**Age UK Leeds Older People’s Engagement (OPE) Group**

**Terms of Reference**

**Core Purpose**

The purpose of the OPE Group is to represent the views and attitudes of older people who have contact with AUKL and to contribute to the development of existing and new services.

**Key Responsibilities of Client Representatives**

* Link to a service and/or a project within the service
* Develop a knowledge of the service and project(s) through:
  + Speaking to staff and volunteers
  + Talking with clients
  + Shadowing staff and volunteers
  + Reading project documentation e.g. funding application, project reports etc
* Gather feedback on the service from other clients through various methods including:
  + Telephone calls
  + Face to face meetings
  + Client feedback forums
  + Surveys
* Feedback to the OPE Group on findings
* Develop a knowledge and links with other relevant organisations, services and projects external to AUKL
* Input on the proposed development of new services
* Recruitment: support the recruitment of staff within the service you are linked to
* Subgroups may be set up to give feedback on a specific issue issues identified by the Group, Trustee Board or Senior Management Team

**Membership**

* The group will be composed of volunteers who meet the Client Representative role description;
* Potential members will be asked to complete an application form and informal interview;
* Target membership is 8 to 12 Client Representatives, with 2 to 3 members linked to each service area;
* The position of Chair will be subject to annual election (or more frequently if agreed by the group) and the Chair will be the group’s representative on the Board.

The following staff will represent Age UK Leeds:

Service Development Director (SDD)

**Resources**

* The Service Development Director will support the group as required and requested by the group
* New members will receive relevant training and support from AUKL and will be allocated a mentor within the OPE Group
* AUKL will provide support to send out meeting documentation and take minutes at full group meetings

**Expenses:**

* Members will receive out of pocket expenses as per the organisation’s expenses policy.

**Meetings**

* Older People’s Engagement Group (all representatives)
* Regular links with service / project
* Client feedback event facilitated by OPE Group
* Other meetings as agreed with the service / project (this could include attending steering group meetings, monitoring meetings etc)
* Subgroups may be set up to look at specific issues identified by the Group, Trustee Board or Senior Management Team
* Agenda items should be sent to the Chair and SDD a week before the meeting
* Meeting documents will be sent out at least 2 working days prior to meetings to give members time to read and prepare
* A copy of the minutes will be shared with AUKL Senior Management Team and the Chair of Trustees
* A copy of the minutes from the Board of Trustees will be shared with the OPEG following agreement and approval of the Board

**Key Behaviours**

* Represent the views of the clients they have contact with
* Be objectively neutral and constructive
* Attend meetings well prepared
* Start on time
* Raising concerns and issues: initially this will be done informally through Chair or, if appropriate the SDD. Members can also follow the formal AUKL complaints procedure.

**Group Performance**

The group will continually consider how it can work in the most effective way and undertake a formal annual review where members will:

* Review ToR;
* Review composition of membership.

**Development sessions**

Some training will be required for group members so that they can undertake the role safely and efficiently. Including, but not exclusively:

* Safeguarding
* Lone working
* Health & safety
* Professional boundaries
* Equal opportunities
* Risk assessment
* Age UK Leeds and our services
* Issues facing older people (health inequalities, social isolation)
* Getting and giving constructive feedback / communication
* Briefing sessions as arranged by the group