

**CAMBRIDGESHIRE LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORK  
(Cambridgeshire LINK)**

**CONSTITUTION**

Version 8  
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# CONSTITUTION

1. The Constitution was first adopted at the first General Assembly of Cambridgeshire Local Involvement Network held on 25 September 2008. It was last amended at the General Assembly held on 8 June 2011. It shall only be further amended under the authority of a subsequent General Assembly or by legislation.
2. The Cambridgeshire Local Involvement Network is a body created by Cambridgeshire County Council under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 through Statutory Instrument 2008 No 528 “The Local Involvement Network Regulations 2008” and any other Statutory Instrument and/or Secretary of State Direction made in accordance with that Act.
3. The body shall be known as ‘**Cambridgeshire LINK**’ in accordance with current practice.
4. The body shall be operated by local individuals and groups having an interested in all matters of health and social care services as determined by the Act. Its role shall be to:
  - 4.1. Promote and support the involvement of local people in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local health and social care services.
  - 4.2. Obtain the views of people concerning their needs for and their experience of local health and social care services.
  - 4.3. Enable people to monitor and review the commissioning and provision of local care services and report on the standard of provision of such services, whether and how they could be improved and whether and how they ought to be improved.
  - 4.4. Enable people to make their views known to those responsible for commissioning, providing, managing and scrutinising those services.
  - 4.5. Receive and respond to public involvement and consultation issues under Section 242 of the National Health Service Act 2006 as amended concerning the planning of the provision of services; the development and consideration of proposals for changes in the way services are provided; decisions made by the appropriate body affecting the operation of services.
  - 4.6. Work with other Local Involvement Networks who have a shared geographical or service interest.

- 4.7. Networking and establishing links with a wide range of individuals, communities, groups, organisations, services and other Local Involvement Networks relevant to the people of Cambridgeshire.
5. The LINK shall consist of three styles of participation as detailed in paragraph 14. Representatives of statutory bodies with a direct interest in health and social care, together with anyone with pecuniary interest in such matters, shall be eligible for participation but shall be precluded from speaking or otherwise taking part in any matter relevant to such issues except by invitation of the President or voting.
6. All persons participating in the work of the LINK shall comply with the Participants' Code of Conduct which shall be published as part of this Constitution.
7. The body shall consist of tiers of operation supported by a Host appointed under competitive tendering procedure by Cambridgeshire County Council and operating in accordance with a binding contract specification.
8. **General Assembly**
  - 8.1. The upper tier of the body shall be known as the '**Cambridgeshire LINK General Assembly**'. It shall meet whenever relevant business is required and at least once per year, normally during April, to receive and approve a statutory Annual Report.
  - 8.2. Suitable public notice in accordance with a procedure approved by the General Assembly shall be given at least 14 days prior to each meeting.
  - 8.3. At the first and each subsequent April meeting, the General Assembly shall elect from amongst its attendees a President and Vice President to advance the work of the LINK as detailed in paragraphs 9 and 10. Candidates for the roles of President and Vice President shall be independent of stakeholder, political and health and social care related commercial or pecuniary interest. The elected Vice President shall deputise in any absence of the President.
  - 8.4. Each meeting shall be open to all persons and representatives of organisations interested in health and social care matters covered by the LINK. Participation is empowered and self-governing through the General Assembly by it being a public accountable unit at which all LINK decisions are taken, following open public debate.
  - 8.5. The General Assembly shall ensure that the LINK operates in accordance with its roles and shall additionally:
    - 8.5.1. Receive and approve all reports produced by other tiers of the LINK prior to submission to third parties.

- 8.5.2. Receive and respond to responses from third parties.
- 8.5.3. Approve any referrals to Cambridgeshire County Council's Health and Adults Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other person or body.
- 8.5.4. Approve the statutory Annual Report.
- 8.5.5. Receive and approve regular business and financial reports from other tiers and approve the operation of the LINK's budget.
- 8.5.6. Receive and regularly update the LINK Work Plan and receive and approve relevant delivery reports.
- 8.5.7. Receive regular performance management reports from the Host and Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 8.5.8. Annually appoint the Management Group in accordance with the conditions of paragraph 11 following.

## **9. Aims of President and Vice President**

- 9.1. The President and Vice President shall do their utmost to:
  - 9.1.1. Ensure that the LINK reflects equally the health and social care interests of people and groups in everything it does.
  - 9.1.2. Ensure that the LINK understands its communities and their health and social care needs.
  - 9.1.3. Ensure that the LINK knows who is already involved in health and social care and plan to include others who are not traditionally involved.
  - 9.1.4. Ensure that the LINK has ways to share information around the network.
  - 9.1.5. Ensure that the LINK communicates widely about itself and plans to work and seek views in ways that people and groups say are best for them.
  - 9.1.6. Ensure that the LINK works in ways that make it easy for people and groups to be involved in its activities and to have their contribution recognised.
  - 9.1.7. Ensure that the LINK has in place methods to govern its work and provide accountability to its communities.

- 9.1.8. Ensure the LINK plans ways to research, map and identify the priorities of local people and communities and communicates about the impact that the LINK makes.
- 9.1.9. Ensure that the LINK activities recognised that 'enter and view;' visits should take place as a result of feedback from local communities and are clear about the purpose of the any agreed visits.
- 9.1.10. Ensure that the LINK talks with commissioners, providers and scrutineers and with other LINKs about who LINKs can best influence service improvement.
- 9.1.11. Ensure that the LINK identifies ways to develop skills and knowledge of people and groups so that they have useful information that helps them contribute their views in relevant ways.

## 10. **Other responsibilities of the President and Vice President**

- 10.1. To ensure that General Assemblies are held regularly and that all LINK operations comply with local and national frameworks.
- 10.2. To undertake duties and functions allocated by the Constitution, Codes of Conducts and related Policies and Guidance.
- 10.3. To undertake any responsibility delegated by the General Assembly and, under delegated authority, approve the issue of a public interest report as a matter of urgency should circumstances so warrant, subject to such report being presented to the next available General Assembly.
- 10.4. To ensure that any issue delegated to the Management Group by the General Assembly is correctly implemented.
- 10.5. To be the public face of the LINK, meeting with wider networks, voluntary and public bodies and helping to promote the LINK.
- 10.6. To preside over General Assemblies.
- 10.7. To chair meetings of the Management Group.

## 11. **Management Group**

- 11.1. The next tier of operation shall be known as the '**Cambridgeshire LINK Management Group**'. It shall meet regularly to deliver its responsibilities as detailed in paragraph 11.2 following and may receive delegation from the

General Assembly. It shall work closely with the Host to advance the delivery of the LINK.

- 11.2. The Group shall consist of between three and five Active Participants elected by their peers and appointed by the General Assembly together with the President and Vice President. It shall be chaired by the President and the Vice President shall act in the capacity of Vice Chair. The Management Group shall:
  - 11.2.1. Manage the finance and resources of the LINK.
  - 11.2.2. Ensure a balance of LINK activity between health and social care. This will entail agreeing and prioritising [using an agreed process] the topics for the various Task and Finish Groups that will take forward the work of LINK.
  - 11.2.3. Agree the project plan for each Task and Finish Group.
  - 11.2.4. Receive interim and final reports from the Task and Finish Groups.
  - 11.2.5. Support the President and the Vice President in the delivery of the Aims and Responsibilities detailed in paragraphs 9 and 10 above.
  - 11.2.6. Ensure that LINK operates in accordance with approved governance and best practice which includes enforcing the Code of Conduct.
  - 11.2.7. Assist the President and Vice President to engage with wider networks, voluntary and public bodies.
  - 11.2.8. Assist the Liaison Groups and the Involvement Group in their everyday contacts, engagement and representation with statutory and public bodies.
  - 11.2.9. Advise on constitutional and governance matters and assist in the development of Policies and Guidance.
  - 11.2.10. Draft and suggest elements of the Host performance management regime to the County Council and help undertake performance reviews on LINK progress, activity and delivery.
  - 11.2.11. Draft the statutory Annual Report for submission to the General Assembly.
  - 11.2.12. Liaise with the Chairs and Leaders of the Liaison Groups, Involvement Group and Task and Finish Groups as appropriate.

11.2.13. Act as arbiter in any issues where the Liaison, Involvement and Task and Finish Groups cannot agree a course of action.

11.2.14. Undertake any other duties and functions delegated by the General Assembly.

## 12. **Liaison Groups**

12.1. Liaison Groups will enable close connection and collaboration with service providers and commissioners. The Groups will:

12.1.1. Receive papers or presentations from Providers and Commissioners regarding aspects of their services that are of interest to the LINK.

12.1.2. Share information about issues.

12.1.3. Monitor performance.

12.1.4. Keep a watching brief on issues of concern.

12.1.5. Identify issues that may require future Task and Finish activity to Management Group for their prioritisation.

12.2. Each Liaison Group will elect a Chair annually from amongst its Participants. There will also be a designated Host Team Facilitator who will work with the Chair to liaise with the relevant Provider or Commissioner to agree the agenda.

12.3. Liaison Group membership will be open to all Participants. Active Participants will be asked to register their interest in Liaison Groups, which will enable them to receive papers and have their expenses paid. Other Participants will be able to attend and observe the meetings, but they will not be sent papers or receive expenses.

12.4. The Liaison Groups will meet no more frequently than quarterly.

12.5. Communication with Providers and Commissioners will be via the Liaison Group Chair or the Facilitator.

12.6. Communications, statements, or reports issued under LINK's statutory powers into the public domain must first receive Management Group approval and that of the General Assembly, unless paragraph 10.3 of this Constitution applies.

### 13. **Task and Finish Groups**

- 13.1. The primary purpose of Task and Finish Groups is to undertake activity that will deliver or instigate improvements to local health or social care services.
- 13.2. A general principle of the Task and Finish Groups is that they will undertake short term focussed pieces of work. Each Group will exist for no more than six months in duration.
- 13.3. The membership of each Task and Finish Group will comprise of Participants [Active or Interest] and Host Team members who have:
  - 13.3.1. The skills, special interest or knowledge of the subject area.
  - 13.3.2. The time to commit to the group.
  - 13.3.3. No conflict of interest.
- 13.4. Membership will also derive from other stakeholders relevant to the activity area who bring appropriate knowledge or skills.
- 13.5. Cambridgeshire LINK will identify issues and concerns for Task and Finish activity through:
  - 13.5.1. Engagement with the public.
  - 13.5.2. Engagement with Service Providers and Commissioners.
  - 13.5.3. Proposals from the Liaison Groups.
  - 13.5.4. Reports on services or issues from statutory bodies such as CQC.
  - 13.5.5. Reports in national or local media on issues relating to health or social care services.
- 13.6. The Management Group will decide which issues will give rise to a Task and Finish activity and how many Task and Finish Groups will run at any one time. This will take into account:
  - 13.6.1. Achieving a balance between health and social care issues.
  - 13.6.2. Whether the issue is County wide or localised.
  - 13.6.3. The volume of comments/concerns received.
  - 13.6.4. The available capacity of the Host team to facilitate the Task and Finish Group.

- 13.6.5. The availability of Participants with the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to engage in the activity.
- 13.6.6. The availability of any other resource necessary for the successful function of the group.
- 13.7. Once the Management Group agrees on potential Task and Finish activity it will task the Host team to work up a project proposal.
- 13.8. This project proposal will set out:
  - 13.8.1. What the activity intends to achieve [the outcomes].
  - 13.8.2. The estimated number of participants needed to complete the activity and the skill sets needed.
  - 13.8.3. The particular skills required by the Group Leader.
  - 13.8.4. How the group will achieve the outcomes identified [the activities].
  - 13.8.5. The time frame for the work of the group.
- 13.9. Once approved by Management Group, this proposal will be used to recruit the Task and Finish Group members and be used by them as the basis of the Delivery Work Plan.
- 13.10. The Task and Finish Group will provide Management Group with monthly progress reports on their activity using the Delivery Work Plan.
- 13.11. The final report of the Task and Finish Group activity will be presented to the Management Group and also the General Assembly for approval before the contents are made public, unless paragraph 10.3 applies.

#### 14. **Involvement Group**

- 14.1. The Involvement Group will continue to meet with the main purpose of engaging with the public.
- 14.2. The Involvement Group will elect a Chair annually from its participants.
- 14.3. There will also be a designated Host Team facilitator who will work with the Group to deliver its objectives.
- 14.4. It will be an ongoing group with its own Delivery Work Plan which will be agreed annually with the Management Group.

14.5. The Involvement Group will report on progress quarterly to Management Group.

## 15. **Participation**

15.1. The Host shall operate a registration process for those individuals, organisations and representatives who wish to support and be involved in the objectives of the LINK. The process shall recognise that participation is open to any person or organisation with an interest in health and social care and that it is designed to ensure adequacy of communication and engagement and will assist inclusiveness, openness, honesty and public accountability.

15.2. A participation database shall be held by the Host. Personal details shall be held on a secure and confidential basis with data accessible only to members of the Host team and managed strictly in accordance with data protection legislation.

15.3. There shall be three styles of participation; Active Participant; Interest Participant; and Stakeholder Participant.

15.4. Each **Active Participant** shall be eligible for inclusion in the General Assembly, the Management Group, the Liaison Groups, the Involvement Group and Task and Finish Groups. They shall commit time, energy and vision to the LINK ideal and be strictly independent and non-political. They shall comply strictly with all aspects of the Participants' Code of Conduct and shall maintain Criminal Records Bureau clearance. They may be individuals or representatives of relevant organisations who can work outside any constraints normally placed upon them by the organisation they normally represent. They shall be entitled to reclaim expenses in accordance with the authorised Participants' Expenses Scheme. They shall understand that they may hold 'authorised representative' status in accordance with the legislation (see Annex 1 for details).

15.5. The Host Team Leader shall act as the LINK's 'nominated person' in CRB matters and, by reference to LINK policy, ensure that all certificates are properly considered and that each applicant is suitable to act as a LINK Active Participant.

15.6. Following clearance, the Host Team Leader shall notify the applicant and shall procure and issue to them a combined photo-identity card at the earliest opportunity. Active Participants shall carry this card at all times that they are acting on LINK duties, producing it to anyone asking for proof of identity.

- 15.7. Active Participants shall immediately surrender their photo-identity card to the Host on ceasing to hold that style of participation.
- 15.8. Prior to commencing their appointment, an Active Participant shall undertake an approved course of induction which is designed for them to understand the Constitution and all other governance matters, the role, function and powers of the LINK and the manner in which the LINK operates. Such induction shall normally be offered to new Active Participants within seven days of their application being processed by the Host.
- 15.9. Each **Interest Participant** shall be eligible for inclusion in the General Assembly, Liaison Groups and, by invitation, in the Involvement Group and Task and Finish Group. They shall be individuals or representatives of interested organisations who wish to pass comment on any activity or project being undertaken by the LINK; or who wish to suggest any such activity or project; or who wish to be consulted on areas of service improvement; or who wish generally to be engaged with the work of the LINK. They shall be regularly communicated with using methods of their choice. They shall not be entitled to reclaim expenses in accordance with the authorised Participants' Expenses Scheme unless invited to participate in a Task and Finish Group. Any minor acting as an individual outside any formal young persons' structure shall require the formal prior permission of their parent/guardian at point of registration. An Interest Participant shall qualify for progression to Active Participant should they be able, on either a temporary or permanent basis, to do so, subject to personal circumstances.
- 15.10. Each **Stakeholder Participant** shall be regularly communicated with and be invited to attend General Assembly meetings. Subject to declarations of interest, they shall be able to vote at such meetings. They shall be representatives of health and social care statutory bodies or similar organisations or representatives of organisations providing services to such bodies who wish to engage with the LINK but for whom legislation or pecuniary interest would preclude Active or Interest participation. They shall not be able to reclaim expenses from the LINK.

## 16. **Communications**

- 16.1. All communications with the LINK shall be through the Host appointed by Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 16.2. Only persons authorised by the LINK shall have the power to speak or otherwise communicate on behalf of the LINK.

- 16.3. The Host shall clearly publicise a range of communication tools designed to encourage communities and individuals to engage with the LINK and for the LINK to respond.

### **Authorised Representative Status**

1. In accordance with paragraph 15.4 of the Constitution, only Active Participants shall be eligible to hold the status of 'authorised representative' as defined in the Local Governance and Public Involvement Act 2007 and shall have their names published in accordance with the Regulations.
2. In order to qualify for such status, applicant Active Participants shall have:
  - 2.1. Received a clear Criminal Records Bureau disclosure.
  - 2.2. Undergone 'Enter and View' training.
  - 2.3. Undergone training in the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults.
3. Upon completion of the above, the Active Participant's photo identity card will be updated to show their 'authorised representative' status.
4. This identity card must be worn at all times while on LINK related business, particularly whilst undertaking 'Enter and View' duties. This is necessary as Service Providers can deny access if the card is not visible and available for inspection.