

Your LINK for improving health and social care

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a LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORK

**Draft minutes of a meeting of the Kent LINK Governors' Group held on
Thursday, 23 July 2009 from 10.00am – 1.00pm
at the Salvation Army Centre, Maidstone ME14 1ED**

Present:

John Cunningham (Chair)
Jack Shulman
Roger Kendall
John Fletcher

Also present:

Ray Harris, LINK participant
Alex Burnand, KCC
Graham Hills, Operational Director
Brenda O'Neill, KMN
Louise Murrell, LINK Development Worker

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Sally Keverne. It was announced that Sophia Gaitinari had resigned from the Governor's Group. It was agreed that a letter be sent to her.

ACTION: Brenda O'Neill

2. Minutes of the last meeting held on 18 June 2009

2.1 Accuracy - Minutes agreed.

2.2 **Actions arising** - not covered on the agenda:

- A letter had been sent to Mo Reece thanking her for her contribution to the Governors Group.
- Re item 8.1 - discussions were yet to be held on the composition of the selection panel. **ACTION: John Cunningham**
- Re item 8.5 - Governors agreed that there were no further policies required currently.
- Re item 10 - the finance sub group had yet to meet. **ACTION: Graham Hills**

3. Declaration of interest - None declared.

4. Kent LINK Groups:

4.1. Priorities Panel

4.1.1. Minutes of meeting held on 24 June 2009 - noted.

4.1.2. Minutes of meeting held on 2 July 2009 - noted.

4.1.3. Governors were assured that urgent issues could be addressed by the Priorities Panel and noted that the criteria to be used was out to LINK participants for consultation - Governors were encouraged to use this opportunity to comment.

4.1.4. Jack Shulman **AGREED** to be the link between Governors and the Priorities Panel and the Priorities Panel needed to confirm who their link with the Governors Group would be. **ACTION: Brenda O'Neill**

Panel of Authorised Visitors

4.1.5. 20 LINK participants had been successful at the selection process and were now undertaking enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks (including Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) checks). Most references had been received and all had been invited to the first training session to be held on 30 July and 3 August 2009. Members of all LINK groups and Medway LINK groups had been invited and each session was fully subscribed. It was noted that John Cunningham would be authorising all visitors once they had gone through the entire appointment process: two satisfactory references, cleared CRB check and training. It was also noted that the cost per person for the CRB check was £16.

4.2. LINKs External Representatives

4.2.1. Governors **AGREED** to discuss at their next meeting the issue of how external representation for the LINK would be managed - what health / social care / commissioner / provider groups the LINK should be represented on and by whom, which could be a Governor or one of the selected external representatives. **ACTION: All Governors / Graham Hills**

4.2.2. A holding reply will be sent to those groups that have already requested LINK representation. **ACTION: Graham Hills**

5. LINKs Work Programme

5.1. ***Outline programme 2009 / 2010*** – noted by Governors who discussed the following points:

5.1.1. The notional budget for each item will be discussed at the first meeting of the Governors Finance Sub Group. **ACTION: Graham Hills**

5.1.2. East Kent competition for the voluntary / community sector and the benefits of the LINK being involved - the main purpose was to demonstrate that users of local services can influence services. The project would help to raise the profile of the LINK, the PCT and the good work in the voluntary / community sector. It also served to show how the LINK could work collaboratively with, but independently of, the PCT - helping to build a good relationship and show that the LINK is an equal partner in community engagement, especially where seldom heard groups were concerned.

5.2. ***High level approach to initiating action on some projects*** - Governors noted and agreed with the principles in the paper and discussed the following:

5.2.1. How projects are started / initiated, who should be involved - key stakeholders, interested participants, a project group would be developed to take the project

forward, activities developed and planned, risk assessments undertaken, budgets set, expected outcomes agreed, progress reporting and updates to the Governors Group.

5.2.2. The possible academic input into some projects - common interests and mutual benefits for the LINK and students.

5.2.3. The potential for the LINK to make future bids to fund joint projects - would help in sustainability of LINK after funding from central Government ceases.

5.2.4. Need for flexibility within project management and associated protocols.

West Kent Project – Older Persons Strategy

5.2.5. Governors welcomed David Firth, Graduate Programme, KCC and Elayne Oxley, LINK Development Worker, who had arrived to discuss the LINK's involvement in KCC's review of the older person's strategy / day services. The methods proposed to seek the views of users of day services were Focus Groups in day centres, mystery shopper exercise and a survey.

5.2.6. Governors expressed concerns:

- That the project was only addressing Age Concern's Day Centres
- That the project must be about developing a strategy and not a review of existing contracts
- How the project tied in to developing an Older Persons Strategy when the Later Life Framework had been published
- If the Age Concerns had quality measures, customer feedback systems in place
- How the Focus Groups would be open and transparent - how people would be selected to take part
- The short timescale for the project
- If there was an independent monitor of the Age Concern service
- What the outcome for the LINK would be
- How the project was being funded and resourced - given the impact of this project on other LINK work
- It needed to be clear that any report produced by the LINK would be in the public domain
- Ownership of the project.

5.2.7. David Firth confirmed that

- It was not KCC's intention to cancel contracts or reduce funding for the Age Concerns. KCC was taking the opportunity to review standards of services, what services are available and to open up a discussion about quality of services and how to improve that.
- KCC would like the LINK, as an independent body, to find out what services are being provided and what users think of that service. The LINK could also help to increase quality and help the Age Concerns' to adapt to when people receive personalised budgets.
- The Age Concerns use Picasso etc for quality control and this project is a one off feedback through the LINK as an independent body.

- Selection of people to take part in the Focus Groups would be made by Elayne Oxley and not the individual Age Concern Day Centre staff or manager.
- The contracts with Age Concern ended in 2010 and notice was needed if changes were to be made to those contracts – much of this tied in with Kent Adult Social Services' restructuring and tying quality assurance into contracts.
- Not all of the Age Concern centres are monitored by the Care Quality Commission.
- The LINK would provide KCC with the information and be in a position to feed into the framework.
- As KCC would be commissioning the LINK to undertake this work David Firth would discuss a budget with his manager at KCC.
- Most Age Concern Centres wanted feedback on their service and were aware that the LINK's findings would be made public.

5.2.8. Having been thanked for his contribution to the discussion, David Firth then left the meeting so that the Governors could discuss whether the LINK should participate in the project.

5.2.9. Governors were advised that this request came to the Group because it was a request to commission the LINK to undertake a piece of work and involved the use of LINK resources. Governors **AGREED** that the LINK should undertake this as a monitor and review project, funded from the LINK's budget, with the following provisos:

- The LINK retained its independence and the project and findings would be open and transparent
- The LINK had ownership of the project and it was being proactive rather than reactive
- The LINK could get the work done effectively
- There were benefits to the community and users of the services
- The LINK would be working in the field of social services as opposed to health
- It complied with the LINK's role of monitoring the provision of services
- This was an independent review and not relating to the contracts between KCC and Age Concern
- Phases 1 and 2 - focus groups and mystery shopping: could commence.
- Phase 3 – survey: no decision.

6. Updates from individual Governors and confirmation of deputy leads

6.1. Community Engagement - noted that there were now almost 850 participants recruited.

6.2. Governance - noted that there was more work to be undertaken on the code of conduct and grievance / complaints policies.

6.3. Equality and Diversity - diversity report noted.

6.4. Communications and PR

6.4.1. Marketing Proposal from The Purple Edge Company was discussed. Whilst Governors concurred with some of the comments contained in the proposal, they **AGREED** to take no further action on the proposal at this stage but to ask

the company for further details and for two other competitive quotes to be obtained for specific items, such as a LINK leaflet and the website.

ACTION: Graham Hills

6.4.2. *Website activity reports May - June 2009* - the figures were noted and that the use of the website may increase following the LINK's presence at the recent County Show. Noted that there was correlation between the publications of the LINK's Bulletin and an increase in visits to the website.

6.4.3. *LINK presence at the Kent County Show* - John Cunningham thanked all who had helped out at the Show and in the preparation. The 3-day event had proved very successful for raising interest in the LINK and its work, recruitment and networking with other organisations. The questionnaires completed for the 60-second survey are being analysed by John Gallimore, a LINK participant. The cost of the event was within budget currently but some invoices were still to be received. Governors **AGREED** that the LINK should have a stand next year and consideration be given to being a part of the KCC Social Services tent.

6.5. Finance

6.5.1. *LINK budget report* - tabled and it was noted that some invoices for June and July had not yet been received. Governors noted that the spend on publicity was high in July due to the materials needed for the County Show. Roger Kendall will produce a more comprehensive report for the September meeting and the new finance sub committee will have met by then.

ACTION: Roger Kendall

6.5.2. *LINK procurement policy* – Roger Kendall introduced the tabled paper that combined procurement policy, guidelines and budgetary supervision. It had been based on SEEDA and NHS policy because it is based on spending public money. Graham Hills will discuss further with Roger Kendall.

ACTION: Graham Hills

6.6. Performance management - a formal quarterly review had taken place with Alex Burnand and Roger Kendall was present for the Governors. The report was tabled for Governors to take away and read and raise any questions with Brenda O'Neill. The report will be put on the website.

ACTION: Brenda O'Neill

6.7. Strategic - nothing to report.

6.8. Project Management - to discuss at the September meeting a replacement Governor.

ACTION: Brenda O'Neill

7. Any Other Business

7.1. KCC Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) - Governors noted that, following the local government election, this was a new committee. Recently the LINK had been present at one of their meetings to introduce the LINK to the HOSC's new Councillors. HOSC Members had discussed LINK representation on the HOSC and concluded that this would not be appropriate because the LINK can refer issues to the HOSC. LINK could still attend as a member of the public however. KMN has offered to provide a further session for new Councillors as only two were present at the original induction that covered NHS as well. This could also be useful for helping in development of a protocol for the relationship of the LINK and the HOSC.

7.2. LINK Quarterly meeting - noted that the event was scheduled to be held on 27 July 2009 between 11.00 and 3.00pm in Sheerness. Graham Hills had prepared a Governors Report for agreement by the Governors and LINK Governors were needed to present their report to the event. Governors to comment on the draft report to John Cunningham / Brenda O'Neill by 4.00pm. **ACTION: All Governors**

7.3. Term of office for Governors - noted that existing Governors' term of office comes to an end on 30 September 2009 and the process for selection will commence shortly. All participants will be invited to apply and current Governors need to apply if they wish to continue on the Group. **ACTION: Brenda O'Neill**

7.4. LINK Annual Report - there had been no responses received from anyone, including the Secretary of State, although there was no requirement to respond.

7.5. Pharmaceutical changes – AGREED that these should be referred to the Priorities Panel.

8. Date of upcoming meetings - AGREED:

- 17 September 2009
- 15 October 2009
- 19 November 2009
- 17 December 2009