



MEMBERS

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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Hello and welcome to Lanarkshire Links, a registered Scottish charity No SC033933 involved in mental health issues for the people of Lanarkshire.

INTRODUCTION

Lanarkshire Links has grown and developed since its inception in 2002 and is recognised as the organisation responsible for supporting mental health service users and carers to be involved in the planning of mental health and social care services across Lanarkshire.

Membership to the organisation is voluntary and is available to:

- anyone who uses or has used mental health services in North or South Lanarkshire
- anyone who cares for or has cared for a person who is currently using or has used mental health services in North or South Lanarkshire
- Associate membership is open to anyone with an interest in the work or the organisation.

The membership has grown considerably over the years with the number of members currently over 850.

Members have various avenues for involvement and at a level they are comfortable with. This may be by volunteering time and talents in any of the following:

- Community Mental Health & Wellbeing Groups are held to discuss current issues concerning mental health services, supports to maintain mental health recovery, foster peer support and make friends. A recovery focussed activity is included in in the group meeting.
- Attending the quarterly members meetings
- By supporting others to attend meetings
- By participating in events with mental health and wellbeing stands
- By raising awareness of mental health issues in your community
- Involvement in focus groups
- Become a member of our Management Committee (Charity Trustee)

The organisation depends on the contribution from its members to ensure the voice of mental health service users and carers is heard and can influence service planning and delivery.

Lanarkshire Links appreciates the time, energy and commitment given by the membership as volunteers.

The organisation has a dedicated management committee and staff group to oversee the legal responsibilities, facilitate meetings, support members to engage with the statutory and voluntary sector service providers and signpost to other agencies.

MEMBERS' POLICY

Lanarkshire Links is a member friendly organisation, and its aims are to support mental health service users and carers. This is done by promoting the welfare and advancing the education of people affected by mental health issues across Lanarkshire.

The principle of this policy is to set out the organisation's objective to continue to engage the membership to allow involvement, have their say in and to influence decisions concerning mental health and social care issues and services.

The core purpose of the organisation is to provide methods of communication whereby the membership receive information to advance, improve and raise awareness of what is happening in mental health and social care services.

The organisation uses various methods to relay information to and involve members, wishing to participate in any of the following at a level they are happy with:

Attending

- the quarterly members meetings
- mental health & wellbeing groups
- focus groups
- consultation events
- management committee meetings
- question and answer sessions
- one to one support to engagement

Receiving

- mental health matters magazine
- questionnaires

In facilitating these groups and meetings, Lanarkshire Links creates opportunities for its members to learn, develop and be motivated by the information and experience gained.

The organisation supports and informs members by:

- Inviting speakers and representatives from statutory and voluntary sectors to the quarterly meetings to consult and update on changes to services either planned or new
- Collating information from round table discussions at the above meetings and publishing the results to appropriate partners
- Supporting members to participate in focus groups providing feedback as requested by service providers
- Facilitating networking between members to encourage peer support and increase membership
- Facilitating mental health & wellbeing groups to highlight mental health issues either personal or in the community

- Providing or sourcing training for service users and carers to support them in the work of the organisation and to assist them in living in recovery or in caring duties
- Distributing Mental Health Matters magazine to members, libraries, voluntary sector and downloaded on to the organisation's website. This magazine is compiled by Lanarkshire Links and issued twice a year
- Providing an interactive website www.lanarkshirelinks.org.uk , giving up to date information on engagement opportunities across Lanarkshire
- Reimbursement of reasonable expenses occurred while participating in events for the organisation

NEW MEMBERS

The administrator of the organisation will ensure all new members receive an invitation to the quarterly members meetings, mental health and wellbeing groups and the latest copy of the Mental Health Magazine.

All members are encouraged to participate in the organisation and are given the appropriate training. Depending on the training required it may be conducted in house or by an external agency for example Assist Training with the cost paid by the organisation. Support is available to new members with the intention of developing and improving skills to enable involvement.

HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all members are treated and treat others with respect and dignity. All members should be aware and understand what types of behaviour constitute harassment and bullying. This policy covers harassment and bullying occurring at events, groups or social functions.

The organisation will not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying and such behaviour may be deemed unlawful [Equality Act 2010]. Under this act the relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin.

HARASSMENT is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. A single incident can amount to harassment. All allegations of harassment will be treated seriously with some termed as a criminal offence.

Forms of Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Unwanted physical contact including touching, pushing etc. or more seriously, physical or sexual assault
- Unwelcome sexual advances, suggestive behaviour or coercion of sexual favours; say to further a career
- Insensitive jokes, offensive language, gossip, racist literature
- Pressure to participate in social events, religious groups or political parties

- Exclusion from social activities, conversations or simply ignoring them
- Mocking, mimicking or belittling a person's disability
- Derogatory or stereotypical remarks about race, gender, age or religion
- Outing or threatening to out someone as gay or lesbian
- Intrusion by pestering, spying and stalking
- Publishing pornographic material that some may find offensive, via any/all digital devices

All forms of harassment impinge on a person's well-being resulting in health issues such as fear, stress and anxiety, affecting all aspects of their lives.

BULLYING

Bullying is the offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. Power may come from a position of authority or the personal strength of an individual to coerce through fear or intimidation.

Forms of bullying may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical or psychological threats
- Overbearing and intimidating levels of supervision
- Deliberate exclusion from meetings or communications without good reason
- Inappropriate or derogatory remarks on performance
- Abuse of authority or power using seniority
- Use of shouting, sarcasm, ridicule or demeaning others

The damage harassment and bullying cause should not be underestimated. The cost is borne by the individual on a personal basis and by the organisation, resulting in a negative reputation.

RAISING CONCERNS

Members aware of any instances of harassment or bullying, or are unsure whether this is the case, should disclose this to the Manager who will guide them on appropriate steps to take. If this is not possible under certain circumstances, then a member of the Business and Development Sub-Group should be approached.

RAISING A FORMAL COMPLAINT

If you are being bullied or harassed a written formal complaint stating all relevant details of the conduct in question, should be submitted to the Manager, whose role is to achieve a solution wherever possible and to respect the confidentiality of all concerned. If the matter involves that person then you should refer it the Business and Development Sub-Group.

INVESTIGATIONS

If informal steps are not successful or the complaint is more serious, an investigation will be conducted by an appropriate representative of the organisation. The decision to progress with a complaint is up to you. However the organisation has a duty to

protect all members and may pursue the matter independently if it is appropriate to do so.

The investigation will be thorough, impartial, objective, respectful and sensitive to all concerned. Each person that is both accuser and accused will be invited separately to an interview to give an account of events.

If the investigator considers that harassment or bullying has occurred prompt action will be taken to address it. This may result in cancellation of membership.

CONDUCT AT EVENTS, MEETINGS, GROUPS

When attending meetings, events, groups or forums on behalf of or arranged by the organisation, all members are expected to conduct themselves appropriately. It is important to have protocols in place giving members the knowledge on how to act and react in situations. This also encourages members to attend meetings and express views.

Members' conduct should never have a negative effect on the organisation's reputation.

The following recommendations will assist on how to behave at meetings

- Work with and in partnership with other members and organisations
- Respect others and their point of view
- Raise your hand to indicate your wish to speak
- Allow others the opportunity to speak; avoid interrupting or speaking over someone
- Discuss the topic and avoid straying from the point
- Address the issue and avoid making it personal
- Do not force anyone to speak
- Avoid using jargon and abbreviations
- Take a comfort break when needed
- Maintain confidentiality
- Avoid raising any personal issues with other members

Inappropriate Behaviour at Events, Meetings, Groups

The above protocols instruct on the way to behave when attending or representing the organisation at meetings, events, groups, forums or conversation cafes. However it is stressed that when attending for these events, members should be aware of forms of behaviour that are inappropriate and not acceptable.

The following lists some forms of inappropriate behaviour but is not limited to:

- You must not attack other attendees verbally or physically for any reason
- Avoid bringing personal or domestic issues with other members with you
- Do not attend if under the influence of / or the misuse of alcohol or drugs

The organisation understands these circumstances exist, is sympathetic to and is committed to supporting members with these issues to seek help by sign posting to statutory bodies or agencies who deal with the particular issue.

If a member's behaviour breaches the above protocols and the organisation deem this as unacceptable, loss of membership may be the outcome.

If the inappropriate behaviour is physical violence of any kind towards an employee or member of the organisation, membership will be withdrawn immediately.

ISSUE RESOLUTION POLICY/ GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

PRINCIPLES

It is accepted by the organisation that there will be occasions when a member may have a complaint or issue relating to working conditions or relationships with other members, to raise.

The member raising the complaint / issue should follow the grievance procedure below. If the complaint / issue involves another member of the organisation and depending on the circumstance's loss of membership maybe the resulting outcome.

While it is hoped that in most cases these will be resolved through informal discussion, where the problem remains unresolved, the following formal procedure should be used.

This procedure applies to all members.

Members may be accompanied by a companion at any stage in the procedure.

If an issue is referred to this procedure for resolution, both parties accept that this should be progressed as speedily as possible.

PROCEDURE

STAGE 1

Any person who has a grievance should raise the matter in writing, in the first instance with the manager who will arrange a meeting to discuss the grievance.

STAGE 2

If the matter is not resolved at Stage 1 then the grievance will be referred to the Business and Development Subgroup. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the grievance and a response in writing will be made within five working days.

STAGE 3

If the member remains dissatisfied with the response following the second stage, he or she may raise the grievance with the chairperson of the organisation. The chairperson will meet with the member and review the response to the grievance. Following the meeting the chairperson will carry out any further investigations that they deem necessary and aim to respond with an outcome within 10 working days. The decision of the chairperson will be final.

Members should note that where the matter is complicated or detailed, or where it involves a number of other members, it may not be possible for the organisation to respond within the 5–10-day timescale set out above. In these circumstances the manager will communicate the reason without delay to the complainant and will seek to respond as soon as is practicable in the circumstances. In some circumstances and subject to mutual agreement between the parties, the matter may be referred to an external independent arbitrator.

DATA PROTECTION (GDPR) POLICY

The organisation is committed to ensuring any personal data will be dealt with in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulations May 2018. To comply with the law, personal information will be collected and used fairly, stored safely and not disclosed to any other person unlawfully. The aim of this policy is to ensure that everyone handling personal data is fully aware of the requirements and acts in accordance with data protection procedures.

DEFINITIONS

In line with Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR principles, the organisation will ensure all personal data will:

- Be obtained fairly and lawfully and not be processed unless certain conditions are met
- Be obtained for a specific and lawful purpose
- Be adequate, relevant but not excessive
- Be accurate and kept up to date
- Not be held longer than necessary
- Be processed in accordance with the rights of the person
- Be subject to appropriate security measures
- Not be transferred outside the European Economic Area (EEA)

Processing personal data means obtaining, using, holding, amending, disclosing, destroying and deletion of. This includes some paper based personal data as well as that kept electronically.

The organisation abides by GDPR which suggests five key principles of good data governance on which best practice is based. The organisation abides by this code in relation to all the personal data it processes, i.e.:

- **Accountability:** those handling personal data follow publicised data principles to help gain public trust and safeguard personal data.
- **Visibility:** Everyone should have access to information about themselves that the organisation holds. This includes the right to have incorrect personal data corrected and to know who has had access to this data.
- **Consent:** The collection and use of personal data must be fair and lawful and in accordance with DPA's eight data protection principles. Personal data should only be used for purposes agreed by the data subject. If

personal data is to be shared with a third party or used for another purpose, the data subject's consent should be explicitly obtained.

- Access: Everyone should have the right to know the roles and groups of people within an organisation who have access to their personal data and who has used this data.
- Stewardship: Those collecting personal data have a duty of care to protect this data throughout the data life span.

TYPES OF INFORMATION PROCESSED

Your personal information is kept as hard and electronic copies. Groups of people within the organisation that will process personal information are employed staff.

NOTIFICATION

The Data Controller for the organisation is the Lanarkshire Links Manager.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Overall responsibility for personal data in the organisation rests with the Management Committee, who delegates this task to the Data Controller who is responsible for:

Understanding and communicating obligations under the Act

- Identifying potential problem areas or risks
- Producing clear and effective procedures

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

To meet our responsibilities we will ensure any personal data is collected in a fair and lawful way:

- Explain why it is needed at the start
- Ensure that only the minimum amount of information needed is collected and used
- Ensure the information used is up to date and accurate
- Review the length of time information is held
- Ensure it is kept safely
- Ensure the rights people have in relation to their personal data can be exercised

We will ensure that:

- Everyone managing and handling personal information is trained to do so
- Anyone wanting to make enquires about handling personal information, whether a member, a member of staff knows what to do
- Any disclosure of personal data will be in line with our procedures

TRAINING

Training and awareness raising about the GDPR and how it is followed in this organisation is included in general training / awareness training.

DATA SECURITY

The organisation will take steps to ensure all personal details are kept secure at all times against unauthorised or unlawful loss or disclosure. The following measures will be taken:

- Hard copies will be locked away securely.
- Electronic copies will be saved on a computer that is username and password protected.

CONFIDENTIALITY

During the course of your membership with Lanarkshire Links, you may learn information about other individuals, organisations and services. Under the above act unauthorised disclosure of any information or personal details is not permitted.

BREACH OF CONFIDENTIALITY

If you are aware of anyone breaking these rules, you should raise your concerns with the organisation's Manager using the Grievance policy.

Any unauthorised disclosure of personal data or information by a Committee Member or member may result in the Committee Member being removed from the Board, and the member having their membership terminated.

SUBJECT ACCESS REQUESTS

Anyone whose personal information we process, has the right to know:

- What information we hold and process on them
- How to gain access to this information
- How to keep it up to date
- What we are doing to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR principles

They also have the right to prevent processing of their personal data in some circumstances and the right to correct, rectify, block or erase information regarded as wrong. Individuals have a right under the Act to access personal data being kept about them on computer and certain files. Anyone wishing to exercise this right should apply in writing to the Development and Business Subgroup.

The following information will be required before access is granted:

Full name and contact details of the person making the request, their relationship with the organisation and any other relevant information – e.g. timescales involved

We may also require proof of identity before access is granted.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The Organisation is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all members by:

- Providing and maintaining safe plant and work systems

- Conducting regular risk assessments
- Providing safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage, transport and disposal of articles and substances
- Providing the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure health and safety
- Maintaining safe means of ingress and egress
- Providing and maintaining a safe working environment, including welfare arrangements
- Consulting, as necessary on matters concerning health, safety and welfare
- Obtaining expert advice, as necessary, to determine levels of risk and advising on their reduction or elimination

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 states that all persons must:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions
- Co-operate with the organisation to enable them to comply with health and safety legislation
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare as required by health and safety law.

ORGANISATION

The Manager has the first responsibility for health and safety affairs in the organisation.

Adequate funding provisions will be made in the annual budget to ensure health and safety commitments are met.

Duties and responsibilities for health and safety will be allocated and recorded in a clear and logical manner to ensure that everyone knows what they are responsible for and to whom they themselves are responsible.

Health, safety and welfare will be a standing agenda item at committee meetings.

TRAINING

All members will be given appropriate instruction in health and safety as it relates to their task. All training programmes will be designed to take account of health and safety issues.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Line Manager will ensure that all members are aware of their individual duties in respect of health and safety.

LEGISLATION

Compliance will be ensured with statutes, regulations and codes of practice as they apply to the organisation.

SYSTEMS OF WORK

Safe systems of work will be designed and organised to ensure:

- Safe methods of working
- Effective supervision
- Selection and employment of competent persons.

ENVIRONMENT

The organisation will achieve and maintain working conditions that meet its environmental responsibilities and will review at regular intervals the effects of production activities on the local environment and community.

SAFE PLACE

Safe ingress to and egress from places used by the organisation will be always maintained.

EQUIPMENT

The organisation will ensure that all equipment is maintained in safe working order, correctly guarded and electrically secure. It will prevent the use of any equipment that is faulty or suspected of being faulty.

HOUSEKEEPING

All areas used by the organisation will be maintained in good decorative repair and regularly cleaned.

SUBSTANCES

The organisation will ensure that only the safest available substances and materials are used and that those handling them are adequately trained and have the correct equipment available.

COMMUNICATIONS

All statutory and other supporting notices will be prominently displayed and be in good order. The exchange of health and safety information will be encouraged. In addition, the organisation undertakes to consider and sensibly respond to all members' ideas, comments and reports relating to health and safety issues.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION

The organisation will ensure that all members volunteering within the office base are instructed in fire and emergency evacuation procedures. Fire drills and firefighting equipment are the responsibility of the building management company. The fire alarms are routinely tested on Wednesday mornings. All staff prioritise safe evacuation.

FIRST AID

Adequate first aid supplies and trained First Aider's will be provided.

HEALTH/HYGIENE

The organisation recognises the development and impact of stress and endeavours to reduce stress wherever possible. The provision of clean and adequate facilities will be ensured.

RECORDS

When an accident or incident occurs it should be reported to the Administrator immediately, or as soon as is practically possible, who will record the event in the accident/incident book.

INVESTIGATIONS

All incidents and accidents will be investigated without delay, and appropriate corrective action will be taken.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Administrator is responsible for the office environment on a day-to-day basis and carries out a formal inspection annually. Findings will be recorded, and action will be taken to eliminate or reduce any hazards discovered.

INFORMATION

The organisation will ensure the timely and accurate issue of relevant information about health and safety.

PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Appropriate protective clothing will be provided, and the organisation will ensure its correct use and replacement as require

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

This policy aims to foster a culture of Equality and to recognise the positive contribution that each individual can make to the organisation irrespective of their sex, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, age or disability ("The Protected Characteristics"). This policy covers all individuals associated with the organisation.

The promotion of equal opportunities is intrinsic to Lanarkshire Links, and everyone will be treated with respect and dignity. The organisation will not tolerate any less favourable treatment of any person on the grounds of the Protected Characteristics. It should be noted that all have a personal responsibility for the implementation of this policy and to ensure that they treat others with the respect and dignity as they would expect to be treated themselves.

REMEDIES

The management of the organisation will take responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy. However, if anyone believes that he or she has been

discriminated against, harassed or victimised on any of the grounds referred to above, they may raise the matter informally with the organisation's Manager. All such complaints will be taken seriously and treated in confidence and investigated fully by a member of the Management Committee using the Grievance policy. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will be taken seriously and may result with the accuser leaving the organisation.

If a member of staff is found to have discriminated against, harassed or victimised a member of the organisation, they will be subject to disciplinary proceedings, and depending on the seriousness of the incident, may be dismissed for Gross Misconduct. In exceptionally serious cases, no matter who is involved, the police may be contacted.

This policy will be applied to all functions carried out by the organisation in the course of its business.

DISCLOSURE SCOTLAND

The organisation is required to have members who join the Management Committee complete a Disclosure Scotland form. This is necessary as during your time with Lanarkshire Links you may come in contact or deal with vulnerable adults.

All employees are subject to a PVG Disclosure check.

Any cost occurred will be financed by the organisation.

ADULT SUPPORT AND PROTECTION

The organisation believes every vulnerable adult has a right to feel safe in any situation and protected from any practice resulting in physical and / or psychological harm in any form, within the Adult (Support and Protection) (Scotland) Act 2007 and National Guidelines for Child protection Act 2014.

To this end the organisation has a policy in place to instruct and guide all employees of the acts and what to do if a situation should arise.

Any member concerned about another member of the organisation should inform an employee who will not investigate the issue but will refer your concerns to the organisation's manager.

All employees of the organisation receive the appropriate support training.

EXPENSES POLICY

Members are entitled to be reimbursed by the organisation for all reasonable travelling and other expenses properly and necessarily incurred by them in carrying out their duties, on the production of an appropriately authorised claim form and relevant receipts.

Expenses will only be reimbursed if they are:

- Claimed using forms available from administration and completed at the time of the expenditure.
- Supported by relevant documents for example, invoices, tickets, credit or debit card slips and till receipts

- Authorised in accordance with instructions in force at the time the expense was incurred.
- Authorised by the Manager
- States reason for the claim e.g. travel, meetings, events or provisions

TRAVEL EXPENSES

The organisation will reimburse the reasonable cost of necessary travel in connection with its business. The most economic means of travel should be chosen if practicable/possible (and you should use existing travel cards and season tickets wherever possible).

TRAINS

You will only be reimbursed for the cost of standard class travel.

TAXIS

If there are transport difficulties then alternative forms of transport, i.e. taxis may be made available by the organisation.

CAR

Where it is cost effective for you to use your car and you have been authorised to do so, you can claim a mileage allowance on proof of mileage in accordance with the current mileage rates authorised by HM Revenue & Customs. You can also claim for any necessary parking costs which need to be supported by a receipt or the display ticket.

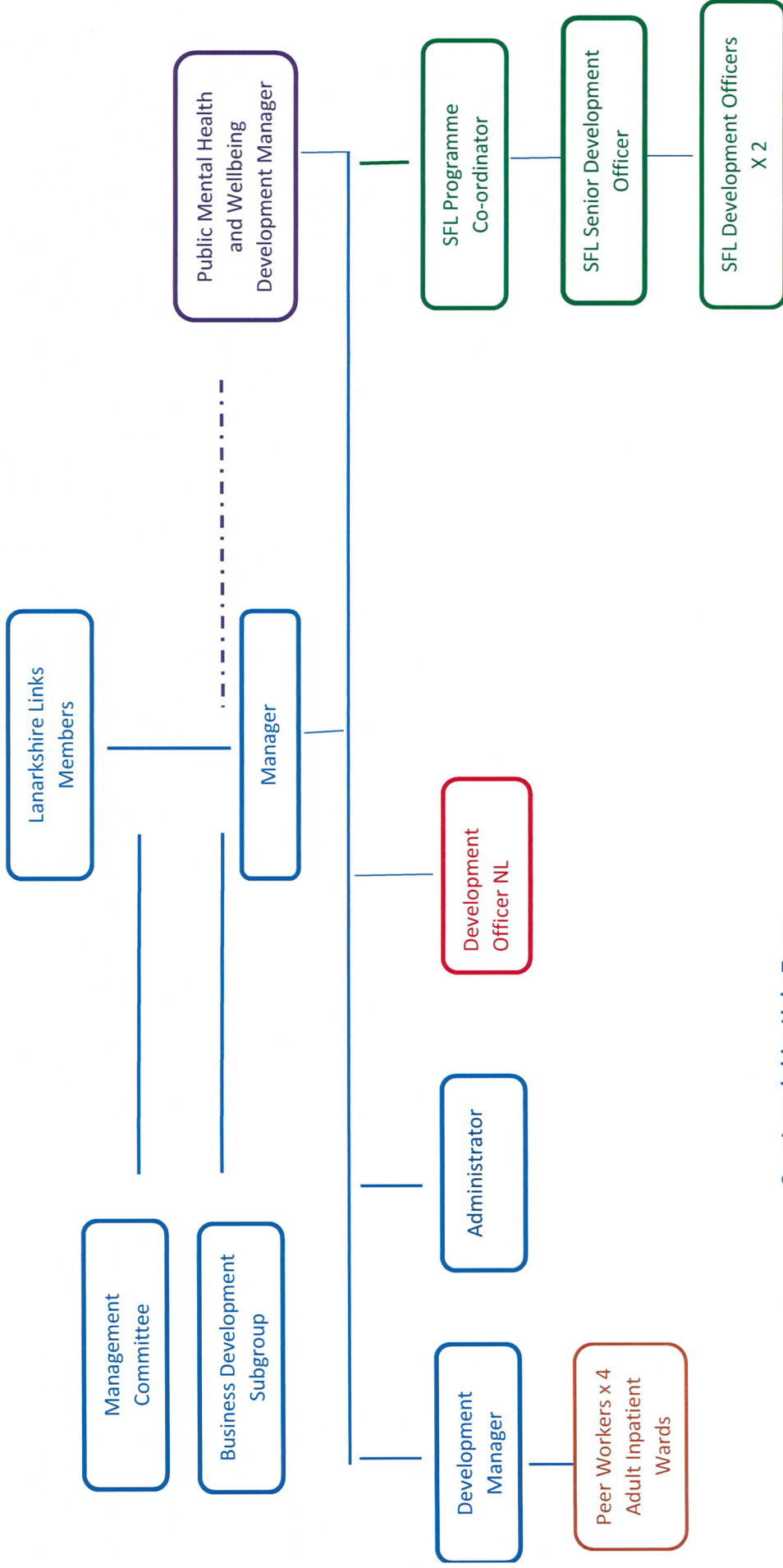
OTHER EXPENSES

Cost of caring for dependents will be paid on submission of an invoice or at a predetermined rate agreed with the Manager. All other out of pocket expenses should be authorised with the Manager in advance, otherwise reimbursement may not occur.

PAYMENT

Expenses are normally paid in cash at the time of the request with submission of the relevant documentation

Organisational Chart



- Core Lanarkshire Links Team
- Peer Workers
- Stigma Free Lanarkshire Team
- NHS Lanarkshire Public Mental Health and Wellbeing Development Manager
- Engagement and participation network NL

