



Leicestershire Local Involvement Network (LINK)

*Improve your Health and
Social Care Services*

Governance Documents

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1. Welcome to Leicestershire Local Involvement Network (LINK)

The Leicestershire Local Involvement Network (LINK) and the Host organisation would like to thank you for volunteering as a participant of the Leicestershire Local Involvement Network (LINK).

By joining, any individual or representative of an organisation with an interest in the health and social care of the people of Leicestershire can participate in the Leicestershire Local Involvement Network (LINK)

It's up to you how and when you get involved - in different ways at different times. For example you may want to have a permanent membership, be interested in everything that the Leicestershire LINK undertakes, and become part of the LINK Board, a Committee or a Task Group, or just to become active only when particular issues important to you or your group/organisation arise, and you may only wish to receive a newsletter so that you feel informed and involved. It is up to you!

This introduction sets out:

- What is expected of you as a Leicestershire (LINK) member
and
- What you can expect from the Host organisation staff.

Members are expected to:

- Work within the Governance Framework, codes and standard of conduct policies and procedures of Leicestershire LINK and register any interests in accordance with the register of interest policy.
- Not work against the majority view of the Leicestershire LINK once a decision has been democratically taken, but you may request that your viewpoint, if it differs, is recorded in the minutes.
- Only carry out work and undertake visits in line with the action plan and protocols agreed by the Leicestershire LINK.
- Have the general agreement of the Leicestershire LINK before speaking, writing or attending meetings on behalf of the LINK.
- Ensure that when representing the Leicestershire LINK at a meeting or event, they are speaking on behalf of the membership and not themselves.
- Report back to other members of the Leicestershire LINK within 2 weeks of attending anything on behalf of the LINK (via completion of a 'meeting report' - the LINK Host office will ensure that appropriate support is provided to members to enable completion of the feedback form).
- Maintain confidentiality at all times, not disclosing information in relation to

complaints, disputes, personal details or reports to any unauthorised person.

- Seek out and listen to the views of patients, carers and the public, especially those individuals and groups whose voices are not usually heard.
- Raise issues for consideration by the Leicestershire LINK which are based on evidence from patients or the public which demonstrate this is a matter of wider concern.
- Act and conduct themselves in a reasonable and responsible way towards any staff or volunteers or members of the public they work with or meet as a member of the Leicestershire LINK.
- Treat all people with respect and act in a way which does not discriminate against or exclude anyone.
- Make sure that people are aware of who can deal with complaints about personal or individual treatment, such as Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), Independent Complaints and Advocacy Service (ICAS), Leicestershire Health and Social Care Directorate, Care Quality Commission.
- Never disclose confidential and sensitive information unless there is a legal duty to do so for example in the interests of patient safety.
- Aim to attend and complete all agreed training plans and other opportunities to develop your understanding of the Leicestershire LINK and health and social care services.
- Follow the Induction Programme and guidance that you are given by the LINK Host staff.
- Let the LINK Host staff know of any changes to your employment or personal circumstances which could affect your participation in the Leicestershire LINK.
- Declare any conflict of interest as soon as it arises to the LINK Host staff who will keep the 'Register of Interests' up to date.
- Notwithstanding, there may be times when a third party can recognise a conflict of interest which needs to be raised at the time.
- Not accept gifts or hospitality which could be seen as trying to influence the decisions, independence or activities of the Leicestershire LINK.
- Comply with relevant legislation including equal opportunities, discrimination, human rights, data protection and freedom of information.

The LINK Host staff will seek to provide help and assistance:

- To help you carry out your volunteering activities within the Leicestershire

LINK by providing:

- Appropriate materials to carry out your Leicestershire LINK volunteering activities.
- Advising and supporting you in dealing with any difficulties you are having and guidance with situations that are new to you.
- Appropriate re-imburement for the help you need to take a full part in the work of the Leicestershire LINK such as interpreter, translations, advocate, carer support, child care and travel.
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- An introduction to the Leicestershire LINK when you join which may include, meeting relevant individuals and organisations and getting the right information including annual reports, work plans and minutes of previous meetings.
- Training in areas you have identified which will help you in your involvement with the Leicestershire LINK.
- Correct and up to date information, sent to you in a way (such as email or post) and format that you have agreed.
- Organising meetings at an accessible venue at an appropriate and convenient time as requested by members of the Leicestershire LINK.
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- Advise on the appropriate level of insurance required when taking part in Leicestershire LINK activities which are carried out in line with the LINK Host office guidance and regulations.
- Appropriate ID if you are appointed by the LINK Board for the purposes of entering and viewing premises in accordance with the Local Involvement Network Regulations 2008.

If the LINK Host staff do not meet your expectations please speak to us about your concerns. You can also use our Complaints Policy.

To ensure that the work of the LINK is carried out in accordance with the legislation and good practice the LINK has approved a series of Governance documents. They are the 'small print' and are listed below (copies are available on request).

Governance Documents

- Welcome and Introduction
- Principles and decision making
- Structure
- Standards of conduct
- Equal Opportunities
- Register of Interests
- Confidentiality
- Role of the Host organisation
- Enter and View
- LINK Board meeting rules
- Authorised representatives
- Financial control
- Complaints

2. Governance Principles and Decision Making

Founding Principles

The principles the members of the LINK will adopt are the seven principles of public life, the Nolan principles.

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they should take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example

The Mission Statement of the Leicestershire LINK

The LINK exists to enable people within the County of Leicestershire to contribute to the improvement and shaping of Health and Social Care Services

- Leicestershire LINK is the umbrella organisation which brings together other networks, organisations and individuals in Leicestershire to enable them to have a voice in improving health and social care services.
- We do this by working in a collaborative and inclusive way across Leicestershire taking account of the rich diversity of the people of Leicestershire and their needs.
- We will also work in an informed and constructive way with other LINKs and organisations.

The Powers of the LINK

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and Statutory Instrument 2008 No. 528 provide the authority of the LINK to:

- Promote and support the involvement of people in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local care services.
- To monitor and review the commissioning and provision of local care services.
- To obtain the views of people about their needs for, and their experiences of, local care services.
- Make these views known to commissioners and providers of local care services and those scrutinising them.
- Make reports and recommendations about how local care services ought, or could be, improved known to commissioners and providers of local care services and those scrutinising them.

The work of the LINK is underpinned by its statutory powers which enable it to:

- Question commissioners and providers of health and social care services and receive a response within 20 working days.
- Refer issues to Overview and Scrutiny Committees and get a response within 20 working days.
- Enter and view premises where publicly funded health and social care is being provided

Membership of the LINK

Membership of the LINK is open to any individual or representative of an organisation with an interest in the health and social care of the people of Leicestershire. Membership will be by application and this can be done by application form, telephone request, in person or in any way which meets the need of the individual.

- Groups will complete a membership form.
- Membership will remain indefinite, unless the member chooses to leave or is expelled from the LINK as a result of their conduct.
- To assure the public that Leicestershire LINK responsibilities are carried out in an impartial and transparent way LINK members should declare any information appropriate for inclusion on a Register of Interests and where members have a conflict of interest they should declare it and withdraw from the decision making process.

Decision Making

The LINK will ensure that the decisions it makes are reflective of the priorities of the local community and will evidence that wide consultation has taken place.

General Meetings of the LINK

The Host organisation on behalf of the LINK will convene a public General Meeting at least once a year on a date to be decided by the Board. Registered members of the LINK will be entitled to attend. 21 days notice will be given to the full membership.

- The quorum for a General Meeting will be 10 members.
- Each Individual member and one member representing each organisation in membership of the LINK will have one vote.
- The Governance Framework is open to review and change by a majority vote of the LINK Board followed by public consultation and agreement by simple majority vote of the LINK Board in a Public Meeting.

The LINK Board

A LINK Board shall be elected by postal ballot with nominations submitted at least 10 working days before the meeting date. Any interests that might impact on decision making or reflect a conflict of interest or are required by law to be made known must be declared with the nominations.

All meetings of the LINK Board shall be held in public and reasonable notice will be given by the Host organisation on the website and such other means as may be

appropriate.

The function of the LINK Board will be to direct the work of the LINK and to support and enable the groups and individuals to carry out the work of the LINK through:

- Ensuring the Work Plan is fully implemented and monitored
- Ensuring key local stakeholders are represented and their views considered
- Deciding priorities and allocating resources within the LINK budget
- Communicating with the wider community
- Supporting groups to undertake work and take up issues as necessary
- Supporting groups to produce credible reports which commissioners and providers can use to improve services
- Approving reports produced by groups on behalf of the LINK making a report or recommendation to a Council, NHS Trust or Service Provider
- Making references to Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- Ensuring the LINK Annual Report and Finance Report is produced and presented when required and circulated to all Stakeholders (this includes Primary Care Trusts, NHS Trusts, Leicestershire Local Authorities, the Care Quality Commission and the Strategic Health Authority).

The LINK Board shall maintain and publish financial procedures, monitor and authorise spending of the LINK budget on behalf of the LINK, to ensure cost effective implementation of the Work Plan. The LINK budget and finance reports shall be provided on a monthly basis to members of the LINK Board.

LINK Board members will be asked to commit 2-3 hours per week to carry out work / attend LINK Board meetings and / or other meetings as required.

The LINK Board shall be comprised of 15 people including individuals, and representatives of the voluntary sector and the community sector.

The objective is to ensure a Board representative of the people of Leicestershire and its communities. To this end the LINK will seek Board membership nominations from the full membership made up of:

- Seven members each representing one of the seven local authority districts in which they should reside. These members will ensure that the LINK is informed of the needs of groups and individual in the District and represent the LINK in the District.
- Eight shall represent the specific communities of interest, ideally from the following areas:
 - Young people
 - Older people
 - BME
 - Disabilities
 - Businesses
 - Carers

- Refugees, Asylum seekers, Gypsies and Travellers
- Economic exclusion

The LINK Board shall have power to co-opt further members if necessary to establish a balanced Board. Co-opted members shall have full voting rights.

The names of all LINK Board and those authorised to act on behalf of the LINK shall be published.

Any individual or representative of an organisation with an interest in the health and social care of the people of Leicestershire (except for elected members of Local Authorities and Members of NHS Trust Boards) can be nominated or self nominated for election to the LINK Board. If there are more nominations than places on the LINK Board, the Host will arrange an election by secret ballot. Ballots may be postal or conducted at a General Meeting.

The LINK Board shall have a Chairperson and 2 Vice Chairs directly elected by the Board. The Chairperson will stand for 2 years and the Vice Chairs for 1 year both shall be eligible for re-election.

Nominations, (including self nomination) for Chairperson and Vice Chair positions should be submitted in advance to the Board. Any interests that might impact on decision making or reflect a conflict of interest must be declared with nominations. If there are more than one nomination for each post the Host will arrange for an election by secret ballot

Further LINK Board positions may be included as and when the Board decides. Such new decisions are open to nomination and election in a manner defined by the LINK Board.

The Chairperson shall be responsible for facilitating the LINK Board and Public Meetings and signing the LINK Annual Report. In absence of the Chairperson one of the Vice Chairs shall be responsible for facilitating the LINK Board meeting and Public Meetings. The Vice Chairperson shall have full Chairperson responsibilities and powers in the absence of the Chairperson.

All LINK meetings shall have an agenda (with adequate information and supporting papers to enable members to make informed decisions) circulated by the LINK Office in advance of the meeting either by post or email.

Items for inclusion on a LINK meeting agenda may be submitted by any member of the public through the LINK Office for consideration but this must be done 10 working days before any meeting and accompanied by any supporting documentation.

All notes and minutes of meetings of the LINK will be published by the Host organisation as soon as is practicable after the meeting.

Decisions of the LINK Board shall be on a majority voting basis and subject to each

meeting being quorate with a minimum of six members present and in the event of a split decision the Chairperson will only have a casting vote.

The LINK Board may appoint Committees or groups (including sub-groups), which will have Terms of Reference and delegated powers agreed by the LINK Board and be chaired by a member of the LINK Board. Committees will report to the Board.

The LINK Board may appoint members with delegated powers to Joint Committees with other LINKs. They will report to the Board.

The Board may establish long and short term Task Groups to undertake a programme of work or to monitor particular services.

Each group must appoint a Chair to take responsibility for what the group does and whose appointment should be confirmed by the LINK Board. This person may be a member of the LINK Board or co-opted to the LINK Board for the life of the group.

Each group will conform to the Code of Conduct for the LINK, have Terms of Reference, work plan and delegated powers agreed by the LINK Board. The LINK Board, together with the Host organisation will identify what level of support to give each group in terms of organising meetings, taking minutes, supporting work projects etc. The membership and remit of all Task Groups shall be published.

Any individual or representative of an organisation with an interest in the health and social care of the people of Leicestershire can be an authorised member of a LINK Task Group. Anyone interested in acting within a LINK Task Group should provide their names to the LINK Board through the Host organisation. Representatives appointed by other LINKs may be members of Task Groups.

The LINK Board shall refer issues to the Leicestershire County Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee after full consideration and when direct approaches to commissioners and providers have not secured a satisfactory outcome.

The LINK Board shall be responsible for ensuring the LINK Annual Report and Finance Report is produced and approved before being circulated to all Stakeholders (this includes Primary Care Trusts, NHS Trusts, Leicestershire Local Authorities, the Strategic Health Authority and CQC).

The LINK may commission or support other organisations to do pieces of work subject to the LINK approving the report of the work.

The LINK will provide feedback to all participants in any piece of work.

The LINK will ensure that relevant work receives publicity and that where appropriate reports are published on the LINK website.

Relationships with statutory agencies

The Board will agree Protocols to govern these relationships and will meet with the Local Authority and/or NHS organisations to discuss forthcoming work planning and with the relevant Local Authority or NHS organisation or private providers to discuss the outcome of any piece of work

The Board may appoint members to represent its views at meetings of the County Council and its Committees and NHS Trust Boards and Committees, these representatives report back to the Board or relevant Committee.

Communications with NHS and statutory organisations on health and social care issues shall be through the Host organisation in accordance with the Protocols and pathways agreed with each organisation.

Relationships with the media

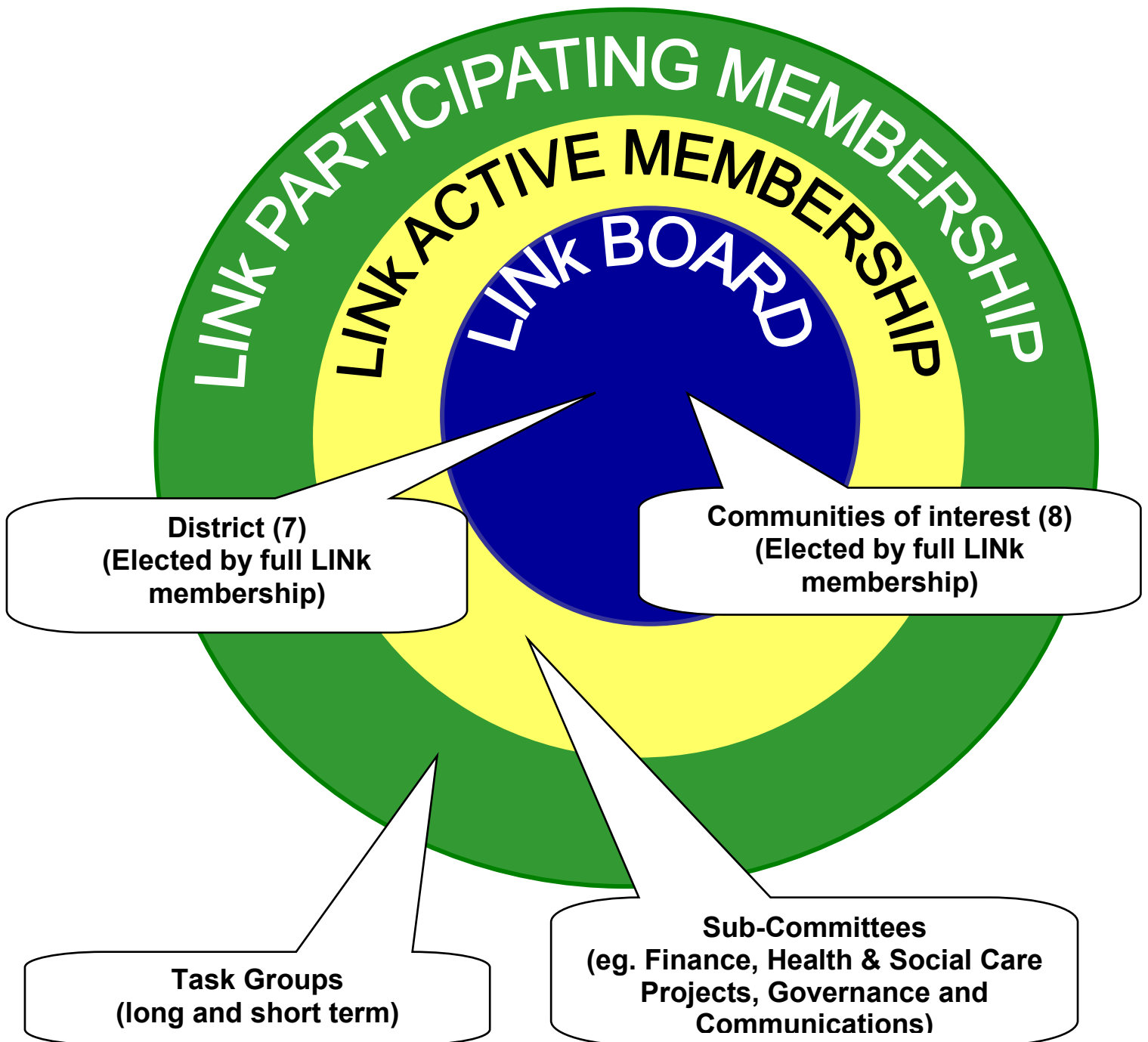
The LINK will work in collaboration with the media to ensure that the work of the LINK is widely known. Comments and articles to the media on health and social care issues shall only be made in accordance with the protocol and guidance issued by the Communications Group. Any comment on health and social care issues shall be accurate and factual, based on current knowledge and activity of the LINK and not simply a matter of personal opinion. No member shall use the authority of the LINK name to gain publicity for personal comment or opinions.

Training and developing LINK members

To ensure that the work of the LINK is well informed anyone wanting to work on authorised LINK activity must be willing to participate in relevant training based on individual training needs analysis conducted by the LINK office.

All necessary training costs and related expenses shall be paid for through the LINK budget.

3. The Structure of Leicestershire LINK



4. Standards of Conduct Policy

The Host organisation has a philosophy of inclusiveness, with members of the Leicestershire LINK performing an active role in health and social care strategic decision making across Leicestershire.

When, however, members do not meet the appropriate standards, it is essential to ensure that action is taken which is fair, proportionate and appropriate. The policy therefore aims to:

- Ensure the safe and effective operation of the Leicestershire LINK.
- Ensure that volunteers are supported in gaining awareness of their rights and obligations.
- Ensure that any standard of conduct action taken is fairly and consistently applied.
- Promote and maintain standards of conduct and commitment to public service values (as described in the Seven Principles of Public Life: The Nolan principles. Reference: Governance Principles and Decision making document).

Financial Interest

Authorised LINK representatives are expected to follow agreed financial procedures at all times. No changes to local financial procedures may be made without approval of the Board on the recommendation of the Finance Group at a meeting held in public.

Authorised representatives are expected to ensure that they use funds and resources entrusted to them for the purpose intended, in accordance with such guidance as may be approved by the Board, and in a reasonable and responsible manner.

Authorised LINK representatives who require significant quantities of printing in relation to LINK business should whenever possible use the facilities of the Host organisation for this service.

Any authorised LINK representative aware of potentially corrupt or fraudulent activities by other representatives in relation to LINK business has a duty to report this to the LINK organisation.

Authorised LINK representatives who receive gifts and/or hospitality should declare and not place themselves under an obligation that might influence or be perceived to influence their future decisions or conduct in relation to LINK activity. Any abuse of this clause shall be dealt with by the LINK Board

It is a requirement that members declare financial interests and withdraw from any discussions relating to such an interest. If it becomes clear to the Host organisation that a member is not observing this restriction, the disciplinary procedure will apply.

Continuing membership not in the interests of the Leicestershire LINK

The following is a list of examples of behaviour that could potentially trigger 'Unacceptable Conduct' action. The list is not exhaustive, and other situations of potentially inappropriate behaviour may also be considered.

List of criteria:

- Physical assault on other Leicestershire LINK members or any other individuals in the course of work pertaining to the Leicestershire LINK, or action likely to bring Leicestershire LINK into disrepute;
- Making comments a recipient or witness considers to be discriminatory, particularly on the grounds of race, sex, disability or other types of discrimination recognised in law;
- Failing to observe agreed confidentiality, particularly patient confidentiality;
- Deception in completing an application or other official form
- Fraud (e.g. submitting false expenses claims);
- Theft of or malicious damage to the Host organisation office, NHS or Health and Social Care property;
- Gross carelessness or negligence (an act or failure to act which endangers others' Health and Safety);
- Conviction of a criminal offence during membership of the Leicestershire LINK that might threaten the credibility of the LINK;
- Bringing the Leicestershire LINK into disrepute;
- Preventing other Leicestershire LINK members from participating;
- Acting against the agreed action/work plan of the Leicestershire LINK;
- Non attendance at 3 consecutive meetings where attendance is required or requested, without sending apologies, will result in a letter being sent to the individual in order to review their membership.

Initiating the Standards of Conduct Procedure

Anyone may make a complaint about a Leicestershire LINK member's behaviour. All such complaints should be addressed to the Chairperson of the LINK. If it's a complaint about the Chairperson, then it should be sent through one of the Vice Chairpersons. A complaint that becomes a standard of conduct case will be dealt with under this procedure. The Leicestershire LINK Standards of Conduct Policy is subject to the Leicestershire LINK Complaints policy.

Stage 1

Initial Investigation

In response to a complaint, a panel formed from representatives of the LINK Board will make the initial decision on whether an investigation is appropriate, based on the standards of conduct. The representatives will inform the member of the nature of the complaint and arrange for an investigation panel and interview. During the interview the member will be given the opportunity to put forward their own case. If the representatives are satisfied that a breach of the established rules has occurred, a verbal warning will be issued.

If a breach of a standard of conduct involves possible criminal activity, the Host organisation should consider informing the police. The standards of conduct procedure will continue whether they do so or not.

Stage 2

Written Warning

If, within a set of timescales, there is a further breach of rules or if standards do not improve then a written warning will be issued. The procedure mentioned above will be followed by a written warning. A final written warning may also be issued by the investigation panel on behalf of the LINK Board immediately if the breach of rules or failure to observe standards are more serious and a verbal warning is considered inadequate.

Stage 3

Gross Misconduct

If it is deemed a member has committed an offence serious enough the normal consequence will be dismissal from Leicestershire LINK. This decision is taken by the LINK Board.

Note: An assessment, investigation and review will not be conducted by the same individuals on more than two panels.

5. Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Purpose

The LINK aims to ensure that no volunteer or member receives more or less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender and gender identity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

2. Principles

The LINK will ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Participants will be given equal opportunities and access to training to enable them to progress both within the LINK. This LINK is committed to a programme of action to make this policy effective and will bring it to the attention of all participants.

6. Register of Interests

Leicestershire LINK and other LINKs throughout England have been set up because changes in the way the NHS is structured and the increasing integration of health and social care mean that new ways of involving people are needed. These changes also mean potential conflicts of interest may arise. It is recognised for example that groups or businesses that provide care services may want to join Leicestershire LINK to influence health and social care as a whole.

To assure the public that Leicestershire LINK responsibilities are carried out clearly and honestly in an impartial and transparent way and that we do not make decisions in a way which furthers our own interests LINK members should declare any information appropriate for inclusion on a Register of Interests and where members have a conflict of interest they should declare it and withdraw from the decision making process. Where any interest is not personal or financial the member may contribute to discussion and should accept the guidance of the Host regarding a right to vote on the issue. Failure to declare conflict of interest is a breach of the Leicestershire LINK Member Code of Conduct. Any conflict of interest that might be considered to influence a member's actions as a LINK member must be declared to the LINK Host organisation as soon as it arises. The Host organisation will offer advice and keep the Register of Interests up to date.

What is an interest?

The criteria is not whether the member thinks they have an interest to declare but whether another LINK member, or a member of the public would think they have an interest to declare.

An example of a declarable interest would be one which was of financial benefit, such as a member deciding about care services which they, or a group to which they belong, provide. An interest may also arise if the wellbeing or financial interest of a family member or friend is likely to be affected.

To be a user of a service or a member of a group of service users does not constitute a conflict of interest with respect to improvements or changes to that service.

Ask yourself these questions and if in doubt ask the Host:

- Will it affect me financially in any way? As a LINK member you are entitled to out of pocket expense e.g. travel or materials costs. Reimbursement for time or expertise would be considered as payment and must be declared as a conflict of interest.
- Does it affect my employer or my employment?
- Does it have a pecuniary affect on a group in which I have an interest?
- Does it affect a close colleague, friend or relative?

Declare any conflict of interest that might be considered to influence your actions as a LINK member to the Host organisation as soon as it arises, who will offer advice and who keep the Register of Interests up to date.

Failure to declare conflicts of interest is a breach of the Leicestershire LINK Member Code of Conduct.

7. Confidentiality

1. Details in relation to complaints and disputes shall be treated with confidence by authorised LINK representatives dealing with these issues.
2. Personal information that may be received by any authorised LINK representative in the course of authorised activity on behalf of the LINK shall be treated as confidential.
3. The Data Protection Act shall govern all information dealt with by the LINK and representatives shall abide by this Act.
4. The LINK and LINK Host organisation shall comply with the CRB code regarding the secure storage, handling, use, retention & disposal of CRB disclosures and disclosure information and with its obligations under the Data Protection Act.
5. Any member breaching confidentiality shall explain their actions to a representative member of the LINK Board. Breaches of confidentiality may be defended by any of the reasons currently accepted in law.
6. In particular circumstances part of any meeting may be held in camera and the minutes relating to that will remain confidential.

8. Role of the Host Organisation

Communities in Partnership are contracted by Leicestershire County Council as the 'Host' organisation to provide independent support for the Leicestershire Local Involvement Network.

The role of the Host organisation is to help the LINK set-up and work with local people and groups to agree how Leicestershire LINK works locally, and how it will decide what to do. The Host organisation staff will also hold the money for Leicestershire LINK and will be responsible for keeping records of how money is spent. The Host organisation will support the LINK in the development and promotion of its work priorities and Work Plan activities for example through:

- Community/citizen panels
- Consultation and involvement workshops
- Focus groups
- Outreach events/meetings
- LINK governance meetings

Although it is accountable to Leicestershire LINK for ensuring appropriate support, the Host organisation will be performance managed against the contract by Leicestershire County Council. The Host organisation will make regular reports to the County Council about how it is supporting the LINK. The Host staff will also assist Leicestershire LINK to write an Annual Report about what it has done throughout the year and how the money has been spent.

The Host organisation will:

- Undertake the initial set-up of the LINK - promoting, workshops, networking, outreach to hard-to-reach and under-represented groups
- Work with LINK members to establish working practices and prioritise activities
- Hold the finances of the LINK - accounting, audit, financial reporting
- Communicate - correspondence, newsletters, website
- Manage a database of contacts, record LINK activity etc.
- Provide advice and support
- Signpost to other projects, information resources etc.
- Liaise with national bodies
- Provide dispute resolution
- Facilitate codes of conduct/ complaints
- Provide convenient access to information
- Arrange training
- Form strategic partnerships, e.g. Scrutiny & Review Committee, Primary Care Trusts, Local Strategic Partnerships, Health & Social Care Commissioners/ Providers/ Regulators
- Work with other LINKs/ Host organisations
- Promote and develop Leicestershire LINK Work Plan and activities and support the production of an Annual Report.

9. Enter and View

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and Statutory Instrument 2008 528 give the LINK powers to Enter and View premises where publicly funded health and social care is being provided in order to carry out its duties in monitoring and reviewing services.

The LINK will seek people who would be interested to undertake visiting develop a pool of trained and authorised visitors develop a programme of visiting with reports back to the LINK Board and any other group that would need to know the outcome and report back to relevant providers and commissioners.

The LINK Board shall approve and authorise individuals to represent the LINK for the purpose of entering and viewing health and social care establishments in accordance with Guidance published by the NHS Centre for Excellence and Protocols agreed by the LINK Board.

Entering and viewing health and social care establishments on behalf of the LINK shall be carried out only by authorised, CRB checked representatives of the LINK who have had the relevant training.

All LINK representatives volunteering for 'Enter and View' activities shall have to undergo a new CRB check that is acceptable to the LINK as decided by the LINK Board following the endorsed practice of the CRB. The criminal record of a participant will be taken into account only when the conviction is relevant. Unless the nature of the work demands it, you will not be asked to disclose convictions that are 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Having an 'unspent' conviction will not necessarily bar someone from being a participant. This will depend on the circumstances and background to the offence(s). Where a conviction has been disclosed in an individual's application, a discussion will take place regarding the offence and its relevance to the participant.

The LINK shall comply fully with the CRB Code of Practice and will not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a CRB disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

Anyone wanting to apply for a CRB check as a LINK representative should first be interviewed by a nominated member of the LINK Board to ensure they are fully aware of the application procedure and any implications for themselves.

Authorised LINK representatives, for the purpose of conducting an 'Enter and View' visit, shall carry LINK authorisation clearly identifying them as an authorised and accredited LINK representative.

Entering and viewing of health and social care establishments on behalf of the LINK shall be as part of the LINK Work Plan.

The purpose in using the power to Enter and View in any case shall be clearly established and in accordance with the LINK Workplan. The outcomes of the visit shall be recorded and submitted to the Host organisation and relevant Committee Task Group of LINK Board (as appropriate).

10. LINK Board Meeting Rules

Members of the LINK Board are expected to:

- Prepare for and attend meetings of the LINK Board on a regular basis sending apologies when unable to attend or when expecting to be late
- Represent the LINK at other meetings
- Be willing to take on specific roles within the LINK such as Vice Chairperson if elected to do so or support other inexperienced Board members
- Commit to playing an active role in the Leicestershire LINK for at least One year
- Contribute to meetings
- Read documents prior to meetings
- Be proactive in acquiring information relevant to the work of the LINK
- Prepare for and attend events
- Support and be involved with working groups and other projects as part of the LINKs work plan
- Write reports if required
- Feed back to appropriate persons as directed.

In order that there are no barriers to participation consideration will be given to personal circumstances and support will be available from the LINK support office.

Meeting Rules

- Switch mobile phones to silent and vibrate throughout the duration of the meeting.
- Keep contributions relevant to the agenda and contribute appropriately in terms of content and length of contribution.
- Show courtesy and respect for others opinions. All members have the right to be heard on matters relevant to the agenda items discussed, members of the Leicestershire LINK should treat colleagues, staff and visitors with respect.
- Raise points of discussion, questions and remarks - through the Chair so as not to prolong the meeting any more than necessary.
- Do not use sexist, racist, ageist or homophobic language.
- Members should observe time limits for discussions.
- The Chairperson has the power to curtail discussion as appropriate - a member dominating the discussion may be asked by the Chairperson to give way to other members wishing to speak.
- No member should complain on behalf of the Leicestershire LINK without prior discussion and agreement at a meeting of the LINK Board.
- A binding vote shall be taken on issues upon which members disagree - the Chairperson does not have an individual vote unless it is necessary for the Chairperson to give a casting vote in the event of a split decision.
- If the Code of Conduct is breached during a meeting, the Chairperson and/or the Host organisation have the right to suspend and withdraw support for the meeting.

- All meetings of the LINK Board need to run smoothly and it is hoped that all members will attend regularly and play an active role within the Leicestershire LINK. However, it is also recognised that at times members may not be able to attend meetings regularly for reasons of ill-health etc. and by agreement with the LINK can continue to contribute via regular contact by some other agreed means e.g. email, post etc.
- Any member who does not attend 3 consecutive meetings without apologies will receive a written letter from the Chairperson.

Role of the Host Organisation

The role of the Host organisation is to provide support to the LINK Board by:

- Ensuring procedures operate smoothly prior to the meeting
- Booking a venue, which is fully accessible
- Preparing an Agenda and accompanying papers, to be circulated to members 5 working days in advance of the Board meeting
- Producing minutes and circulating to the Board within 5 working days of the meeting
- Acting as a clerk to the meeting generally, to ensure smooth running
- Publicising advance notice of Board meetings on the LINK website and in the LINK newsletter.

11. Authorised Representatives

1. Purpose

This procedure meets the statutory requirement to show and record how Authorised Representatives for the LINK are selected, trained, authorised, identified and monitored.

2. Principles

It is essential that Authorised Representatives for the LINK are aware of the sensitivities of their role and that they are committed to constructive partnership ways of working.

These principles follow the detailed guidance in "Code of conduct relating to LINKs visits to enter and view services" (NHS NCI Gateway reference 10194).

3. Selection

People interested in becoming LINK Authorised Representatives should apply via the Host organisation. Anyone wanting to apply for a CRB check as a LINK representative should first be interviewed by a nominated member of the LINK Board to ensure they are fully aware of the application procedure and any implications for themselves.

The Leicestershire LINK Board will decide candidates for training based on their experience, interest and availability.

The procedure for selection and approval is found in the 'Enter and View Procedure Appendix A' as approved by the Board.

4. Training

Training in the necessary requirements, sensitivities and constraints will be arranged by the Host organisation in a training programme approved by the Leicestershire LINK Board.

5. Authorisation

Candidates will be authorised in writing by the Leicestershire LINK Board once the Board is satisfied that training requirements have been met and that Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks have been made in the last 12 months. The criminal record of a participant will be taken into account only when the conviction is relevant. Unless the nature of the work demands it, you will not be asked to disclose convictions that are 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Having an 'unspent' conviction will not necessarily bar someone from being a participant. This will depend on the circumstances and background to the offence(s). Where a conviction has been disclosed in an individual's application, a discussion will take place regarding the offence and its relevance to the participant.

The LINK shall comply fully with the CRB Code of Practice and will not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a CRB disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed. Acceptability of the CRB checks to be determined by the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson.

6. Identification

The Host organisation will supply LINK Authorised Representatives (LARs) with written confirmation of their authority and powers, together with an Identity Card with photograph. This card should be worn at all times and on all occasions when on LINK business.

7. Monitoring

If fellow members or the Host organisation have any concerns about inappropriate or counter-productive behaviour, they should pass these concerns on to the Leicestershire LINK Board Chairperson or a Vice Chairperson who, with the Host organisation, will investigate the concerns and, where necessary, will arrange appropriate coaching, mentoring and possible additional training.

8. Defaults

Any breaches of this procedure should be brought to the attention of the Host organisation for the Leicestershire LINK who will raise it at the next meeting of the Leicestershire LINK Board. The Leicestershire LINK Board will then decide the appropriate response.

12. Financial Control

1. Purpose

This procedure meets the statutory requirement to show and record how the finances of the Leicestershire LINK are used and monitored.

2. Budgets

The LINK Board will approve an annual budget and monitor expenditure

3. Principles

Unless otherwise delegated in writing, expenditure in excess of amounts which may be specified elsewhere (Leicestershire LINK Expenses Policy Appendix B) must be approved by the Leicestershire LINK Board and recorded in writing, together with a summary of why that decision was taken. The Host organisation will be responsible for making payments.

Other expenses incurred by LINK members in the performance of their appointed role(s) may be authorised by the Host organisation.

4. Delegation

The Leicestershire LINK Board will ensure that the same principles are followed if it decides to delegate some of its powers to:

- Duly constituted committees and task groups
- Duly constituted committees for multi-LINK functions

Any breaches of this procedure should be brought to the attention of the Host organisation for the Leicestershire LINK who will raise it at the next meeting of the Leicestershire LINK Board. The Leicestershire LINK Board will then decide the appropriate response.

13. Complaints

1. Purpose

This procedure meets the statutory requirement to show and record the processes for how the LINK deals with complaints and appeals.

2. Principles

To gain and maintain credibility with the wider public which the LINK serves and is accountable to, it is vital that there are simple and transparent processes for making constructive use of complaints in order to learn what to improve. The range of complaints could involve:

- The Host support;
- An individual LINK member;
- The entire LINK organisation.

3. Host

A complaint or concern involving **contract issues** with the Host must be referred to **Leicestershire County Council (LCC)** who administer this contract.

Complaints and concerns about **Host support issues** must be referred to the Leicestershire LINK Board who will consider what action to take.

4. LINK Members

Concerns or complaints about **individual LINK members** should first be shared with a Host support worker who will pass these concerns on to the Leicestershire LINK Board Chairperson or a Vice Chairperson who will investigate and clarify the concerns or complaint. If necessary, there is then a range of options:

- Informal discussion and counseling.
- Convening three non-involved Leicestershire LINK Board members as a Complaints Panel.
- Referring the issue on appeal to the complete Board.

If there is a complaint about a LINK Committee or Group this must be made in writing to the Chair and it will be considered by the Board in a private part of the Board meeting. The Chair will arrange for an independent investigation of the complaint if required.

If there is a complaint about the Chair this must be made in writing to a Vice Chair and it will be considered by the Board in a private part of the Board meeting in the absence of the Chair. The Vice Chair will arrange for an independent investigation

of the complaint if required.

5. Whole LINK

Since the Leicestershire LINK was instituted by Leicestershire County Council under statute, any complaint against the whole LINK would need to be referred to LCC.

6. Timescales

Working targets are:

- 7 working days for the Host to acknowledge receipt of a complaint
- 14 working days thereafter to clarify the complaint
- 20 working days after that for a Complaints Panel to start
- 40 working days for the Complaints Panel to conclude their investigation

If the Complaints Panel decision is not accepted by the Complainant he or she has the right to appeal to the LINK Board. The above timescales will then be replicated.

At each stage of the Complaints and Appeal procedure, the Complainant will be kept fully informed.

7. Defaults

Any breaches of this procedure should be brought to the attention of the Host organisation for the Leicestershire LINK who will raise it at the next meeting of the Leicestershire LINK Board.

The Leicestershire LINK Board will then decide the appropriate response.

Leicestershire LINK

Enter and View Authorised Persons Selection Procedure

Introduction

To undertake Enter and View (E&V) activity under the current legislation a person must be authorised by the LINK Board. This procedure sets out the process by which a person is approved as an Authorised Person.

There shall be two levels of authorisation:

1. Level One (Probationary)

- a) The person shall have been accepted as suitable in accordance with the relevant paragraph, **Acceptance** below.
- b) The person shall have satisfactorily completed the necessary theory training.
- c) The person shall have satisfactorily completed the necessary practical training.
- d) The person shall have the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check completed and accepted in accordance with the relevant paragraph below.
- e) The person will be authorised to undertake E&V activity only when accompanied by a person authorised to Level Two

2. Level Two (Substantive)

- a) The person shall fulfill the requirements of Level One (Paras a, b, c and d) above.
- b) The person shall have undertaken at least one E&V activity under the guidance of a person qualified to Level Two.

Acceptance

LINK members wishing to be accepted as candidates for E&V activities must submit a statement detailing:

- a) Relevant experience, if any
- b) Reasons for wishing to undertake E&V activity
- c) Details or evidence of any current CRB checks
- d) Any circumstances which may adversely affect their performance of the relevant activity, or which, if made public, may adversely affect the reputation of the LINK.
- e) Any employment or activity which may present a conflict of interest when undertaking E&V activity

The statement will be treated as confidential by the Chair of the LINK Board and the Project Manager of the Host organisation who will make the decision on the candidate's acceptability.

A rejected candidate may appeal to a panel comprising the original assessors and in addition two members holding Level Two status one of whom must be a Board member. The appeal panel will also treat the statement as confidential, their decision will be final and not open to further appeal.

CRB Check

- a) Persons already in possession of a current CRB certificate must produce the original for inspection by the Project Manager of the Host organisation who will maintain a record of the relevant detail.
- b) The Project Manager will advise the person whether or not their certification is acceptable for the purposes of E&V activity.
- c) Persons not in possession of a current CRB certificate will be invited to submit the necessary application through the Host organisation.
- d) Any CRB certificate issued must be produced for inspection as in a) above
- e) Such applications and subsequent responses from CRB will be treated as confidential between the applicant and the Host unless the information supplied indicates possible grounds for non-acceptance. This will be dealt with as noted in Acceptance above.

Publication

In accordance with the relevant legislation the LINK Board must approve the appointment of Authorised Persons and their names published into the public domain. This will be satisfied by appropriate notices:

- a) Being recorded in the minutes of the LINK Board meeting.
- b) The minutes of the Board meeting being available on the LINK website
- c) The names being recorded on the LINK website
- d) Written notice being given to Leicestershire County Council



Leicestershire LINK

Reimbursement of Travel and other related expenses incurred by members of the public and their carers who are involved in the work of Leicestershire LINK

Expenses Policy

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the process and provide guidance on the payment of expenses incurred by members of the public who have been individually asked to be involved in the work of the Leicestershire LINK (as a volunteer).

Whilst it is recognised that individuals may obtain personal satisfaction from being involved, it is unreasonable to expect them to resource their own involvement as this runs the risk of excluding people on financial grounds.

How is the policy to be used?

This policy is to be used to reimburse travel and other related expenses incurred by members of the public involved in the work of the Leicestershire LINK. The policy includes information in relation to members of the public who have a special need that requires them to be accompanied by a personal assistant or by a carer, and enables the claiming of travel and associated expenses for them.

As a publicly funded body, the Leicestershire LINK has a responsibility to ensure that it accounts for the resources it is given and that they are used for the purpose provided. Therefore, all claims for reimbursement must show that it was reasonable to incur the expenditure and that the reimbursement sought accords with this Expenses Policy and with the Leicestershire LINK's work plan.

This Policy will be reviewed annually.

2. Expenses and Reimbursement

This section provides information about travel, subsistence, incidental expenditure and carers expenses for which LINK members may claim reimbursement.

If the LINK member has any special requirements or has a query about whether a request for reimbursement will be considered reasonable, they should discuss this with the relevant member of staff responsible for leading the initiative within the Leicestershire LINK.

LINK members may request a cash advance for anticipated expenses, adequate notice must be given of this requirement and any such request will be treated as confidential – in line with the LINK policy on Cash Advances.

Travel expenses can only be authorised within the boundaries of Leicestershire unless the travel is claimed for attending events outside the County.

Claimants are advised that they must take responsibility for declaring payments received from the LINK, which may have implications for tax liability or benefit payments.

Expenses will only be payable for as long as the LINK is in existence. Termination of LINK activity by dissolution or any other legal cause shall terminate the LINKs responsibility for payment of expenses up to the date of termination.

In the case of funded organisations, it is expected that representatives will be reimbursed through their individual organisation.

a) Rail

The cost of a standard class ticket may be claimed. For journeys booked in advance or for travel outside peak hours, LINK members are requested to use the cheapest standard class ticket available, (e.g. saver and other advanced purchased tickets).

A receipt for the cost of the ticket is to be attached to the Expenses Claim Form.

b) Bus

The ticket is to be retained and attached to the Expenses Claim Form.

c) Taxi

Wherever possible, public transport should be used for short journeys. If this is impractical (e.g. if public transport does not operate at a suitable time) or the LINK member is not able to use public transport, then a taxi may be used. This should be agreed, in advance if possible, with the member of staff responsible for the initiative within the Leicestershire LINK.

A receipt for the fare should be attached to the Expenses Claim Form.

d) Private Cars, Motorcycles and Bicycles

If a car or motorcycle is used for attending meetings or for getting involved in the work of the Leicestershire LINK, the driver must possess a valid driving licence and be fully insured for this purpose. You may need to inform your insurance company. The vehicle must be taxed and have a current MOT certificate.

Any loss or damage caused to the vehicle whilst it is being used for attending meetings or for getting involved in the work of the Leicestershire LINK, must be covered by the LINK member's own insurance and breakdown cover.

The Leicestershire LINK will not reimburse the costs of any penalty imposed under the Road Traffic Acts (e.g. using a mobile phone while driving), or any associated expenses. Parking fines or clamping charges will not be reimbursed.

Mileage Rates:

Car	45p
Motorcycle	24p
Bicycle	20p

Reimbursement of mileage should be claimed on an Expenses Claim Form, recording the mileage and the details of the journey to be reimbursed.

f) Car Parking

A receipt should be obtained and attached to the Expenses Claim Form. If this is not possible, then the LINK member should make a note of the parking charge and this will be refunded on trust.

g) Subsistence

LINK members attending a full day event relating to the work of the Leicestershire LINK, where lunch is not provided, can claim subsistence allowance. Invoices or receipts must be obtained to support any claim.

Breakfast/Lunch – up to £8.00 / Dinner – up to £16.00

h) Additional Expenses

When getting involved in the work of the Leicestershire LINK, members may incur incidental expenditure. This may include costs for postage, stationery, and phone calls.

Claims for incidental expenditure should be made on the Expenses Claim Form and LINK members should provide invoices or receipts to support the claim where possible.

i) Carers' costs

Reimbursement for childcare costs may be claimed for children aged 16 or under in order for the LINK member to attend meetings and get involved in the work of Leicestershire LINK.

Reimbursement for carers' costs or for other dependents may also be claimed. Medical or social services confirmation that care is required may be requested.

To allow for essential travelling time, claims may include payment for periods starting up to a maximum of one hour before the time at which the Leicestershire LINK meeting or the Leicestershire LINK business starts and ending up to one hour after it finishes.

The maximum allowance payable is £7.50 per hour or £30 for any one claim.

LINK members may not claim for care provided by a member of the household or by a person who is under 16. LINK members are also unable to claim for care which is provided by or is available from another organisation (e.g. social services).

Claims for childcare and carer support must be submitted on an Expenses Claim Form. A receipt to support the claim must be provided.

LINK members should be advised that it is their responsibility to check whether any tax or benefit liabilities will be incurred through claiming carers expenses.

j) Interpreting/Translation

Leicestershire LINK will consider contributing towards the cost of providing interpreting or translation (including British Sign Language - BSL) services, where needed, for LINK members invited to attend meetings or get involved in the work of the Leicestershire LINK.

Leicestershire LINK may also meet the cost of obtaining information in an alternative format (e.g. Braille or another language).

If the LINK member has particular communication needs, these should be discussed with the member of staff responsible for the initiative within the Leicestershire LINK.

3. Completing the Expense Claim Form

Queries from LINK members about how to claim for travel, subsistence, incidental expenditure and carers expenses should be directed to the member of staff within the Leicestershire LINK who is responsible for the initiative in which they are involved.

LINK members should submit claims within a month of the date on which the expense was incurred. The Leicestershire LINK reserves the right not to reimburse expenses if claims are not made within this time. Claims submitted after three months will not be paid.

All claims will need to be completed accurately and submitted on the Expenses Claim Form. (Appendix A to this document).

All Claims should be supported by an itemised invoice or receipt where possible.

Participants will need to sign and date the claim to certify that:

- Expenses were actually and necessarily incurred solely on the Leicestershire LINK business.
- Journeys detailed in the claim were necessarily made in the performance of the Leicestershire LINK duties.
- It was reasonable in the circumstances for the expenditure to be incurred and that the expenses claimed accord with this Expenses Guidance and the Leicestershire LINKs' work plan.
- Reimbursement has not been sought from another source for the expenses claimed.

4. Submission and Authorisation of Expense Claims

Once the Expenses Form has been completed, this should be submitted for authorisation to the member of staff responsible for the initiative within the Leicestershire LINK.

In authorising payment, this member of staff will confirm:

- That the entries and calculation of the claim have been checked for accuracy and that they are in accordance with the principles and policy set out in this Expenses Policy.
- That to the best of the authoriser's knowledge, the journeys and items for which expenses are claimed were necessarily and exclusively incurred for the Leicestershire LINK business and were so arranged to ensure value for money.

In authorising the Expenses Form, the member of staff responsible for the initiative may need to seek explanations for expense claims. If they determine that the expenditure was not reasonable and/or does not accord with the Expenses Policy, they may decline to authorise a claim, may partially authorise a claim or may substitute the cost of what would have been reasonable in the circumstances.

If this member of staff determines that reimbursement already claimed previously was not reasonable and/or does not accord with the Expenses Policy, they may seek full or partial repayment or deduct the sum involved from future claims.

An explanation must be given to the participant if an expenses claim cannot be authorised or amendments must be made to the claim submitted.

Once the Expenses Form has been authorised by the relevant budget holder, it should be given to the Finance Officer of Communities in Partnership for payment.

LINK members should normally receive payment by cheque within 28 days.

5. Defaults

Any member believing that this Policy is being misused should contact the Host organisation.

6. Impact Assessment

This Policy has been reviewed in the light of current legislation relating to discrimination and does not appear to have an adverse impact on any section of the community by virtue of age, disability, gender and gender identity, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation.

Leicestershire Local Involvement Network (LINK) Expenses Claim Form

Claims should be submitted within one month of the event. Any claim submitted after three months will not be paid. **Please note:** Claims can only be made by Leicestershire LINK members.

Please complete clearly and use a separate form for each meeting.

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone No. _____ Vehicle Registration _____

Meeting/Activity _____

Location _____ Date _____

EXPENSES:

(a) Use of private vehicle – details of journey:

From	To	Total mileage	Amount claimed at 45p per mile

b) **Public Transport** (delete as appropriate: bus / taxi / train) £ _____

c) **Volunteer Transport** £ _____

d) **Parking Costs** £ _____

e) **Carer/Childcare Expenses** £ _____

f) **Other expenses** £ _____

(Please describe) _____

Total Amount Claimed (please attach all receipts/invoices) £ _____

Declaration: I certify that all the expenses shown have been wholly and solely incurred on Leicestershire LINK business. I also confirm that by claiming car mileage the driver holds a valid driving licence, the car is taxed, has a current MOT certificate and is fully insured. Reimbursement has not been sought from another source for the expenses claimed.

Please tick this box if you wish to be paid by BACS

Signature _____ Date _____

Authorised _____ Date _____



PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO: **FREEPOST RSCK-LBKH UBGL
Leicestershire LINK, Leicester LE4 1HB**

T: 0116 229 3103 E: info@leicestershirelink.org.uk

