

Lambeth Local Involvement Network (LINK)

Procedures for Governance and Decision-making of the Lambeth LINK

1. Introduction:

- 1.1 These Procedures describe the governance and decision-making arrangements as defined in and required by the LINKs Regulations, SI 2008 No 528
- 1.2 Decisions on the carrying on of Lambeth LINK activities and the exercise of LINK powers can only be taken in accordance with these Procedures
- 1.3 These Procedures may be reviewed in the light of experience and may be developed and amended according to the arrangements agreed to in paragraph 10

2. Membership:

- 2.1 The Lambeth LINK shall have two classes of membership:
 - a) Individual membership which is open to any individual with an interest in health and social care
 - b) Voluntary Organisations and Community Groups membership which is open to any voluntary organisation and community group with an interest in health and social care and which operates in the Borough of Lambeth
- 2.2 Individual Membership will be by application and this can be done by application form, telephone request, in person or in any way which meets the needs of the individual
- 2.3 Voluntary organisations and community groups should complete an application form
- 2.4 Membership will remain permanent, unless the member is expelled from the LINK as a result of their conduct or chooses to leave
- 2.5 Individual members must register with the Host Organisation - Age Concern Lambeth - in the manner described in paragraph 2.2 above.
- 2.6 Individual members shall, when requested, register their interests by declaring any relevant personal and/or commercial benefit, advantage and/or connection that may have the appearance of conflict of interest or may be perceived by others than themselves as preventing them from being objective or impartial
- 2.7 Members who have not declared and registered their interests may not vote at any LINK meeting or be elected to the Steering Committee or any task group of the LINK.
- 2.8 Voluntary Organisations must register with the Host Organisation – Age Concern Lambeth
- 2.9 Such organisations shall provide the host with a copy of their current constitution
- 2.10 An organisation that has not registered its interests with the Host may be represented at a LINK meeting but its representative may not vote or be elected to the Steering Committee or any task group of the LINK.

- 2.11 Community Groups must register as such with the Host Organisation – Age Concern Lambeth
- 2.12 Such groups must register their interests by declaring any relevant personal and/or commercial benefit, advantage and/or connection that may have the appearance of conflict of interest or may be perceived by others than themselves as preventing that group from being objective or impartial
- 2.13 Such groups which have not registered their interests with the host may be represented at a LINK meeting but their representatives may not vote or be elected to the Steering Committee or any task group of the LINK.
- 2.14 Voluntary organisations and community groups registering with the host shall inform the host of the representative of the organisation entitled to communicate with the LINK on behalf of the organisation and inform the host of any change in that representative
- 2.15 The Host Organisation shall keep the register of individual, voluntary organisation, community group and business organisation members and their authorised representatives, together with any register of interests of such members and representatives. All such registers shall be kept in a form which may be available at each meeting so as to verify the rights of the members present.
- 2.16 Members of the LINK will be kept informed of LINK activities and enabled to take part in the activities and key decision-making of the LINK, including the appointment or election of members of the Steering Committee
- 2.17 Members of the LINK shall not speak or claim to speak on behalf of the LINK unless authorised to do so by the Steering Committee according to these Procedures

3 Meeting:

- 3.1 Full meetings of the LINK shall take place at least once each year and whenever:
 - a) Such a meeting decides
 - b) A majority of LINK members decide
 - c) The LINK Steering Committee decides
 - d) The LINK officers can also call a full meeting of the LINK when they consider it necessary
- 3.2 At each full meeting of the LINK:
 - a) Individual members (eligible under these Procedures) shall have one vote
 - b) Voluntary organisation, community group and business organisation representatives (designated in accordance with these Procedures) may speak but only one of them may vote for each organisation and he or she shall have only one vote. Each representative who is to speak or vote shall register their interests in the same way as an individual member.
- 3.3 The annual meeting of the LINK shall be a full meeting at which the Annual Report shall be presented by the Steering Committee and approved by the meeting.

4 Steering Committee:

- 4.1 The Lambeth LINK will be led and governed by a Steering Committee elected by the LINK membership, and accountable to the LINK membership and the wider Lambeth community
- 4.2 Every effort should be made to ensure the composition of the steering group reflects the diversity of the community in Lambeth.
- 4.3 The initial Steering Committee will consist of 25 members but may be reduced by the first full meeting to a lower number
- 4.4 Nine places will be reserved for organisations; three places each will be reserved for individuals in the three geographical areas of north, central and south Lambeth. The seven remaining places will be taken up by individuals or other voluntary, community organisations and groups providing services for the people of Lambeth
- 4.5 The Steering Committee shall be elected annually. Elections to the Steering Committee will take place by postal ballot. The Host Organisation will organise the election. All LINK members (individuals, voluntary and community organisations and groups) will be entitled to vote for membership to the Steering Committee
- 4.6 At the first meeting following the elections, the Steering Committee shall elect its officers as follows:
 - a) Chair
 - b) Two Vice Chairs (one being a voluntary organisation or community group representative and one an individual member)
- 4.7 The election of officers will be by secret ballot of all committee members present at the meeting.
- 4.8 The officers elected shall be confirmed at the next AGM or at a full membership meeting, whichever is earliest
- 4.9 The officers shall report all decisions they make to the Steering Committee which may amend those that they consider need amending.
- 4.10 The quorum for Steering Committee meetings shall be one quarter of its membership
- 4.11 The person chairing any meeting of the LINK or its committee shall make all rulings on points of order. Their decisions may be varied, if challenged, but only by simple majority of members present and entitled to vote. A record will be made of the vote including the numbers abstaining
- 4.12 All minutes of the LINK Steering Committee shall be published initially as a draft within 10 days of the meeting. The draft minutes will be verified at the next subsequent meeting of the Steering Committee and any amendments shown in the final published version

5. Function of the Steering Committee

- 5.1 To steer the work of Lambeth LINK and to support and enable individuals, organisations and groups to carry out the work of the LINK through:

1. Ensuring key local stakeholders are represented and their views considered
 2. Agreeing and publishing procedures to specify how it will take decisions and carry out its functions
 3. Agreeing and publishing a procedure for making decisions about who may be an authorised representative for entering and viewing services and publishing the list of such authorised individuals in accordance with LINKs Regulations 2008 No 528
 4. Agreeing and publishing a procedure for making decisions about which premises should be visited and viewed
 5. Agreeing and publishing policy for the payment of out-of-pocket expenses to persons participating in authorised LINK activities and meetings
 6. Allocating resources for the work of the LINK, recognising that there are limited resources within the LINK and that it cannot take on all the work that is required
 7. Communicating with the wider LINK and other LINKs in London and England
 8. Planning work and allocating resources to support that work
 9. Supporting groups to undertake work and take up issues as necessary
 10. Supporting groups to produce credible reports which commissioners and providers can use to improve services
 11. Approving reports produced by groups on behalf of the LINK
 12. Ensuring that the LINK operates in accordance with these Procedures and relevant regulations and directions, and specifically for the relevant decisions and other matters
- 5.2 The relevant decisions for which the Steering Group is accountable include:
1. How the LINK is to undertake the relevant section 221 activities (see Appendix 1)
 2. Which care services in relation to which those activities are to be carried out
 3. The spending of amounts in relation to the LINK's section 221 activities
 4. Whether to request information from a services-provider
 5. Whether to refer a report or a recommendation to a services-provider
 6. Which premises owned or controlled by a services-provider an authorised representative is to enter and view and when those premises are to be visited
 7. Whether to refer a matter to an overview and scrutiny committee of a local authority or
 8. Whether to report a matter concerning one or more of the section 221 activities to another person
 9. Agreeing an annual work programme that sets out the priorities for LINK activities, the exercise of LINK powers and the use of LINK resources
 10. Making any Annual Report in accordance with Directions made by the Secretary of State including producing an annual report of its activities by the end of April or May each year

6. Working arrangements

6.1 The Steering Committee and all LINK members will act in accordance with these Procedures

- 6.2 The Steering Committee will meet at least once every month until another arrangement is made
- 6.3 The Steering Committee will exercise decision- making powers with respect to LINk activities
- 6.4 Decisions will be taken at appropriately convened meetings, by consensus or a majority of those voting by a show of hands
- 6.5 Between Steering Committee meetings, the Steering Committee Officers (the Chair and the two vice-chairs) have the authority to take urgent decisions. Such decisions shall be reported back to the Steering Committee through information leaflets, publication on the Lambeth LINk website and also at the next meeting
- 6.6 The Steering Committee will set up time-limited task groups to carry out specific tasks and may delegate specific decisions and activities to task groups or to individual LINk members
- 6.7 Before any task group is set up, a report must be made by the Steering Committee stating what the task group is to achieve and how it should proceed
- 6.8 The Steering Committee will inform and consult members of the wider LINk network and involve them in LINk activities, and will seek to inform, involve and gather views from the local Lambeth community
- 6.9 In these Procedures 'publishing' information or decision, means placing it on the Lambeth LINk website within 20 working days, with hard copies available on request, and distributing it to all LINk members within 20 working days

7. Relationship with Statutory agencies

- 7.1 The Steering Committee or its Officers will liaise with officers and Councillors of the London Borough of Lambeth; Lambeth Council's Health & Social Care Overview and Scrutiny sub-committee and also Lambeth PCT to discuss forthcoming work planning
- 7.2 Individuals representing the LINk on Trust Boards, Boards of Governors etc will be appointed by the Steering Committee and these individuals will report back to the Steering Committee

8. Relationship with other agencies

- 8.1 All other contacts with other agencies will be through the Host organisation
- 8.2 Only the Chair, Vice-chairs, authorised persons and the authorised employees of the Host Organisation may speak on behalf of the LINk to outside agencies
- 8.3 Anyone who speaks to the press or other outside agency on behalf of the LINk may
1. Only speak on relevant issues agreed by the Steering Committee and
 2. It has been agreed that this person can speak to the agency concerned (for example where special knowledge or expertise is required)

9. Breaches of Procedures, Complaints and Dispute resolution

- 9.1 Breaches of these Procedures by a member or participant in LINk activities will be considered by the Steering Committee

9.2 Breaches of these Procedures by a member of the Steering Committee will initially be referred to a five-member sub-committee of the Steering Committee. Where the breach is not successfully considered, it may be referred to the Host and the Local Authority

9.3. If there is a complaint about the Host Organisation, this will be dealt with through the Host Organisation's own complaint procedures and the outcome reported back to the Steering Committee

9.4 If there is a complaint about the Chair of the Steering Committee, this must be made in writing to the two vice-chairs who should set up a five-member sub-committee of the Steering Committee to consider the complaint. The sub-committee may arrange an independent investigation of the complaint if required

9.5 If there is a complaint about any other member of the Steering Committee, this must be made in writing to the Chair who should set up a five-member sub-committee of the Steering Committee to consider the complaint. The sub-committee may arrange an independent investigation of the complaint if required

9.6 Failure to declare a relevant interest will be considered as a breach of these Procedures

9.7 Any person who breaches these Procedures may be excluded from taking part in LINK activities for a period of time and/or excluded from membership of the Steering Committee or from representing the LINK

9.8 Any exercise of the power in paragraph 9.7 shall be appealable to a five-member sub-committee appointed by the Steering Committee. The decision of the sub-committee will be final. The five-member sub-committee will not include the persons who made the decision subject to appeal but these persons may attend the appeal and present their case for that decision.

9.9 Complaints about individuals acting on behalf of the LINK must be made in writing to the Chair who should set up a five-member sub-committee of the Steering Committee to consider the complaint. The sub-committee may arrange an independent investigation of the complaint if required

9.10 Complaints about the conduct of the Steering Committee as a whole should be raised at a full LINK's meeting and included in the Annual Report

10: Review

10.1 These Procedures should be reviewed at the first anniversary of its adoption and every year thereafter by the Steering Committee in light of experience and any changes in the law

10.2 These Procedures may be amended and extended by a proposal to the Steering Committee, which must be approved by two-thirds majority of members of the Steering Committee attending a meeting specially convened to amend these Procedures.

Amendment to the Lambeth LINK Steering Committee Governance Document:

The Lambeth LINK Steering Committee meeting on Wednesday 21st October 2009 accepted a proposal to amend the Governance Document agreed on 02/02/09 to include the following:

- 1) "Any member of the Steering Committee who does not attend three consecutive Steering Committee meetings and who does not provide a reasonable explanation shall cease to be a member of the Steering Committee".
- 2) "Organisations that are represented on the Steering Committee may nominate a substitute for their representative to attend meetings in the absence of such representative".

This Document was first amended on Wednesday 21st October 2009