

Governance Framework

MISSION

The Gloucestershire LINK will help influence, improve or change the way local Health & Social Care services are planned and delivered

The Gloucestershire LINK is a network of local people, groups and community organisations who want to help shape health and social care services commissioned and provided in Gloucestershire. It is a mechanism for gathering the views of people throughout Gloucestershire communities so that these views can be made known to health and social care commissioners and providers. The Gloucestershire LINK aims to be inclusive and will not discriminate on the grounds of the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. The Gloucestershire LINK has statutory duties and powers and will act in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

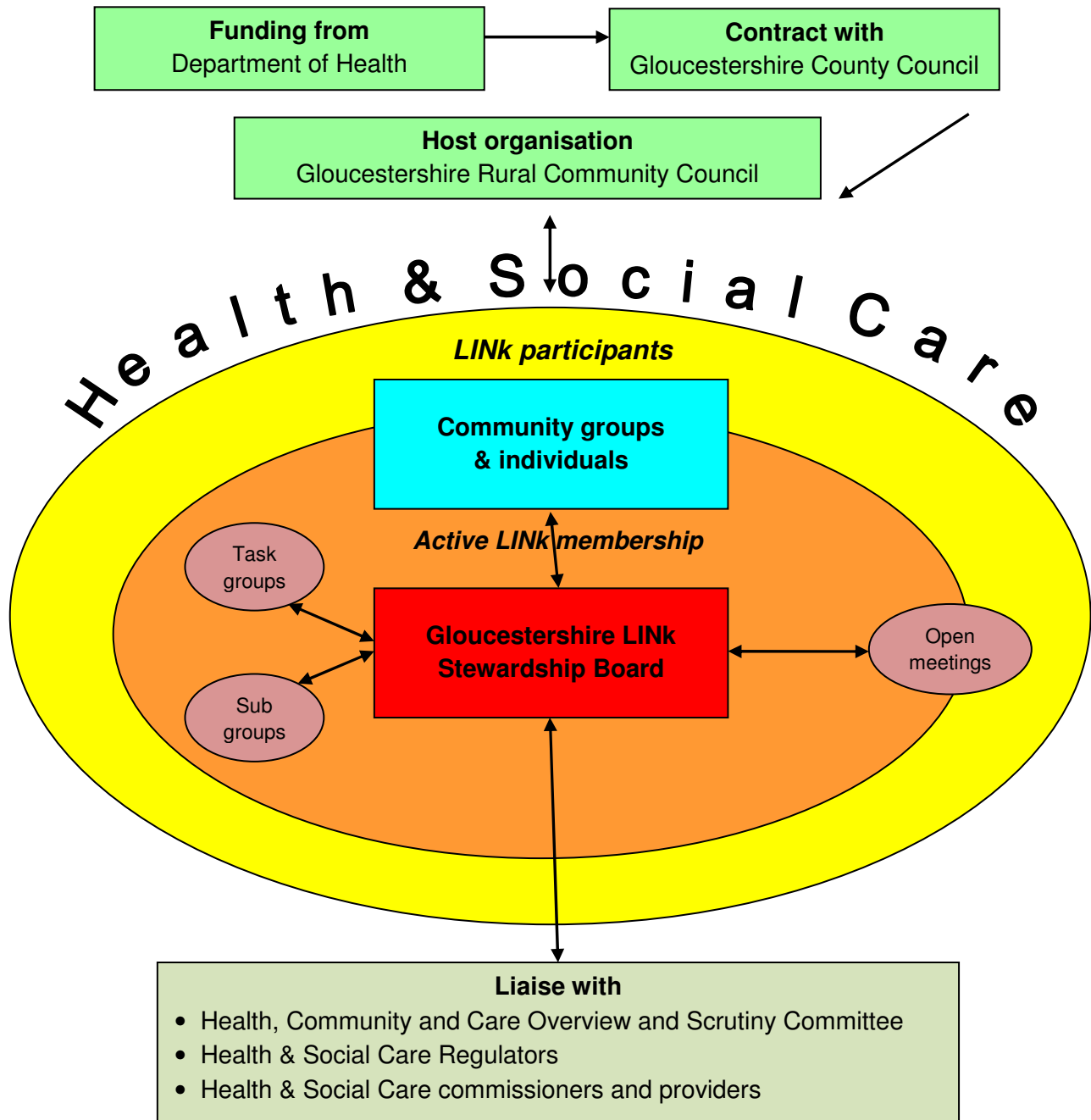
The role of the Gloucestershire LINK is to promote and support the involvement of local people in order to:

- Find out what people like and dislike about local Health & Social Care services
- Look into issues of concern
- “Enter & View” to ensure services are working well
- Ask for information and get answers
- Refer issues to relevant agencies
- Have a say when new services are being planned
- Value the diversity of the local population and make its services and resources accessible to every citizen

The Gloucestershire LINK is **NOT**:

- A group of people who **ONLY** inspect premises and services
- Performance management of health and social care services
- A health and social care complaints body
- A way to duplicate other networks or initiatives
- Self appointed or unaccountable
- A group of professional workers
- A mechanism for the pursuit of personal or political agendas
- A place for personal or political agendas

Gloucestershire LINK Model



1. Membership

Membership of the Gloucestershire LINK is open to:

- An individual living or working in Gloucestershire with an interest in health and social care services within the area
- A community group or organisation based in Gloucestershire with an interest in health and social care for Gloucestershire residents
- A national or regional organisation or business providing health and social care services for Gloucestershire residents
- A private sector organisation or business providing health and social care services for Gloucestershire residents

Types of membership:

a) Individual

b) Community Group or Organisation

Any community group or organisation that wishes to be represented, may appoint **one** named person to be the representative of that organisation. The appointed representative is required to have their membership form countersigned by their Chief Executive or senior manager.

All prospective members of LINK will complete a registration form, either as an individual member, or as a named representative of a community group or organisation. Membership will remain indefinite, unless the member chooses to leave or is disqualified from the Gloucestershire LINK as a result of their conduct.

All individual members and those representing a community group or organisation may stand for election to the Stewardship Board providing they have been a member of the Gloucestershire LINK for six months preceding the election nomination closing date.

County and District Councillors are ineligible to stand for election to the Stewardship Board, although they are able to participate in all other activities as long as any conflict of interest is declared.

Voting Rights

The individual member or named person will be entitled to full voting rights commencing one month after the membership has been acknowledged.

Levels of Engagement

All members can:

- Provide comment on particular issues
- Provide information or views from an individual or an interest group, when contacted by the Gloucestershire LINK.
- Take an active role in particular pieces of work that relate to their area of interest

a) Active Members take part in Gloucestershire LINK activity on a regular basis through task and sub groups as required.

b) Participants take part in Gloucestershire LINK activity occasionally.

2. Gloucestershire LINK Stewardship Board

The Stewardship Board will develop and prioritise the work plan ensuring engagement with the wider LINK to establish the views of its members and will be accountable to the wider Gloucestershire LINK. It is empowered to allocate finances and other resources to undertake the work of the Gloucestershire LINK.

The Stewardship Board members will be expected to take an active role in the LINK, attend a minimum of at least 50% of all Board meetings, and be willing to travel within Gloucestershire. If a Stewardship Board member does not attend three consecutive meetings, they will be deemed to have resigned from the Stewardship Board, subject to consideration by the Governance group. A Stewardship Board member who does not attend two consecutive meetings should consider their position.

If membership of the Board falls below 12, the Board has the power to co-opt from the wider membership to fill the vacancy until the next Annual General Meeting. The co-opted member will have full voting rights.

The Stewardship Board has the power to invite members of the LINK who either lead a task or focus group, or represent the LINK on other bodies to attend a specific part of a Board meeting to provide an update.

3. Duties of a Gloucestershire LINK Stewardship Board Member:

- To adhere to the Gloucestershire LINK Code of Conduct (document available on the Gloucestershire LINK website at www.gloslink.org.uk)
- To help provide leadership and direction over the conduct and work of Gloucestershire LINK and its members and participants

- To help develop the activity of Gloucestershire LINK and its work plan
- To attend Gloucestershire LINK training events as required
- To attend or chair one of the existing Gloucestershire LINK working groups eg Task groups, Focus Groups and Stewardship Board sub groups
- To write and scrutinise reports and other information
- To help increase membership of the LINK by attending public events throughout the county and giving talks to groups and organisations in partnership with the host organisation (GRCC)

In addition to the above duties, each Gloucestershire LINK Stewardship Board member should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Gloucestershire LINK Stewardship Board reach sound decisions.

4. Structure of Gloucestershire LINK Stewardship Board

The Stewardship Board will be elected annually by and from registered members of the Gloucestershire LINK. It will consist of 12 members with a chair and vice chair who will be elected annually from and by the Stewardship Board members only. Up to 1st April 2010, members of the Board shall stand for election annually and be entitled for re-election.

From 1st April 2011, members will be elected for a term not exceeding three years. (After the 1st April 2011, the newly elected Stewardship Board members, at the first meeting, will agree the term of office, four for three years, four for two years and four for one year.) From 1st April 2012, all elected members will be elected for three years. A third of board members will stand down each year and be entitled to stand for re-election.

Election Process for the Stewardship Board

Who can stand for election?

To stand for election to the Gloucestershire LINK Stewardship Board, candidates must have been a member of the Gloucestershire LINK for six months preceding the closing date for nominations. Candidates submitting a self nomination form who are not eligible to stand for election will be notified in writing immediately.

Election and Voting Process for Gloucestershire LINK Stewardship Board members

- Publication of a Notice of Election will be sent ten weeks prior to the 31st March. The Notice of Election sets out the timetable and arrangements for the nomination of candidates.
- Prospective candidates to request a self nomination form from the Host (GRCC).
- Forms to be completed and returned to the Host (GRCC) before the closing date identified in the Notice of Election (this date must be at least eight weeks prior to the 31st March).
- Voting papers will be sent out at least seven weeks prior to the 31st March.
- Voting papers must be received by the Host (GRCC) five weeks prior to the 31st March. Any voting papers received after the closing date will not be counted.
- Voting papers will be counted by two independent scrutineers.
- The results of the election will be announced on the Gloucestershire LINK website www.gloslink.org.uk. All candidates will be notified by telephone. Written notice of the new Board members will be sent to all candidates.

Election and Voting Process for Chair and Vice Chair of Gloucestershire LINK Stewardship Board

To stand for election of Chair and Vice Chair to the Gloucestershire LINK Stewardship Board, candidates must be a member of the newly elected Gloucestershire LINK Stewardship Board.

Chair of Gloucestershire LINK Stewardship Board

- Self Nomination Forms for the position of Chair will be sent to the newly elected Stewardship Board members immediately after the election results are available
- Forms to be completed and returned to the Host (GRCC) within seven days
- Voting papers will be sent out by the Host immediately
- Voting papers will need to be returned to the Host within five days
- Voting papers will be counted by two independent scrutineers.
- The result will be announced immediately the count is completed

Vice Chair of Gloucestershire LINK Stewardship Board

- Self Nomination Forms for the position of Vice Chair will be sent to the newly elected Stewardship Board members immediately after the Chair election results are available
- Forms to be completed and returned to the Host (GRCC) with seven days
- Voting papers will be sent out by the Host immediately
- Voting papers will need to be returned to the Host within five days
- Voting papers will be counted by two independent scrutineers.
- The result will be announced immediately the count is completed or by 31st March, whichever is the sooner

5. Meetings

a) Stewardship Board Meetings

The Stewardship Board will determine the days and timings of the monthly meetings for the coming twelve months at the first Board meeting after the 1st April.

To enable a Board meeting to take place, the Chair of the meeting, together with a minimum of four Board members, is required.

The agenda is to be posted onto the website five working days prior to the meeting, so that the wider membership has the opportunity to comment / feedback on the agenda items. Any items LINK members wish to have considered for inclusion on the agenda must be forwarded to the Host (GRCC) prior to the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will decide which items are to be included on the agenda.

The Chair is responsible for facilitating the LINK Stewardship Board. The Vice Chair will have full Chair responsibilities and powers in the absence of the Chair.

An Extraordinary meeting of the Stewardship Board for a specific purpose can be called at the discretion of the Chair or a minimum of four Stewardship Board members. No other matters may be discussed at this meeting.

Decisions of the Stewardship Board will be on a majority voting Basis. The Chair will not have a vote except in the event of a split decision, when he/she will have a casting vote. Proxy voting is not permitted.

Stewardship Board Meetings will not be held in public. Notes of the meetings will be published on the Gloucestershire LINK website once they have been ratified by the Stewardship Board. The notes are available, on request, in a variety of alternative formats from the Host (GRCC).

b) Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will be held in public within three months of 31st March, at which the Annual Report of activity during the preceding year will be presented. Notice of the meeting will be issued at least 21 days prior to the event.

c) Extraordinary General Meeting

An extraordinary general meeting can be called by the Stewardship Board or a minimum of 25 members. These meetings must be held within 7 to 14 days of the request for the meeting with a minimum of 7 days notice to the membership. Notes will be taken and made available to the membership and published on the website as soon as possible.

6. Task Groups and Sub Groups

- a) The Stewardship Board may set up task groups or sub groups to enable the LINK to function, undertake a programme of work and monitor particular services.
- b) The Stewardship Board will set the Terms of Reference for each group.
- c) A Chair for each group will be appointed by the Stewardship Board.
- d) The Stewardship Board will be represented on each group.
- e) Task groups and sub groups must conform to the Governance Framework and Code of Conduct.
- f) All groups are accountable to the Stewardship Board and must report their activities to the Board, as agreed in their Terms of Reference.
- g) The level of support required by each group will be agreed by the Stewardship Board and the Host.

7. Code of Conduct

- All members must abide by the published Gloucestershire LINK Code of Conduct. Failure to conform may result in expulsion from the LINK
- Those members or groups involved in LINK visits to health and social care premises must abide by the “Code of Conduct relating to LINK visits to enter and view services”
- A person acting as a carer / interpreter for a member of a group / meeting, is attending to convey the views and opinions of that member only.

8. Data Protection Policy

- Organisations in the health and social care sector that hold or process people’s information have a statutory duty to comply with The Data Protection Act 1988
- The purpose of The Data Protection Act 1988 is to protect individuals, their personal data, and the movement and use of that data
- The Host, GRCC, has overall responsibility for the Data Protection Act (DPA) and acts as Data Controller for compliance and management of information under the Gloucestershire County Council contractual arrangements

9. Register of Interest/Conflict of Interest

- Any interest includes any financial or personal interests, memberships or affiliations that may be perceived as a conflict of interests. The criterion is not whether a member thinks they have an interest to declare, but whether another LINK member, organisation or member of the public would think they have an interest to declare
- Any conflict of interest that might be considered to influence a member’s actions as a Gloucestershire LINK member must be declared to the Host organisation
- All members of the Stewardship Board should declare any information appropriate for inclusion on a Register of Interests
- Where members of the LINK have a conflict of interest they should declare it and withdraw from the decision making process. Any failure to declare a conflict of interest will be treated as a breach of the Code of Conduct

10. Expenses Policy

- All LINK members are expected to adhere to the Expenses Policy and any breach will be reported to the Chair of the Stewardship Board. The matter will then be investigated by the Chair and the Host in accordance with the Code of Conduct policy
- All LINK members will be reimbursed for agreed out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the course of undertaking authorised work on behalf of the Gloucestershire LINK

Authorised Visits

- All visits must be carried out by authorised representatives in accordance with the Gloucestershire LINK 'Enter and View' policies and procedures
- A list of Authorised Representatives is published on the Gloucestershire LINK website
- Representatives can be authorised only when they have undergone recognised training and satisfied enhanced disclosure through the Criminal Records Bureau, in line with section 113A of the Police Act 1997

11. Complaints Policy

- Complaints about the Host organisation should be made to the Host and will be dealt with through the Host organisation's own complaints procedure
- Complaints about the Gloucestershire LINK or its members should, where possible, be made in writing and forwarded to the Stewardship Board Chair / Vice Chair or via the Host

12. Review of Policy

- The Governance Framework and policies of the Gloucestershire LINK will be reviewed annually

The Powers and Duties of the LINK

- The powers and duties of Gloucestershire LINK will be those set out in Section 221 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (“The Act”) and in the Local Involvement Network Regulations 2008 (“The Regulations”).
- The LINK may exercise its powers within Gloucestershire and wherever health and social care services are provided for people living in the area
- LINK powers are to:
 - Get replies to requests for information or to reports and recommendations
 - “Enter and View” premises where publicly funded care is being provided
 - Refer issues to Overview and Scrutiny Committees and get responses
- Link duties from the Act and the Regulations and include:
 - Publishing and updating decision making procedures
 - Complying with published procedures
 - Publishing a policy for dealing with breaches of procedures
 - Publishing written statements of decisions and reasons for decisions
 - Publishing and updating a procedure for making decisions about who may be an Authorised Representative of the LINK
 - Ensuring that Authorised Representatives have received a criminal records certificate (CRB)
 - Providing Authorised Representatives with written evidence of their authorisation
 - Publishing a list of Authorised Representatives
 - Producing an Annual Report for year ending 31st March

The Nolan Principles – The Seven Principles of Public Life

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 organizations 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 that they 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 to 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.