

Local Involvement Network Host Organisation Invitation to Tender - Specification

General

1. This specification outlines the Government's vision and sets out basic requirements that are expected of a host organisation of a LINK.
- 1.2 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Department of Health's *Getting ready for LINKs - Planning your Local Involvement Network* and *Contracting a host organisation for your Local Involvement Network* policy documents (www.dh.gov.uk/patientpublicinvolvement), which set out more information about the nature, purpose, role, responsibilities and relationships of LINKs show what is expected of LINKs and the host organisations to be appointed to establish and support them. Prospective host organisations are advised that these documents will be seen as basis for the specification for the host organisation of the Stockton-on-Tees LINK, and that they and this ITT document and the responses of the successful organisation, where agreed with the Council, will together constitute the contract.
- 1.3 In accordance with its contract with the local authority, the host organisation will be responsible for the development, maintenance and support of a Local Involvement Network (LINK) in the local authority area to carry out the following activities.
 - i. be a local community based network of organisations and individuals committed to strengthening and widening the influence of patients, users of social care services and the public in the process of planning and improving health and social care services.
 - ii. comprise a wide range of participants and involvement that is inclusive, diverse, representative of the Borough and made up of individuals and organisations; and which will utilise different methods of involvement and communications.
 - iii. promote and support the involvement of people in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local health and social care services
 - iv. obtain the views of people about their needs for, and their experiences of, local health and social care services and make those views known to those responsible for commissioning, providing, managing and scrutinising those services.
 - v. enable people to monitor and review the commissioning and provision of care services

- vi. make reports and recommendations about how health and social care services could be improved, to people responsible for commissioning, providing, managing and scrutinising those services;
- vii. establish a local agenda driven by the priorities and interests of local communities.

Length of contract

- 2. The contract between the Local authority and the host organisation will be for 3 years, subject to satisfactory performance. The Council may, subject to the satisfactory performance of the contractor and the availability of funding, extend this contract for up to 2 x 12 months periods

Purpose

- 3. The purpose of the host organisation is to enable support and facilitate the LINK in its activities. However, it will be for the LINK to decide what work it does, when and how.

Intended Outcomes

- 4. Health and social care services that are shaped to meet people's needs and are improved as a result of people's experiences
- 4.1 Local people having confidence in the validity and transparency of health and social care bodies' decision making.

Role of host

- 5. The host organisation's role will be to
 - 5.1 Undertake the initial set up of the LINK, by
 - i. Advertising and promoting the LINK
 - ii. Holding introductory workshops/ meetings
 - iii. Making contacts with existing voluntary and community sector user led groups to encourage participation
 - iv. Encouraging participation from hard to reach / under represented groups and communities
 - 5.2 Work with the LINK participants to facilitate the establishment of the LINK's arrangement for managing and deciding on its activities. These would include terms of reference for the LINKs governance arrangements, dispute resolution procedures and rules for the different types of representation – organisational and individual.

- 5.3 Hold the finances of the Link, in particular
- i. Being the responsible accounting organisation for LINK expenditure decisions and reporting where necessary on how the money is spent
 - ii. Meeting audit and accountancy requirements
 - iii. Reporting on expenditure against activity, both to the LINK and externally as agreed by the LINK governance structure
- 5.4 Facilitate the correspondence and communication activities of the LINK, including, for example producing a regular LINK participant bulletin and making arrangements to ensure a local web presence so that LINK information is publicly available to interested parties and the public can put forward its views and experiences easily
- 5.5 Ensure data management and record keeping of LINK information (to be passed to a successor host on the ending of the contract), in line with relevant Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation.
- 5.6 Provide advice and support for the LINK, in particular
- i. Explaining or signposting any national guidance to LINK participants
 - ii. Liaising with the NHS National Centre for Involvement (NCI), the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) and others for best practice guidance on supporting a LINK, including methods of consultation, participation and community development
 - iii. Resolving disputes and having in place its own complaints policy (according to the established guidance)
 - iv. To facilitate the development and establishment of a participant and governance code of conduct/constitution and enabling the LINK to manage complaints about conduct within the agreed governance framework (based on Department of Health guidance and models of good practice), relevant regulation and legislation.
 - v. Reimbursing LINK participants reasonable out of pocket expenses (policy to be agreed with the LINK governance structure)
 - vi. Allowing convenient access for LINK participants to relevant information from the Department of Health, NHS, Voluntary sector organisations, etc
 - vii. Arranging any training and skills development as appropriate, including enabling LINK participants to become authorised representatives so as to enter and view specified health and social care premises, which will require the undertaking of Criminal records Bureau checks for such participants
 - viii. Build on and develop local networks to support ongoing, sustainable recruitment activity

- 5.7 Have a strong commitment to forming strategic partnerships and effective working relationships with other organisations, and support the LINK to develop such partnerships for example with
- i. The local authority overview and committee (OSCs), PCTs and practice-based commissioning groups;
 - ii. Health and Social Care providers;
 - iii. Health and Social Care regulators;
 - iv. Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) partners, as well as LSPs as stand alone bodies;
 - v. Other host / LINKs supporting communication and joint working where necessary between LINKs locally, regionally or nationally
 - vi. Health and Well-being Partnerships
- 5.8 Support the LINK in the development and promotion of its priorities and work plan and activities, for example through
- i. Questionnaires and surveys
 - ii. Community / citizen panels
 - iii. Consultation and involvement workshops
 - iv. Focus groups
 - v. Advertising, events and campaigns
 - vi. Staff, and LINK members supported by staff, operating on an outreach basis to meet, listen to and record the views and experiences of local people
 - vii. LINK governance meetings
 - viii. Provision of appropriate venues and support for the LINK's activities wherever possible using existing community and public facilities and venues of stakeholder organisations
 - ix. Preparation of reports, where directed by LINK
- 5.8 Provide a service appropriate to peoples needs and not discriminate on the grounds of their disability, ace, culture, religion, sexuality, age or gender, in terms either of participation or of obtaining and presenting peoples views and experiences.
- 5.9 Operate within the agreed performance frameworks laid down in its contract with the local authority.
- 5.10 Report back to the local authority on LINK/ host activity in accordance with the terms of the contract and ensure the LINK annual report on expenditure, activity and achievements is sent to the Department of Health and made publicly available

Accessibility

- 6 The host organisations premises and any proposed venues for meetings arranged for the LINK must be accessible and compliant with Disability

Discrimination Act 1995 and the Equality Act 2006 and must maintain a safe and clean working environment.

- 6.1 All communication methods used should be appropriate to the needs of LINK participants. For example, translating and interpreting facilities should be available to provide information in the major community languages or in specialist formats such as Braille, audio and easy read versions
- 6.2 The host organisation's opening hours should be fully communicated to LINK participants, as should staff contact details and any changes in staff or absences. The host should agree with the LINK governance arrangements how it would like relevant information to be circulated to LINK participants and the wider community.
- 6.3 The host organisation should ensure compliance with both the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and ensure that LINK participants are aware of their responsibilities under both these Acts.

Contract monitoring and management

- 7 The host organisation will report on its activities and finances to the local authority on a quarterly basis throughout the term of the contract and more frequently if this is required as part of the formal performance review process. The reporting frequency will be reviewed at the end of the first year.
 - 7.1 The host organisation will be expected to report on its activities in support of the LINK and on its financial position in relation to the contract with the local authority. All funds provided to the host as a result of the contract are to be spent on the fulfilment of the contract. All invoices and documentation relating to the financial management of the LINK will be kept for a minimum of six years for, audit purposes
 - 7.2 The quarterly review will also take in to account feedback and recommendations from the LINK governance arrangements, including where relevant, proposals on how the host might support the LINK better.
 - 7.3 Meetings will be organised by the local authority to review the information gathered through the contract monitoring process, to amend and improve the specification. The host organisation and representatives of the LINK governance arrangements will be expected to participate in the process, to enable the LINK to input into the local authorities performance management of the host.
 - 7.4 The host organisation will need to be able to demonstrate to the local authority its performance against the contract by fulfilment of key performance indicators. The Department of Health will be developing national benchmarks of quality for LINKs, including tools for localised performance management, peer review and recognisable success criteria for key areas such as the performance of the host. These measures will be

introduced throughout the contract, as the Department of Health makes them available and agreed between the Contractor, the Council and the LINK.

- 7.5 The host organisation will be accountable to the local authority as the contract holder. The host is expected to undertake regular reviews or audits of its services and to link these to its development plans. Results will be shared with the local authority at the quarterly performance review meetings
- 7.6 The host organisation will have a written complaints procedure, which should include a role for a person independent of the organisation as either an investigator or a decision maker at an appeal stage.
- 7.7 Where the host organisation's own management reporting, stakeholder feedback, review process or other contract management activities reveal the need for remedial action, the host will agree a timetable with the local authority for submission of an action plan which identifies
- i. full details of the issues identified and the risks
 - ii. named owners for all remedial actions required
 - iii. timescales for the completion of all remedial actions
 - iv. monitoring arrangements to ensure remedial actions are completed on time
- 7.8 The host organisation will have its own internal quality assurance system, which will include standard setting, monitoring, and management and review processes, to ensure the required service quality is maintained and confirm how improvement will be communicated on completion. The host organisation should if not already accredited work towards an externally accredited quality assurance system.
- 7.9 Any proposals to carry out the Services by the host organisation or any Associated Company (and all subsequent clarification of and amplification of such proposals), including its bid proposal, will be deemed to have been submitted on a bona fide competitive basis. The organisation submitting the successful tender will contractually be expected to provide the levels of resources, procedures, methods of working and statements of policy given in the submission documents.

Funding

8. The value of the contract is £110k per annum, payable by the Council from Government targeted funding.

TUPE

9. The Council does not believe that TUPE applies. However, it is up to the Contractor to take legal advice regarding TUPE in relation to this contract. We will provide all the information we can to help you form your opinion.

Performance Indicators

10. These will continue to be developed during the term of the contract, around Department of Health guidelines but will be based on the following:
- i. sustainable recruitment of a diverse membership of the LINK
 - ii. development of effective networks and strategic partnerships
 - iii. effective management of the LINK work programme
 - iv. governance
 - v. communication, externally within the community and internally
 - vi. financial management
 - vii. administration
 - viii. performance management