

## HARINGEY COUNCIL RESEARCH GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK PANEL REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE

**First edition agreed:** RGF Panel meeting 8 December 2008  
**Second edition:** RGF Panel meeting 31 October 2011

### 1. AIMS

- 1.1 To promote a quality research culture across the Council by recording, assessing, and monitoring research and consultation activity in line with the Department of Health's Research Governance Framework for Social Care<sup>1</sup>, the Research Governance Framework Resource Pack for Social Care<sup>2</sup>, and good practice and guidance such as the Council's Consultation Toolkit.
- 1.2 To ensure the implementation of Haringey Council's Research Governance Framework (RGF) Policy and Procedures<sup>3</sup>
- 1.3 To ensure that all stages of the Research Governance process are carried out in accordance with equalities principles and Haringey Council's Equal Opportunities Policy<sup>4</sup>

### 2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE RGF PANEL

#### 2.1 Core Membership

- **Chair:** Deputy Director Adult & Community Services
- Children's Services – Deputy Director Children & Families or nominated senior representative
- Housing Services – Commissioning Manager (Housing Related Support)
- Corporate Services – Manager Policy Equalities and Partnerships
- Principal Policy Officer, Policy Equalities and Partnerships
- Policy Officer, Policy Equalities and Partnerships
- ODL representative
- Corporate Consultation Manager
- NHS representative or public health representative
- A service user or carer representative

#### 2.2 Membership as and when required

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Health (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.,2005), *Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care*

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ssrg.org.uk/governance/>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/social\\_care\\_and\\_health/services-for-all/research\\_governance\\_framework-2.htm](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/social_care_and_health/services-for-all/research_governance_framework-2.htm)

<sup>4</sup>

[http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/council/how\\_the\\_council\\_works/equalities/equaloppstate ment.htm](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/council/how_the_council_works/equalities/equaloppstate ment.htm)

- Service Managers of operational services
- Other members and partners to be co-opted as necessary

### **2.3 Criteria for appointment of panel members<sup>5</sup>**

The criteria for accepting a service user or informal carer on to the research governance panel should be no different from those for any other member, in that they should have some but not necessarily all of the following attributes:

- a sound understanding of research methodology;
- knowledge of ethical research principles and standards;
- experience of conducting research;
- experience of being researched;
- service user or unpaid carer experience;
- experience or a sound understanding of social care practice;
- knowledge of the organisation's aims, policies and strategic direction;
- understanding of the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts;
- understanding of staff development needs and processes.

## **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **3.1 Chairing**

Deputy Director Adult & Community Services

### **3.2 RGF Panel administration**

The Senior Policy Officer, Policy, Equalities and Partnerships, will have the responsibility for assembling and maintaining Haringey's Research Governance Panel.

3.3 The Policy, Equalities and Partnerships team in Assistant Chief Executive's Service will provide panel administration including arranging and minuting meetings.

## **4. THE APPROVAL PROCESS**

4.1 Not all proposed research projects will pose the same levels of risk. With some proposals it is likely to be clear after relatively brief consideration that there is minimal or no risk to participants, while with other projects there may be initial reason for some concern which would warrant more detailed scrutiny and deliberation before giving approval.

4.2 Haringey Council has limited resources for research governance, and so it is important for time and resources to be focused upon the

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<sup>5</sup> These criteria have been taken from the RGF Resource Pack for Social Care 2<sup>nd</sup> edition April 2010

proposals which may potentially present the highest risk. This procedure therefore takes a **'tiered' approach** where the level of scrutiny applied will be based on an initial assessment of potential risk.

- 4.3 Upon receipt of the completed form, the applicant will be sent an e-mail acknowledging receipt and giving the indicative timescale for a decision from the Policy, Equalities and Partnership team.
- 4.4 A Principal Policy Officer (Policy, Equalities and Partnership team) or a nominated deputy from the RGF Panel, will make an initial decision on the level of risk for each application.

### **Level 1**

If the project is initially assessed as level 1 the proposal will be sent to the core members for review and the decision for approval. Where possible this should include a senior manager with responsibility for the client group(s) who would be involved in the research project. After reviewing a proposal the members selected may agree a decision or choose to escalate the decision to the full panel. The RGF Panel may choose to make decisions on these proposals via e-mail correspondence, or hold face-to-face panel meetings as needed to make their decision.

### **Level 2**

If the project is initially assessed as **level 2**, the proposal will be escalated to the full RGF Panel for review and the decision for approval. The decision will be made by majority view and if necessary, the chair will make the final decision. The full panel will meet quarterly. Full application documentation should be submitted 1 month before the full RGF Panel meeting.

- 4.5 If internal projects are assessed as level 2, the researcher(s) may be asked to answer relevant additional questions before the full assessment is completed.
- 4.6 After the proposal has been reviewed, the applicant will be sent an e-mail advising them of the outcome.
- 4.7 If minor amendments are required, approval will normally be granted on receipt of satisfactory amendments with the level 1 approval process. If major amendments are required, the re-submitted application will at minimum be assessed at the same risk approval process as when initially submitted.

There is **no automatic right of appeal** against decisions made through this procedure.

## **5. THE RGF PANEL'S PROCESS OF DECISION-MAKING**

5.1 The RGF Panel will attempt to reach a majority view, but if this is not possible the Chair's decision will be final.

5.2 The lead researcher will be invited to attend the RGF Panel meeting at which their research is being considered.

## **6. COMPLAINTS ABOUT RESEARCH**

6.1 Complaints about internal research will be dealt with through the Council's Complaints procedure.

6.2 Complaints about external research should be dealt with through the Complaints procedure of the organisation which owns the research.

6.3 The RGF Panel will record complaints and note their progress.

6.4 The RGF Panel reserves the right to stop research at any time if it has concerns.

## **7. COLLATION OF INFORMATION ON RESEARCH PROJECTS**

All research projects approved through this policy will be entered on:

- Haringey Council's Corporate Consultation database; and, where appropriate,
- The national **Research Register for Social Care** (<http://www.researchregister.org.uk>)

## **8. MEETINGS**

### **8.1 Frequency of meetings**

The RGF Panel will meet up to four times a year to consider high risk proposals. These should be circulated to RGF Panel members 5-10 days before the Panel meeting.

### **8.2 Quorum for meetings**

The Chair of RGF Panel and five members, preferably including service user/ carer members and others prepared to review the proposals and give their views via email.

### **8.3 Re-imburement of expenses**

Re-imburement of expenses will be given for service users and carers.

## **9. REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS**

The RGF Panel will report to the Assistant Chief Executive People, Organisation & Development quarterly by means of the circulation of minutes of RGF Panel meetings.

## **12. REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The terms of reference will be revised annually and modified when deemed appropriate by RGF Panel members.

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