

South Gloucestershire LINK

Draft Training Strategy

1. Introduction:

South Gloucestershire LINK participants need to know what is expected of them, how their work will be of benefit to the LINK and what difference they are making. Proper induction to the LINK, is vital to ensure positive results for the LINK and the participants involved. Participants who do not get proper support or are not sure how their work has helped the LINK, soon lose interest and stop coming. If their experience has been particularly bad, they may stop volunteering altogether.

Participants need to understand the nature and boundaries of volunteering (in particular, their relationship to other volunteers, employees, people they help, and other health and social care organisations that involve them). They need to understand the requirements of the activities or tasks that they will carry out. They need to have the knowledge, skills and attitudes to carry out those activities or tasks.

This strategy recognises that volunteering is a sort of social glue that binds together different groups of people in society – men and women, younger people and older people, people of different faiths, ethnic groups, political beliefs – into a cohesive whole. Volunteers are a very valuable asset to the community and the power of such people should not be undermined or under-estimated. South Gloucestershire LINK will value its volunteers and seek to increase volunteering literacy through training as one of the most effective tools.

A flexible training programme will be developed to help LINK volunteers to perform their roles and duties efficiently and effectively and give the opportunity for volunteers to exchange their experiences and good practice with other LINK participants.

2. Strategy

As South Gloucestershire LINK develops there is a real need to ensure that new participants receive good induction into the role and responsibilities of becoming a working participant of South Gloucestershire LINK. Training needs will be broken down into different categories:

- LINK development including new activities and change
- Roles and responsibilities
- Volunteer support and personal development

Learning and development can be seen as part of the LINK participants continuing professional development to improve their knowledge, skills and attitudes to implement:

- To monitor the improvement and progress of the LINK
- As part of an overall professional development programme for LINK participants and staff
- Succession planning to provide for the LINK development
- Pilot or test the operation of a new systems
- Provide training on specific topics
- Improved communication throughout the LINK
- Interactive technology
- Quality
- Equality and diversity

3. South Gloucestershire LINK Training Plan:

Before a training programme can commence South Gloucestershire LINK need to identify the training needs of current participants and anticipate the training needs of seldom involved participants and undertake a skills audit of current participants. The training plan will enable the implementation of the Training Strategy. The initial focus of the training plan will be on key areas in which it will be possible to deliver significant improvement in attitudes to and provision of training for LINK volunteers.

The training programme needs to take into account the Strategic Plan for the South Gloucestershire LINK and the identification of training requirements to support this. These needs will prioritise to allow the project

to move forward and to achieve the strategic objectives. A training programme will be produced to address the training needs of South Gloucestershire LINK participants with a range of training opportunities that can be delivered either in-house, in partnership with other LINKs or through outside training organisations.

There are many ways of providing training for volunteers. These range from:

- Induction Training
- Training workshops
- Seminars
- Discussion groups
- Mentoring other volunteers
- Conferences
- Visits to other LINKs – inviting visits to South Gloucestershire LINK
- Informal learning opportunities

Providing leadership and committee skills training will assist LINK volunteers to take on various roles within the working task groups and the core management group which forms the governance structure of South Gloucestershire LINK. As the LINK is working in partnership with other community and voluntary community groups training in community development and engagement as well as co-ordination and facilitation skills will also be an important element of the training programme. Training for LINK participants will provide self development, as the LINK develops bringing along more seldom heard or seldom involved groups training in equality and diversity will be another important element of the training programme. Taking part in new areas of learning will give LINK participants the opportunity to develop new skills and take ownership and control of their own development to become competent independent learners.

The development of the training programme will provide the necessary opportunities to assist LINK participants to develop South Gloucestershire LINK into an organisation providing good practice, ensuring quality of their learning experience and providing the participants with the skills to evaluate

the impact of changes in their ability to deliver the LINK as an independent organisation.

4. Identified training needs:

Induction of new participants

PR and media training

Committee skills

Committee roles and responsibilities

Role of the chairperson

Understanding the commissioning role

Equality and diversity

Entering and viewing training

5. Requests for relevant and appropriate training:

Requests for relevant training can come through the participants and if there is training available through a training organisation we can match the volunteer to appropriate training. If enough participants require training on the same topic we can arrange training either in-house or through a training organisation. We will negotiate with other LINKs to identify if there will be an opportunity to share training.

6. Distributing Training information:

When training has been agreed we will ensure that all participants are given the opportunity to access it, publicising training opportunities will be through:

Email contact, postal contact and word of mouth

An item within an email bulletin – that will be posted or audio info sent to members who cannot access email

Newsletter

Website

We will seek to signpost people to relevant information and development opportunities.

7. Barriers to learning:

There may be some LINK participants who will have barriers to any new learning offered and we will make every effort to support participants.

8. Evaluation of training programmes

The training that participants receive will be monitored to assess the effectiveness of the training provided.

Evaluation will take place after every training event to ensure we meet the needs of LINK participants.

July 09

