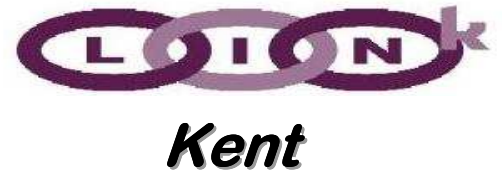


Local Involvement Network (LINK)



**Notes of the meeting of the Kent LINK Transitional Group held
on Tuesday, 5 August 2008
at Hawkinge Community Centre, Heron Forstal Avenue, Hawkinge, CT18 7BP**

Present:

Ram Appadoo
Leslie Bulman
John Fletcher
Peta Groom
Jim Hancock
Robin Kenworthy
Roger Kendall
John Larcombe
Maureen Moore
Jack Shulman
Evan Stirzaker
Carole Swann

Also present:

Graham Hills, Kent & Medway Networks Ltd (KMN)
Brenda O'Neill, KMN

1. Arrangements for facilitating meeting

The Group agreed that Graham Hills facilitate the meeting.

2. Welcome and introductions

These were carried out.

3. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from John Hopkinson, Lesley Street, Clive Wanstall and Fran Witherden.

4. Notes of the last meeting

The notes of the meeting held on 8 July 2008 were confirmed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of a question concerning the body responsible for indemnifying members of the LINK.

Continued ...

5. Matters arising

a. Indemnifying members of the LINK

Graham Hills reported that there had been no official guidance issued on the subject but that as part of the contracting process the “Host” was required to carry substantial public liability and professional indemnity insurance. KMN’s insurers had been advised of its new business and had not raised any concerns or objections. As KMN carried such insurance this may have implications for the way governance arrangements were drawn up, eg LINK correspondence going out through KMN office, processes in place for removing potentially defamatory material before being posted on the LINK website, a protocol for dealing with the media, etc.

A number of other insurance issues were raised, which included the need for LINK members (and also Transitional Group members) to notify their insurance company that they are using their car on LINK business for which they may be reimbursed and also that they may be carrying passengers.

Another issue involved the impact on invalidity benefit and loss of income for those taking time off work to attend LINKs meetings

6. Presentation by KMN

Brenda O’Neill gave a presentation on KMN, the role of the “Host”, the role of the LINK, KMN’s proposed operational plan and a proposal to develop further the Group’s model and specifically the “Governance Hub”.

Arising from the presentation, a number of issues were identified from the subsequent question and answer session:

- a. The “Host” must be seen to be accountable to the LINK and not making decisions without reference to it.
- b. The roles within the Governance Hub should include a distinct role for audit.
- c. The Governance Hub should ensure that social care issues are covered by the LINK and a truly holistic approach is adopted. This could also embrace education services, which strictly speaking do not come under the remit of the LINK.
- d. The Governance Hub should ensure that services are not missed that span more than one LINK, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.
- e. Arrangements for a LINK AGM / Report. Brenda O’Neill advised the group that the only statutory requirement on the LINK was to produce an annual report by 30 June each year (to cover the period 1 April to 31 March).
- f. Arrangements for a report on the transition. Brenda O’Neill reported that such a report would be produced and published. (Subsequently agreed with Mary Blanche that she will send a brief report to KMN for inclusion in the Kent LINK Annual Report.)
- g. It was suggested that all members of the Group should be CRB checked and become part of the authorised panel to immediately commence visiting.

- h. Brenda O'Neill advised that this was not within the Group's terms of reference and that it would need the LINK to be in place to decide on its work programme. Group members were also reminded that whilst visits may be required as part of a LINK review / project, there were other organisations responsible for carrying out inspections, eg Health Care Commission, Commission for Social Care Inspection, Royal Colleges, etc.
- i. Concern was expressed that events were happening and there was a void in public involvement in health and social care. Graham Hills stated that the LINK was not the only mechanism in place. There were statutory duties laid on Health Authorities, PCTs, Trusts and Adult Social Care to consult with people affected in relation to commissioning and service development and the Secretary of State can require Authorities to declare what actions they took as a result of such engagement.
- j. A discussion took place on how individuals would be selected to be part of the Governance Hub and on who should be involved in the selection panel:
 - i. The Host would not be part of the decision making process;
 - ii. The panel should comprise people with standing in the community and not be part of a health / social care single issue campaigning group
 - iii. Need for skills in interviewing
 - iv. A representative of the Transitional Group.It was agreed that members of the group should submit their ideas / views on roles of the Hub, the selection of members and the panel make up to Brenda O'Neill, by the end of the week.
- k. Whilst recognising that the Governance Hub would need a variety of skills and a defined role for each member, it was felt that it needed a collective and decision making role and terms of reference, rather than leaving decisions to individuals which could be putting too much responsibility in the hands of a few people. It was accepted that it should not follow a committee / bureaucratic model but would need to make decisions on recommendations from members with lead responsibilities.
- l. It was felt that the term "Governance Hub" was obscure and that Management or Executive Board would be more understandable.

7. The way forward

It was agreed that the Group had achieved its primary function of agreeing a proposed model for the Kent LINK and that the next stage was to set up the Governance Hub that would carry forward the process of setting up the framework of the LINK and its various systems, particularly its governance arrangements and all to be agreed by the community of Kent. It was proposed by Jack Shulman and seconded by Leslie Bulman that, in view of the fact that the Transitional Group had achieved its primary objectives and that there was now a need to get on and establish the Governance Hub, the Transitional Group be dissolved with immediate effect and this was unanimously agreed by those present.

Brenda O'Neill will notify the LINK Project Board accordingly and appropriate officers within the KCC.

Graham Hills thanked those members present for their contribution to the setting up of the Kent LINK and expressed the hope that they would continue their interest in the LINK, in whatever capacity.