County Durham LINk Management Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday 8th December 2008
County Durham Education Development Centre, Spennymoor

		ACTION
1.	**Present:** David Haw (DH) (Chair), Peter Irving (PI) (Vice Chair), Colin Burton (CB), Malcolm Fallow (MF), Jackie Heslop (JH), Jim Welch (JW), Mary Mitchell (MM), June Wainwright (JuW), Jim Rochester (JR) (Vice Chair) **In Attendance:** Alesha Aljeffri (AA) (minutes), Sue Jennings (SJ)	
2.	**Apologies:** were received from Malcolm Harrison, Anne Stobbs, Stafford Scholes, Audrey Chapman, Julia Catherall	
3.	**Minutes of the last meeting:** Approved and accepted as true record.	
4.		
5.	**Update report from Host** • SJ provided committee members with further information to complement the Host Update. • JR commented that some organisations/councils may still have an earlier edition of the LINk newsletter, and suggested that a review should be undertaken on the information about the LINk that is currently held by these organisations. SJ said that this would be difficult as a record isn't available of where all old newsletters are held. • MM also commented that the LINk is still not widely known. SJ agreed that this was true but that promotion of the LINk via newsletters is a continuous process. • DH later commented on the absence of Michael Robson, the representative from the Learning Disabilities Parliament, explaining that a different way of including specialist groups is being looked into to enable them to play more of an inclusive role on the committee – Host will be meeting with Brian Smith from Learning Disability Parliament to discuss how this can be achieved.	**AA**
6.	**Website update** • AA gave a brief update on the website and explained that she is currently in contact with a consultant working on the accessibility issues of the website. It is anticipated that the design of the website and its accessibility will be completed by late December/ early January. • AA also asked for confirmation of whether the minutes from the Management Committee meetings should be made readily available for	

	people to view online. It was agreed that this should be made possible but only after the minutes have been approved and agreed as a true record of events.	
7.	**LINk Work Plan** • SJ read through a letter/email from Scott McInally (Durham County Council) asking for more clarification on what the LINk would be looking at in terms of the work plan issue "Lack of provision of day opportunities". As this was such a big topic, SJ suggested that we narrow the focus. • PI commented that this is a huge topic and affects a number of groups across the region and suggested that a mapping exercise be carried out to see where things are lacking. JuW commented that there have been many mapping exercises carried out and that it would be better to focus on the work that has already been completed. • JH seconded this and added that mapping exercises whilst beneficial in some instances are immense tasks and require a lot of resources. • MF stated that LINk have already outlined the issues that will be worked on and that there is a need to have clear performance indicators for these issues. • In terms of the lack of provision of day opportunities JuW agreed that there has already been some work compiling information from the mental health point of view and agreed that this should be fed back to the LINk – however stated that she would need support to carry this out. • JH also agreed that this is also the case for the learning disabilities area and that she would also require support to compile a report to be fed back to the LINk Management Committee. • SJ confirmed that the Host would provide all necessary support that is required to help both JuW and JH to bring a report back to the Management Committee. • DH and SJ give a brief rundown on the progress so far with the work plan issues that were identified at the last meeting: ➢ Seizing the Future – A working group has been set up and all issues with regard to the consultation process have been identified and have been compiled in a report that will be sent to OSC (Overview and Scrutiny Committee)/NHS County Durham on 11th December. ➢ Carers Strategy – A response is awaited from Durham County Council with suggested dates for a meeting to take place with Management Committee Carers Representative Audrey Chapman attending. ➢ Rural Health Issues – LINk have recently produced a newsletter which will be asking for expressions of interest from individuals who would be interested in being involved with this and forming a working group. ➢ Lack of provision of day opportunities – As noted above a meeting between JH, JW and LINk Host is due to take place in January to compile information and pool resources.	**JR/SJ** **JW,JH and Host**

8.	**Policies and procedures** • The Committee were asked for their comments on various policies and procedures that had been sent out to them prior to the meeting. These were then discussed individually and the following were approved and agreed: ➢ Equality and Diversity ➢ Complaints ➢ Expenses ➢ Policy and Procedure for selecting representatives for groups/ meetings/committees ➢ Role of the Host Chair encouraged Committee members to send in expenses form on a monthly basis – particularly when larger claims are being recovered. ➢ Members Support PI enquired about the possibility of the host supporting the costs of IT equipment such as printer cartridges – SJ agreed to check this out and get back to the Management Committee members. ➢ Members Media Chair clarified that this is the policy/procedure that all members should follow when talking to the press/media. The Management Committee agreed that in the first instance, the Host should be contacted first, as this would help to reduce the effects of misrepresentation. • All of the above policies will be available on the LINk web site.	**SJ**
9.	**LINk Communications Strategy** • SJ informed the Committee of the quote received form Alpha Communications regarding the production of a Communications Strategy. • MF questioned if different quotes had been sought and SJ confirmed that the Host had received another quote for the communications strategy and also quotes for other aspects of the work such as design of newsletters. Alpha Communication's quote was really good and an excellent reference had been received from 2D. • In terms of the support required by the Host on how best to carry out their responsibilities, ie with reference to the communication strategy it was agreed by all that these decisions should be made by the Host. • SJ then also raised the issue of staffing. At the last meeting it had been agreed to recruit a part time support worker and part time project worker. SJ has since had a look at the requirements needed to meet the LINk's support needs in terms of staffing and would like to go ahead with recruiting a part time administrator and two part time support workers – SJ gave all of the members a copy of the budget relating to this. All agreed to this. SJ confirmed that the posts would be advertised in January.	

10	**Expert Advisor** • SJ informed the committee of the opportunity for County Durham LINk to have a free days consultancy to look at LINk set up. A similar opportunity has been offered to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and they have requested that the two days are pooled together and that both the LINk and OSC use the opportunity to build a working protocol. This would include a working protocol with NHS County Durham, Adult and Community Services and other commissioners and providers as appropriate. SJ would be in touch with more information as soon as it is received.	**SJ**
11	**NHS County Durham Annual Operating Plan** • Committee members received a copy of the letter sent from NHS County Durham outlining their Annual Operating Plan 2009 – 2010. A response detailing comments is required by 19th December 2008. • JuW commented that there is a lack of information provided to make an informed decision or supply comments. • It was agreed that the Host would respond to the letter stating that the Management Committee had met and had the following to comment on: ➢ Concern over the usage of acronyms ➢ Insufficient information to make a valid contribution or decision on priorities ➢ Further information is required regarding commitments or updates so that the Management Committee can make considered judgements on the proposals • DH added that if it meant pulling a meeting together with NHS County Durham then this could be arranged. He suggested that himself, JR and PI could meet with NHS County Durham to discuss further.	**SJ** **SJ**
12	**Equal Opportunities Information** • The Management Committee were provided with a breakdown of the equal opportunities information that has been collected from the LINk membership database up until the end of September. SJ explained why there were gaps in the results and also pointed out the complications in trying to collect this data, with particular reference to organisations who are unable to provide such detailed information, and also that it is not a mandatory requirement.	

13	**Representation on Groups/Meetings** • MM provided feedback from the North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) meeting she recently attended and informed the committee that NEAS have produced draft terms of reference which are to be circulated to all Management Committee members for their comments before their next meeting. • The meetings will be held at least 6 times a year and if necessary more will be arranged. It had been agreed that the Chair would initially be someone from NEAS. • MM pointed out that NEAS were particularly interested in LINs being involved in issues such as Patient Transport Systems, Discharge and linking with other services. • JR questioned the level of representation that the LINk have at these meetings – Is the LINk there as a representative involved in the decision making or just as a representative to report back to the LINk. • All Management Committee members were asked to provide their comments on the terms of reference to the Host within 14 days of receiving the information.	**All**
14	**Date for Diaries** • 2 places to be booked for the LINk Annual National Conference on the 5th February – 1 for the Host and 1 for the Management Committee. • It was suggested that for future events, all committee members would be asked if they were available and attendance would be rotated between members. • Details of the OVN Conference 25th March 2009, would be sent out to committee members via email.	
15	**Information items** • Information items were handed out to the group for reference.	

16	**Any other business**
	
	• Mental Health Engagement Plan
	  ➢ MM commented that reports are not easy to understand and that there was no context supplied with it.
	  ➢ SJ pointed out that this was all that was sent to the LINk but that a separate paper had been written up by the Community Development Team to simplify this – this was handed out to all committee members.
	
	• In light of the above the Management Committee agreed to ask the Host to write to all (NHS County Durham/Acute Trust/Durham County Council/Tees, Esk and Wear Valley/North East Ambulance Service) and inform them that the LINk would be happy to give feedback. However for the LINk to make a valid contribution, it needs to be provided with all the information, background details, any supporting evidence, who is involved and at what level.
	• SJ also informed the Committee that there would be a Team Building Day, and this is due to take place in January.	

17	**Date of next meeting** • 26th January 2009 – venue tbc • Host will arrange meetings for the following year and will look to holding them on the 3rd/4th Monday of the month – this will be circulated to Management Committee.	