

**Gateshead LINK
Operational Task Group**

**Thursday 18th December 2008
10am – 12 noon
Blaydon Room
Civic Centre**

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies

Present:

Kay Parker	Resident
Ian Mason	Resident
Alison McClellan	Resident
Dave Wallace	Voluntary worker
Gretel Keadell	Resident
Julie Whitehouse	Project Coordinator, Gateshead LINK

Apologies:

Dorothy Henley	Resident
Bill Llewellyn	Gateshead Community network
Christine Squires	Resident
Kim Newton	Administrator, Gateshead LINK
Annie Murphy	GVOG

Ian Mason was nominated and accepted as Chair.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting 20th November were agreed as a true record.

Matter arising:

- Topics for the work programme have been selected from the Conference Report. These are: Residential Care; Mental Health; Carers and Hospital Discharge.
- Item 6: LINK members Training Policy – a list of completed and outstanding policies will be produced for the Steering Group for January 2009.

3. Draft Protocol (2) between LINK and OSC

It was agreed the revised draft protocol be forwarded to Angela Frisby, on the understanding the LINK consider it still to be in draft form. A meeting will be requested with OSC representatives in January 2009 both to explore future working and to agree a final protocol, as appropriate.

JW presented information from her visit to Birmingham University regarding LINKs and OSC. The information raised various points for discussion including what type of working relationship would best benefit the objectives of the LINK and OSC. This information will be taken to the Steering Group for further discussion.

It was agreed a training input would be helpful to assist the LINK understand the role of Scrutiny and how it works in the Council.

Members could see the benefit of receiving Scrutiny papers other than 'health' - to keep abreast of the wider public health picture. However, there may not be capacity to do this and LINK may be better focusing on public opinion.

A concern was raised that OSC might think there are 'hundreds' of people attached to LINK to take on work. Mutual understanding of each others' capacity and remit is necessary.

4. LINKs Annual Report

The LINK Exchange guidance notes were circulated and discussed. It was noted in this first year of LINKs, the annual report (AR) cannot contain all the suggested inclusions.

It was noted it would be possible to produce the report in a format which is accessible, rather than very text based.

It was agreed a dedicated meeting should be held to discuss the AR with as many members as possible in attendance. This will be taken to the Steering Group, Thursday, 15th January 2009.

JW offered Host staff to produce a summary of main activities and achievements to date. This can be used as a basis for discussion.

Action : Project Staff

5. Expert Advisory Team (Enter and View Training)

The requirements previously notified to the EAT were agreed to be relevant:

- Re-visit the NCfl guide: Code of Conduct relating to visits to enter and view premises
- To clarify what LINKs can and can't do / should and should not do
- Explore what selection criteria, training and support needs may be required by potential LINK visitors
- Begin to develop a code of conduct of conduct / protocol for visits across service providers

The preferred date is Thursday, 29th January, afternoon.

Action: Project Staff

6. Yorkshire, Humber and the North East Regions:

Monitoring the LINKs Host's Contract

This event takes place Thursday 22nd January, Park Inn Hotel, York (10am – 1pm). It is suggested it would be best for local authority, Host staff and LINK members to be present.

Gretel and Kay will attend and Dave second for Gretel, if unavailable. AM and JW will attend on behalf of the Host. Staff will check AP is aware of this meeting. Transport details will be confirmed nearer the date.

Please note: the Operational and Promotional Group meetings arranged for this date will be transferred to Wednesday 21st January (venue to be confirmed).

Action: Project Staff

7. Annual Health Check (LINK Involvement)

Members received the Healthcare Commission: Your part in the annual health check (AHC) publication. LINK will be invited to contribute to the AHC of the three local trusts (Gateshead NHS Health Trust, Primary Care Trust and the Gateshead part of the Mental Health Trust).

Hilary Matthews (Involvement Lead, Gateshead NHS Health Trust) expressed an interest in meeting with the LINK and agreed to talk through the AHC procedure. It was agreed to invite Hilary to the Operational Group meeting, 8th January 2009.

8. Care Quality Commission Stakeholder Event

This event takes place on Friday, 16th January 2009 (Leeds), further detail yet to be notified.

Kay and Dave agreed to attend the above, with Ian or Gretel on 'stand-by'. It is preferred that 3 members and an officer attend, should places be available. This event will incur little cost to the LINK as travel expenses will be reimbursed by GCN.

Should places be unavailable staff will enquire about joining the 'online community' for consultation purposes.

9. Equality and Diversity Training

NHS Staff: Coleen Knox (Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator) had contacted the LINK expressing a wish to receive information from the LINK event, 23rd October 2008.

The Trust wish to provide awareness raising training for staff, particularly in relation to different disabilities and thought the report would be useful in informing training plans.

The LINK will request feedback on the training provided and the benefits perceived.

LINK training (Box of Frogs): JW has attended training with this organisation and found them to be both very good and thought provoking. The consideration in suggesting them was:

- a. their approach could enable different people to get different things out of the event, regardless of their previous experience of equality and diversity.
- b. Their approach would lend itself to inviting other LINKs to come along to the event.
- c. Learning from the course could be transferred into an Equality and Diversity Policy that members felt was an active document.

Information was circulated regarding 'Box of Frogs' training costs, listed below:

Planning and preparation: £750

Delivery: £700 (based on 2 facilitators and a peer consultant)

For under 12 participants this would be reduced to: £400

For a large events (40+) an extra facilitator might be necessary: £300 /day
One nights accommodation / travel : £50ppn / £120pp

Members discussed the relative costs of this provider compared to a local provider. It was noted training costs, in general, are quite expensive and the quality of the provider needs also to be considered.

It was agreed to obtain further information and quotes from local providers of equality and diversity training before a decision is made.

It would also be useful to establish if other LINKs in the region would be interested in getting involved with 'Box of Frogs' and contributing to the costs.

Action: Project Staff

10. Any other business

Local Engagement Board (15th December 2008):

Presentation on Our Plans for the Future – the Key to Health

12 strategic objectives were presented and participants asked to rate the 5 most important and then rank order the five. This will influence future commissioning. The priorities identified by LINK were similar to those selected at the event, with the exception of Children's Services.

It was agreed the event was very informative and LINK should continue to have representation at the LEB.

The dates for 2009 are included with these minutes.

11. Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 8th January 2009
10 am – 12 noon
GVOC, John Haswell House, 8/9 Gladstone Terrace

