to the LINK
- The legal obligations placed on statutory bodies are complied with in respect of
 - Supplying information to the LINK
 - Responding to LINK reports.
- The legal obligation of the LINK in respect of publishing an annual report is complied with
- It participates in the performance management arrangements to be agreed by the Kent County Council (KCC) - relating to the Host's contract with KCC
- It puts in place and supervises a system for the appointment of individuals to be part of the LINK's authorised panel of representatives and LINK representation on outside bodies.

The Group will not

- Be partisan or become involved in the issues being addressed by the LINK
- Directly engage in LINK activities or raise issues that should be the province of the LINK.

The Group will receive appropriate administrative and professional support from the Host in accordance with a Working Agreement, to be agreed by both parties.

Commitment

The term of office for a member of the Governing Group is 12 months.

As a general guide membership of the Governing Group will involve at least one day per week as follows

- Group meetings – once per month
- Review day – one per six months
- Activity – 6 hours per week.

More time may be required in the initial stage of the setting up of the Governing Group.

As individuals, Group members are expected to

- Be interested in and committed to the development of the LINK
- Understand and be committed to the LINK's policies and values and equal opportunities
- Share in the governance of the LINK by agreeing to work on working parties or other groups set up by the Governing Group which may involve the production of written papers and other tasks
- Regularly attend meetings of the Governing Group
- Support all decisions once they have been reached by the Governing Group
- Be willing to participate in training and strategy meetings
- Ensure that they and any employing body accept the time commitment involved in their full participation as a Governing Group member

As members of the Governing Group they will

- Ensure that funds received by the LINK are properly managed and accounted for
- Keep under review the LINK's overall policy and direction and contribute to its development
- Ensure that, given the constraints on resources, the LINK is meeting its aims
- Take a long term view of how the LINK should develop
- Ensure that the Group responsibilities which are delegated to individuals are carried out.

Roles and Responsibilities

General abilities

There are a number of general abilities that all Members of the Group will need:

- **Equality and diversity** - The LINK will adopt a principle of ensuring that the diversity of the area is covered, that all have an equal opportunity to voice their views and take part in LINK activity. It is therefore important that fresh and different perspectives are drawn upon to govern the LINK and be inclusive in the way it fulfils its purpose. For this to be achieved all members of the Group will sign up to these principles but at least one member will have experience in addressing equality and diversity issues and a good understanding of the diversity of Kent.

- **Commitment** – In line with Kent LINK’s purpose to provide a voice for the community of Kent, members of the Group will need a high level of commitment to the principles of patient and public involvement, especially enabling the involvement of disadvantaged groups. This will include having the time to contribute to the work of the Group and the ability to promote the LINK and encourage further involvement from a wide cross section of the population of Kent.
- **Team working** - The ability to contribute as an individual and collectively to the work of the Group and the LINK generally.
- **Influencing and communication** - The ability to gain support and influence as well as good communication skills.
- **Contribution to planning the future** - Having the ability to think ahead, not only identifying problems but also providing solutions.
- **Holding to account** - As well as the ability to accept accountability and probe and challenge constructively all members of the Group will promote public accountability in health and social care through open and transparent communication with commissioners and providers.

Specific roles

The Kent LINK Project Board and Steering Group agreed the specific roles that will be needed on the Governing Group.

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| • Facilitation | • Finance |
| • Project management | • Community engagement and partnerships |
| • Performance management | • Communications, PR and media |
| • Strategic | • Legislation / policy / governance |
| • Equality and diversity | |

Details of the roles and required expertise are at Appendix 3 (to the Governance Framework).

Standards in public life

All members of the Group, as with the LINK, would be expected to follow the seven principles of public life (known as the Nolan Principles). These are a useful basis for understanding the role of the Group member:

- **Selflessness** – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
- **Integrity** – Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity** – In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability** – Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness** – Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.
- **Honesty** – Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interest relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership** – Holders of public office should promote and support the principles of leadership and example.

All members of the Group will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct and will be asked to subscribe to the LINK's 'Code of Conduct' policy.

Conflict of interests

All Members of the Group will be required to declare any potential conflict of interests. Areas of particular concern are involved in the provision, management or regulation of health / social care provision and commissioning. Having an interest in such an area should not prevent applications for the membership of the Group as long as the applicant is open about those interests and they are declared on the application form.

Equal Opportunities

The LINK and any groups established to fulfil the purpose of the LINK will adopt the principles of openness and transparency in all processes and provide equal opportunities for all, irrespective of race, age, disability, gender, marital status, religion, sexual orientation, transgender and working patterns.

Remuneration

Whilst there is no remuneration for these roles, all members of the Group will be able to claim for out of pocket expenses, such as travel and subsistence, in accordance with the LINK's governance framework / policy on payment of expenses.