

Developing terms of reference and ways of working documents

Purpose of this resource:

This is a template to help you develop terms of reference and ways of working documents for your public contributors. This could be a group that advises on an individual research project or research activity across your local authority.

You will need to adapt the content, so it meets the needs of your project or organisation.

The content of these documents is not exhaustive, and they have been included to provide prompts for you to produce your own resources with.

We strongly recommend developing this resource with the public contributors you are working with to ensure they include the information that matters the most to them, that the language and format is accessible and that they suit the needs of your organisation. This may include making the information available in different formats with simplified language, translated materials or visual formats.

Acknowledgements

This template has been based on policy documents kindly provided to us by Public Advisory Group from NIHR Health Determinants Research Collaboration Medway.

Terms of Reference

(Name of local authority) Public Advisory Group (PAG)

Purpose and role of the PAG group:

- To offer a broad, public and/or personal perspective on the research programme for **(name of local authority)** colleagues and to help researchers stay on the right track.
- To offer constructive feedback and to provide a reality check from a community perspective.
- To support **(name of local authority)** to communicate with the public around research in an understandable and clear way.
- To support **(name of local authority)** to engage with the public around research in ways that are accessible.
- To act as a first port of call for the local authority colleagues who require public involvement advice in their research and wish to draw on the group's knowledge and expertise.

Aims of the group:

- To improve research to make it more relevant for people who live in **(name of local area)** most effected by wider health and wellbeing determinants.
- To provide links to the broader communities in **(name of area)** that offers insight, involvement and/or participation.
- To explore ways of developing regular communication to engage the communities in **(name of local area)** in health research.
- To support the **(name of local authority)** to include the voices of under-represented communities in research activity.

Meeting format:

- Face to face/ online meetings every **(add frequency and length)**
- Core group of up to **(add number)** members in the meeting (a meeting doesn't happen with less than **(add number)** available).
- Length of PAG membership official duties is **(add number)** months, after which point there will be a membership review.
- Facilitated by **(name of chair)**, although members are welcome to chair meetings, or part of meetings, at any point.
- Recordings of actions and summary of meeting. Papers and actions to be circulated at least **(add time period)** ahead of the meeting.

What should PAG members expect from **(name of local authority)**

- To identify funding opportunities for research.
- To pay out of pocket expenses in a timely manner.
- To provide a main point of contact **(add details of local authority contact).**

- To provide guidance and support to the group, including offering training opportunities.
- To provide PAG members with reasonable and appropriate deadlines for PAG input or review of documents or papers in advance as possible. With minimum turnaround of documents set at (add time period).
- To keep contact details confidential in line with the privacy notice/data protection policy circulated to all members.
- Public Involvement Team to channel requests from researchers for public engagement/ involvement input. Responses will then be co-ordinated by the (add name of staff member) their admin support and passed to the appropriate researcher.
- To communicate with members in an accessible way.
- Feedback notes of meeting. Feedback how member's comments have impacted upon research design/management via the researcher feedback form.
- To evaluate members' experiences on an annual basis to monitor people's satisfaction with their role.
- For the local authority to respond promptly to any communications.
- To provide details of (name of local authority)'s complaints procedure.

Responsibilities of group members:

- Members to be the conduit between the local authority and members of the public in this local authority area.
- To give input, advice, and guidance on documents and projects throughout the PAG term.
- To offer a broad perspective on health/research issues related to communities in (name of local authority).
- To declare any conflicts of interest.
- To sign a confidentiality agreement and to keep all aspects of research projects confidential (unless published in a journal/ on the local authority website).
- In the spirit of active engagement, to attend all meetings per year (individual circumstances such as ill health/caring responsibilities will of course be fully appreciated and understood) and/or take an active part by e-mail in response to virtual invitations to comment on aspects of research projects*
- To contribute to the group in accordance with the Ways of Working agreement, recognising that everyone has an equal voice and should be heard.
- To support (name of local authority) to identify which findings are of interest to the public, especially those underserved by research or services.
- When possible, to provide adequate warning to the PAG chair if you intend to leave**

*Non-attendance at 2 meetings without prior agreement may result in cancellation of PAG membership at the discretion of the PAG chair and management.

**PAG membership can be cancelled at any time by PAG members without the need for a reason to be provide

Name of Local Authority Public Advisory Group

Ways of Working

These 'ways of working' intend to help ensure being part of the (name of local authority) Public Advisory Group (PAG) is a pleasant, supportive and engaging experience for all.

They aim to highlight values of mutual respect, inclusivity and being welcoming:

- A friendly, respectful and welcoming atmosphere shown to all. This applies to within the group and between members and local authority colleagues
- Members to not act in a way that could offend or intimidate based on age, disability, ethnic origin, gender, race, religion and/ or sexual orientation
- Allow everyone to have their say and to speak one at a time so everyone can voice their opinion clearly to the group that can be responded to
- Encourage friendly, constructive, courteous and healthy debate
- Respect everyone's right to confidentiality as well as keeping project information confidential
- Be mindful of the sensitive and confidential nature of some issues and/or situation of others
- Follow any health and safety guidance given by local authority colleagues
- To acknowledge and respect the different areas of expertise and community connections each PAG member brings to the group