



*'Improving the quality of Health and Social  
Care Services for the people of Cumbria'*

## **Cumbria Local Involvement Network Decision Making Process**

December 2008

There will be a number of mechanisms by which issues can be raised with the Cumbria Local Involvement Network (LINK). These include:

- Direct contact with the LINK Support team
- Via the Cumbria LINK web site
- At public meetings

The Governing Body will need to consider these issues and agree a work plan based on the issues raised and be able to account for how it has arrived at its decision and what action it intends to take.

In order to make the process as open and transparent as possible the following process is proposed.

- All Governing Body meetings will be held in public.
- Governing Body Members should declare any conflict of interest at the beginning of each meeting
- In order to arrive at a valid decision the minimum number of Governing Body Members that need to be in attendance at the meeting will be one half of the Membership. Where this number results in a half number the amount will be rounded up to the next whole number.
- The Governing body will arrive at decisions via consensus (definition and explanation of the process annex 1). The Governing body needs to consider if it wishes to apply a benchmarks to its decision making process described in annex 1.
- All issues agreed must demonstrate that they meet the overall aims of the Cumbria LINK.
- A toolkit for prioritising work plan items has been developed (annex 2) and the Governing Body should apply this to all issues agreed upon.
- For each work item agreed upon and prioritised the Governing Body must publish the following

- Description of the activity to be undertaken
- How the LINK intends to undertake the activity
- Which care services the activity relates to
- How much money will be spent on the activity
- If information is to be requested
- If a report is to be made
- If visits are to be made and if so which premises and date of the visit
- If the matter is referred to Overview and Scrutiny committee
- If the matter is to be reported to anyone else, and who

(Reporting form annex 3)

### **Conflict of Interest**

A situation in which a Cumbria LINK Governing Body Member decisions are or could be influenced by the official's personal interests.

Members of the Governing Body should declare a conflict of interest where it arises at the beginning of the meeting.

### **Consensus decision-making**

A group making decision process that not only seeks the agreement of most participants, but also to resolve or mitigate the objections of the minority to achieve the most agreeable decision. Consensus is usually defined as meaning both general agreement, and the process of getting to such agreement.

### **Consensus procedure**

Once an agenda for discussion has been set and, optionally, the ground rules for the meeting have been agreed upon, each item of the agenda is addressed in turn. Typically, each decision arising from an agenda item follows through a simple structure:

**Discussion of the item:** The item is discussed with the goal of identifying opinions and information on the topic at hand. The general direction of the group and potential proposals for action are often identified during the discussion. Members of the Governing Body should use the prioritising guide to focus the group and meet the overall objectives of the LINK

**Formation of a proposal:** Based on the discussion, a formal decision proposal on the issue is presented to the group.

**Call for consensus:** The Chair of the Governing Body calls for consensus on the proposal. Each member of the group must actively state their agreement with the proposal.

**Identification and addressing of concerns:** If consensus is not achieved, each dissenter presents his or her concerns on the proposal, potentially starting another round of discussion to address or clarify the concern.

**Modification of the proposal:** The proposal is amended, re-phrased or reworded in an attempt to address the concerns of the decision-makers. The process then returns to the call for consensus and the cycle is repeated until a satisfactory decision is made.

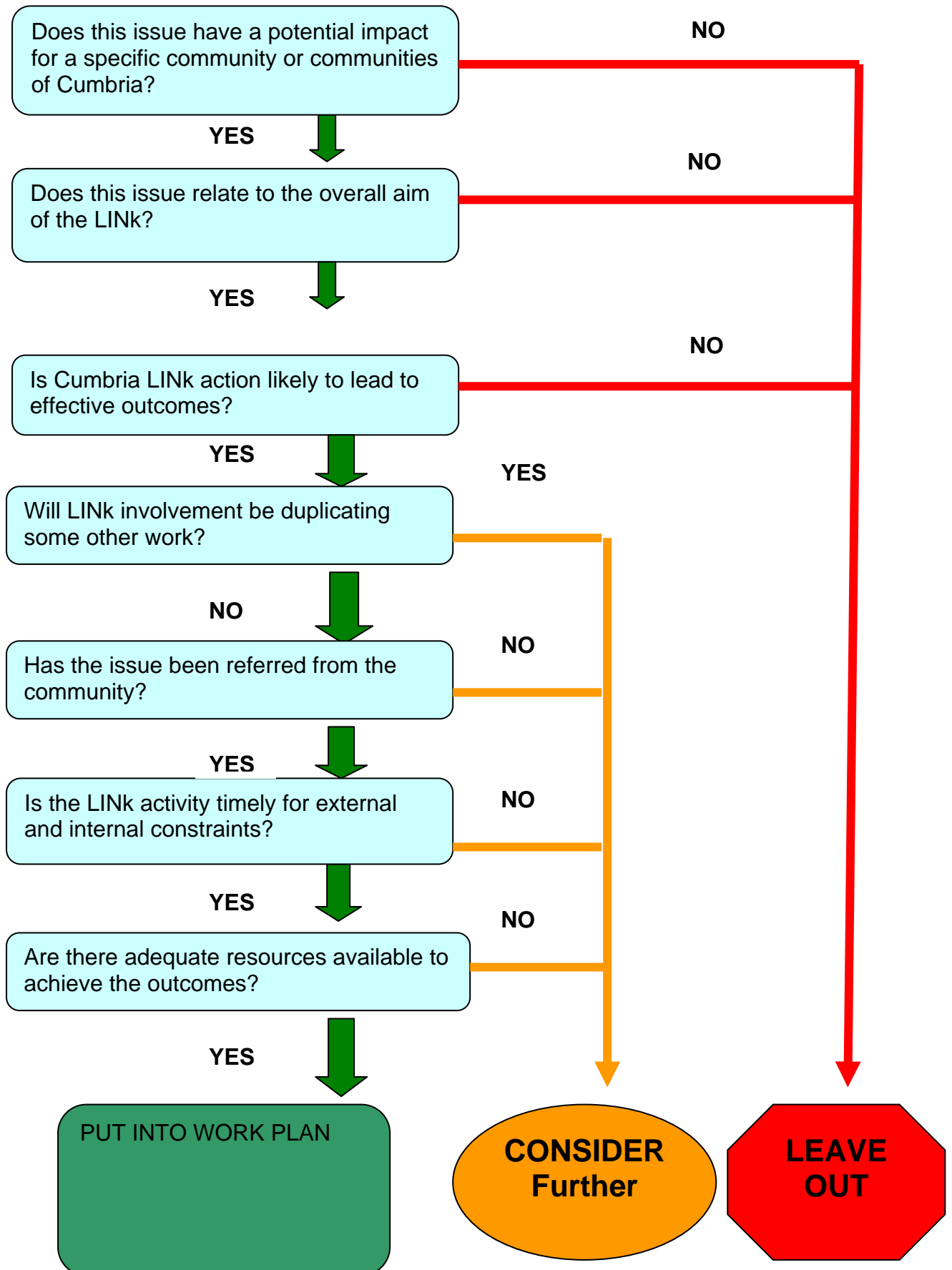
### **When consensus cannot be reached**

Although the consensus decision-making process should, ideally, identify and address concerns and reservations early, proposals do not always garner full consensus from the Governing Body. When a call for consensus on a motion is made, a dissenting delegate has one of three options:

**Declare reservations:** Group members who are willing to let a motion pass but desire to register their concerns with the group may choose "declare reservations." If there are significant reservations about a motion, the decision-making body may choose to modify or re-word the proposal.

**Stand aside:** A "stand aside" may be registered by a group member who has a "serious personal disagreement" with a proposal, but is willing to let the motion pass. Although stand asides do not halt a motion, it is often regarded as a strong "nay vote" and the concerns of group members standing aside are usually addressed by modifications to the proposal. Stand asides may also be registered by users who feel they are incapable of adequately understanding or participating in the proposal.

## Cumbria LINK Work Plan Prioritisation Aid



Note: In this instance communities can be communities of place or of interest

## LINK ACTIVITIES

Date

Activity Undertaken

How the LINK intends to undertake this Activity

Which Care Services will the activity relate to?

How much will be spent on the activity?

Will information be requested from a service provider?

Yes

No

Date of information request

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Information received

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Will a report or recommendation be made?

Report

Recommendation

Will premises be visited?

Yes

No

If yes, which premises and the date of the visit

Will the matter be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Yes   
No

Will the matter be reported to anyone else?  
Yes

No

If yes, then who?

Outcomes of LINK Activity