# Terms of Reference

# ARC NWC Public Adviser Forum

**Aims of the group**

To provide oversight of the ARC NWC public engagement policy, supported by the Public Engagement Manager. It will:

* Advise on recruitment of members of the public to ARC NWC activities
* Advise on aspects of the work of the ARC NWC work such as:
  + Applied research and implementation priorities and activities
  + Capacity building programme
  + Public engagement in theme management and the development of public forums within themes.
  + Communication and dissemination strategy
* Identify potential questions for evidence reviews, applied research or implementation activities
* Contribute to capacity building activities aiming to support public and service user engagement.
* Monitor ARC NWC performance in delivering public engagement and supporting public volunteers into leadership roles within the ARC NWC.

**Membership**

The Adviser Forum will be made up of members of the public involved in ARC NWC projects and the Public Engagement Team.

It will share information and develop close working relationships with representatives within ARC NWC and our member organisations. Public Advisers will be invited to attend the Adviser Forum meetings as requested to bring specialist skills, information and knowledge to the group.

**Ways of working**

* The group will meet approximately every eight weeks, with no meeting taking place in August.
* At least seven attendees need to be present for decisions to be passed on behalf of the group.
* Members of the group will receive papers one week before each meeting.
* Minutes of the meeting will be kept and agreed by all members of the Group who attended the meeting.
* Members may be contacted (or contact each other for reasons relating to ARC NWC activities) between meetings should the need arise.
* Forum sub-groups are formed to work on specific issues as appropriate. There are currently three sub-groups:
  + Governance
  + Communications
  + HEMS
* From time to time Public Advisers may be co-opted to provide specific advice and expertise as required.

**Other opportunities**

* Advisers taking part in opportunities at the request of ARC NWC are asked to complete a ‘Adviser Feedback form’ to share the information and learning from that activity with the wider Adviser Forum. These are to be emailed to the Public Engagement Facilitator at [arcnwc@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:arcnwc@liverpool.ac.uk).

**General**

* The key activities of the group will be reported to the NIHR annually as part of the reporting requirements.

**Governance**

**Management group, Steering Board and Sub-Committee ‘governance’ roles**

* The role of Public Advisers holding a place on the Management team, Steering Board or Sub-committee is to communicate the opinion of the wider Adviser Forum, not their personal opinion to these governance meetings.
* Two public advisers sit on the Management Team meetings, these will be drawn from the governance sub-group.
* Four public advisers sit on the Steering Board, these will be drawn from the governance sub-group.

**Governance Terms of Reference:**

**Purpose and role of the sub-group**

The Governance sub-group structure has been formalised by the Public Adviser Lead in conjunction with significant input from members of the PA Forum and agreed with Management Team.

The Governance sub-group will ensure that ARC NWC Public and Community Involvement, Engagement and Participation (P&CIEP) interests are represented in the governance and decision making of ARC NWCand that P&CIEP activities are co-developed to deliver the aims of the ARC NWC and its themes.

The sub-group will also ensure that the key principles of good governance are built into the relationship between the Management of the ARC NWC, Member Organisations and members of the public represented by the Public Adviser Forum.

The Public Advisor (PA) Forum is the principal means by which the Governance sub-group will discharge its brief to promote constructive discourse between the wider community and ARC NWC.

**Membership of the Governance sub-group**

The normal membership of the Governance Sub-group is limited to eight, with other Public Advisers to attend by invitation.

Following the establishment of a system of Co-Leads (and Deputies) to strengthen the direct links with the existing ARC Theme Groups, Theme Co-Leads will have a reporting relationship to the Governance Sub-group. They will be invited on a pre-arranged basis by the Governance Sub-group to make a written or verbal report as required.

Membership of the Governance sub-group will be refreshed on a regular basis to deliver diversity of involvement opportunities to the wider body of Public Advisers with staggered appointments to promote continuity. To ensure there is a core membership, three positions will be filled on an annual rotation.

A mentoring procedure is in place to familiarise new members with the Sub-group’s methods of working.

**Accountability**

The Governance sub-group is accountable to ARC NWC (Steering Board and Management Team) for matters of funding, data gathering and security, administrative matters and good conduct. The sub-group also accounts for itself to the wider constituency of the NWC by means of the established PA Forum whose voice it represents to ARC NWC. Management. It has a duty to bring issues from the Forum to ARC NWC management.

**Review**

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually.

**Working methods**

The Governance sub-group will adopt a collaborative method of working. Each member of the sub-group will have the opportunity to express their views. A consensus view will be the expected outcome guided by the Public Adviser Lead.

A member from among the sub-group will be appointed to act as chair on a rotating basis to manage the conduct of meetings.

The Governance sub-group will gather information and intelligence on PA activities, liaise via co-leads with the existing ARC Themes and advise the Management Team as a critical friend on matters of interest and concern that arise through these channels.

**Meetings**

Meetings of the Governance sub-group will be held monthly prior to that month's Management meeting.

The Sub-group will be serviced by a member of the ARC NWC administrative staff and designated members of the academic staff of ARC NWC will have ex officio rights of attendance at all meetings.

An agenda will be published prior to the meeting with time given for members to read and review documents and associated papers.

Meetings will be chaired on a rotating basis by a Public Adviser member of the Governance sub-group.

Papers from the Governance Sub-group for transmission to higher management in ARC NWC will be approved by the Sub-group.

**Confidentiality**

Management Team paperwork is considered confidential. Discussions at meetings is normally restricted to Governance Sub-Group members.

**Terms of Reference agreed: July 2021**

**Next review: July 2022**