**DOCUMENT REFERENCE NUMBER:**
**POLICY TITLE: RESEARCH GOVERNANCE**

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| **Policy/Guideline Title:** | Research Governance Policy | | |
| Executive Summary: | The purpose of this policy is to build a research governance infrastructure as part of Coventry Health Determinants Research Collaboration (Coventry HDRC). We aim to build an open, creative and dynamic research network that uses evidence to address inequalities caused by the wider determinants of health and improve the health of residents.<br><br>The Research Governance Policy outlines the framework and principles guiding the conduct of research affiliated with Coventry HDRC ensuring all research activities are conducted ethically, responsibly and in accordance with relevant regulations and legislation.<br><br>Through its research activity, Coventry HDRC seeks to embed a research culture within Coventry City Council, encouraging best practice and evidence-based decision making, driving forward action to reduce health inequalities. | | |
| Supersedes: | N/A | | |
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| **This policy will impact on:** | | | |
| **Financial Implications:** | | | |
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| Approved by Director: | Allison Duggall | 10th March 2025 |

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| Ratified by: | | |
| Received for Information: | | |

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 Research is the attempt to derive generalisable or transferable new knowledge to answer or refine relevant questions with scientifically sound methods (Health Research Authority, 2023)[1]. The new knowledge or further understanding of a subject, can ultimately lead to, or contribute towards changes to policies and service provision. This includes activity that involves the collection of information to derive new knowledge from or about Coventry as a place, Coventry residents, Coventry City Council as an organisation, strategies/policies and plans, service users, employees of the Council or its contracted organisations. Please refer to section 3.4 for projects which are not within the scope of this policy.

1.2 Coventry City Council hosts the National Institute for Health and care Research (NIHR) Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) Coventry which is part of the national HDRC programme, funded by the NIHR from 1st October 2022 to 30th September 2027. The funding is being used by Coventry's HDRC to build a research infrastructure and ecosystem and change culture in relation to the use of research evidence with a focus on the wider determinants of health.

1.3 This policy forms part of the intention to build a research infrastructure in the Council as part of the HDRC. The initial focus will be the council functions that influence the wider determinants of health. The wider determinants of health (also known as social determinants) are a diverse range of social, economic and environmental factors which impact on people's health. The 2020 Marmot Review emphasised the strong and persistent link between social inequalities and disparities in health outcomes[2]. The potential to expand to other aspects of Council business will be kept under review through the HDRC governance programme.

1.4 Coventry City Council ('the Council') is committed to the development of a strong research culture throughout the organisation and supports evidence-based services in which policy decisions are formed on sound information from high-quality published research findings. Research and research related activity within services is a valuable tool for learning, service improvement and engagement with Council service users.

1.5 Council staff may undertake research themselves and / or support external research projects that are led by others. In addition, staff may be invited to be research participants in projects where the Council's processes and methods are the subject of research.

[1] This definition may not be suited to all local authority research activities. A survey is being conducted by the NIHR Research Support Service Specialist Centre for Public Health to refine this definition. Results are expected in 2025 which will be used to update this policy definition.

[2] Wider determinants of health - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

1.6 For research to add value, it must be conducted in a planned, open, and rigorous way, be peer reviewed and be reproducible. Research governance is the system of administration and supervision through which research is managed, the rights, health and safety, and well-being of participants and researchers are protected, and quality and accountability are assured.

1.7 The initial scope of this policy is research focussed on the wider determinants of health and it aims to ensure the dignity, rights, safety and wellbeing of participants and researchers are protected at all times. This policy aligns with the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research[1] which sets out the principles of good practice in the management and conduct of research.

## 2. Purpose

2.1 This policy sets out standards for research, defines mechanisms to deliver these standards and ensure they are being met, and defines the responsibilities of all those involved in the research process to:

- Develop and maintain a research culture of excellence.
- Support the conduct of research by facilitating prompt decisions and constructive working with partner research organisations and regulatory bodies.
- Protect the dignity, rights and well-being of the public, research participants, researchers and reputation of the Council.
- Work with the public and local communities to develop a better understanding of their needs and experiences of health inequalities.
- Ensure public confidence in the decisions made as a result of research.
- Encourage and ensure new knowledge and research findings are shared with Council colleagues and external organisations that will benefit from the information and be best placed to effect change, service improvement or user engagement.

## 3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to officers employed by Coventry City Council and organisations, including contractors and students, involved in conducting, participating in, funding, or managing research hosted by the Council associated with the Coventry HDRC.

3.2 Research associated with Coventry HDRC will either wholly or partly focus on the wider determinants of health.

3.3 This policy does not apply to research carried out by Council staff in their private capacity.

3.4 All research hosted by the Council associated with the Coventry HDRC must conform to this policy and all policies to which it refers.

3.5 Projects which are not defined as research by the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research are not covered by this policy. Typically, the following Council activities are **likely** to not be covered by this policy:

- Service evaluations – the assessment of the quality of a service or intervention
- Financial, practice or service audits
- Public consultation exercises to gather residents' views on changes to strategy, policy, or service, infrastructure or planning development, budget or council priorities
- Engagement activities with the public, Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector and Council staff

## 4. Responsibilities

4.1 It is the responsibility of individuals to check and record whether or not their project is research as defined in this policy prior to the project starting. Include HRA checking tool.

4.2 It is the responsibility of both those individuals conducting research hosted by the Council, and those whose work supports them, to ensure that they comply with the requirements of this policy and management and accountability procedures.

4.3 The Director of Coventry HDRC is the accountable officer responsible for ensuring that proposed research is ethical and respects the dignity, rights, safety, and well-being of participants.

4.4 The research governance approval process for the Council is overseen by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Health Determinants Collaboration (HDRC) Coventry ('the HDRC') and is managed by the HDRC Research Governance Officers within the Council's Public Health Directorate. Research projects may be subject to review by the HDRC Research Ethics Committee (REC).

4.5 It is the responsibility of Council departmental leads to review and approve any research projects related to their department, prior to the project being granted research governance approval.

## 5. Definitions

5.1 **Health Research Authority (HRA)** - An executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department of Health and Social Care. HRA Approval is the process for research in the NHS in England which comprises a review by an NHS Research

Ethics Committee (REC) (where required) as well as an assessment of regulatory compliance, and study-wide research governance checks.

5.2 **Participant** - An individual who voluntarily participates in a research project after giving consent or assent.

5.3 **Research** - The attempt to derive generalisable or transferable new knowledge to answer or refine relevant questions with scientifically sound methods, including community based methods, where appropriate. The HRA decision-making tool should be used to determine whether a project is research - www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk/research/

5.4 **Research Ethics Committee** – A committee (in development) made up of multidisciplinary professionals both within and outside of the Council and lay members, responsible for reviewing research projects, with the purpose of ensuring the rights, safety, dignity, and wellbeing of research participants are protected. Further information about the composition and role of the Research Ethics Committee can be found in the Terms of Reference.

5.5 **Research Governance** - The broad range of regulations, principles and standards of good practice that ensure high quality research.

5.6 **Sponsor** - The individual, company, institution, or organisation that takes on legal responsibility for the initiation, management and/or financing of health and care research.

## 6. Details of the Policy

### 6.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Coventry City Council is committed to making a difference to the lives of the people of Coventry by improving equality of access to our services; of inclusion and respect for people from different backgrounds, including those with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marital and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation), challenging inequality, harassment, discrimination and racism; ensuring that our employment opportunities are fair and transparent, in order for our workforce to be more representative of our city.

In accordance with Coventry City Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commitment and NIHR HDRC Coventry's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement, the collaboration values equality, inclusion and diversity at the centre of its work, so that inequalities are reduced and not worsened. This includes the research delivered, the people who take part and the researchers they support.

### 6.2 Conflicts of Interest

For the purpose of this policy, a conflict of interest is when an individual's judgement or action(s) are or could be impaired or influenced by their involvement in another role or relationship. Conflicts may occur if individuals have, for example:

- A direct or indirect financial interest
- Non-financial or personal interests
- Competing loyalties between an organisation they owe a primary duty to or some other person or entity, or both.

Conflicts of interests can be categorised as the following:

Potential – a private, personal or commercial interest of an individual that can cause the potential for an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Actual – a private, personal or commercial interest that could influence the impartial performance of an Officer's duties/activities.

Perceived – a private, personal or commercial interest that could be perceived by a third party to influence the impartial performance of an Officer's duties/activities.

All staff involved in research are required to declare any conflicts of interest which will be logged by the HDRC Research Governance Team. Where applicable, financial interests must be declared to the City Solicitor and non-financial or personal interests must be declared to the Officer's Assistant Director in line with the Code of Conduct for employees.

6.3 **Planning Research**

It is essential that existing sources of evidence are considered before planning a research project. This may include e.g. peer reviewed research evidence, research and evaluations in grey literature, other intelligence relating to "public, employees of the Council or its contracted organisations". Research should never duplicate other work unnecessarily.

Research projects should have a coherent aim, demonstrate a clear link to strategy, policy, or practice, contribute to existing knowledge and ensure that all groups in society are appropriately represented.

Proposed research should be discussed with and approved by appropriate Council departmental leads before an application is submitted for research governance approval; this may be the lead researcher's line manager if the lead researcher is a Council employee.

In accordance with the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitment[3], research should be inclusive to ensure that results can be generalised to a broad population. Engagement with underserved groups who might not routinely take part in research, but who will be affected by the outcome of the research should be considered

at the research design stage. The definition of 'underserved' is often context and research specific but may be determined by demographic factors (e.g. age, sexual orientation, education, ethnicity) and/or social and economic factors (e.g. employment status, carers, digital exclusion, visually impaired)[2]. There should be a clear rationale for research study participation. Groups should not be excluded because of practical challenges with engagement and recruitment when these are viable within the resources available.

Those involved in research must be aware of their legal and ethical duties and should have appropriate arrangements for obtaining informed consent. All research participants must be provided with a copy of the Participant Information Sheet and Consent form. Particular care is required when obtaining consent from children and vulnerable individuals. Where appropriate, consent should be obtained from those who have a legal authority to provide consent, such as parents, guardians and legal representatives.

Researchers must also be aware of their legal and ethical responsibilities with regard to the processing of personal information. Arrangements must be in place for the collection, storage, sharing and deletion of personal data in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.

### 6.4 Public Involvement

Public Involvement is an active partnership where the public are involved in shaping the prioritisation, design, application for funding and approval (as co-applicant), conduct, dissemination, and use of research. Public involvement will help ensure that the public rightly have a voice in research that may affect them and their communities. Involvement will also help research to be meaningful, relevant, and impactful, and should provide positive experiences and outcomes for the public involved.

Members of the public should be actively involved in the research process as early as possible, so that they are able to influence and inform the research priorities and the design of the research.

It is the responsibility of researchers to involve the public in the research process, ensuring that the public involved represent the wider population who will be affected by the research, including but not limited to, people of different ethnic backgrounds, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, race, religion, and socio-economic status.

Public Involvement in research should be conducted in line with the NIHR HDRC Coventry Guiding Principles for Public Involvement[4].

### 6.5 Approvals

Before any research is carried out within the Council, the lead researcher must have obtained the necessary approvals, this will include HDRC research governance approval and may include other relevant approvals (e.g. University Research Ethics Committee (REC) approval, NHS REC approval), which will be dependent on the type of research being undertaken.

### 6.5.1 HDRC Research Governance Application

All research project applications, including data requests for research, should be submitted for review via the HDRC Research Governance portal as a matter of priority.

As part of the application process, the lead researcher will confirm that the project falls within the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research definition of research by using the Health Research Authority (HRA) decision making tool at www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk/research/.

**All research projects within the scope of the NIHR Coventry HDRC must have HDRC research governance approval prior to commencing.** Refer to section 3.4 for projects which are not within the scope of this policy. Approval may also be required for other, non-research activities involving human participants (e.g. internal service evaluations where the findings will be presented externally).

The HDRC Research Governance Officers will triage applications within 10 working days to determine the type of review required (e.g. proportionate or full review) and whether additional approvals (e.g. University REC, NHS REC/HRA) are in place. If additional approvals are required, the HDRC Research Governance Officers will advise the lead researcher.

Research governance review processes are risk-based, and research projects will be categorised into one of three levels of risk - 1) Low, 2) Medium or 3) High:

1) **Low risk** - Typically secondary research, e.g. literature-based reviews, systematic reviews, collection and analysis of published data, and research which does not involve collecting data from human participants (e.g. housing insulation, energy efficiency data from direct measurements)
2) **Medium risk** - Typically primary research, e.g. working with/collecting data from human participants. Critical and service evaluations. Secondary data applications can also flag as medium risk.
3) **High risk** - Typically research that could harm participants and/or researchers physically or psychologically, undertaking research on sensitive topics that could cause distress or submitting for additional ethical approval externally e.g. IRAS/ NHS REC. Research that could harm organisations, including reputation and/or financial.

Feedback on applications will be provided by the HDRC Research Governance Officers to the lead researcher within 10 working days. This may be that the application is approved, approved with conditions, or not approved.

6.6 **Sponsorship**

All research relating to the wider determinants of health and hosted by the Council requires a 'Sponsor' who takes responsibility for the initiation, management and/or financing of the research. The Sponsor may be the organisation coordinating the study or the substantive employer of the lead researcher. It is not acceptable for an individual researcher to be a Sponsor.

It is the responsibility of the lead researcher to identify a Sponsor.

The Council can act as the Sponsor for most research undertaken by Council employees. For researchers from external organisations and student research projects, the Sponsor should be identified prior to a Council research governance application being submitted.

For those research projects which require the Council to act as Sponsor, this should be requested as part of the research governance application process.

**6.6.1 Insurance**

Researchers should ensure that appropriate insurance is in place for their project within their organisation by liaising with their insurance lead officers.

An appropriate level and type of insurance must be in place for each research project involving human participants to provide cover in the event of an individual coming to harm, as a result of the research. It should be noted that it is likely that the limit of indemnity will be "in the aggregate". This means that it should be sufficient to cover all claims that may be received against the policy in any one year.

The insurance will only provide an indemnity to the policyholder, so it is important that the policy is taken out by the correct organisation. The policy may need to be in the name of Coventry City Council or an external organisation. This will be determined by which organisation is sponsoring (if applicable) the research, which organisation is the main employer of the researcher, or if the research is being undertaken as part of an academic qualification.

Consideration must be given to whether insurance cover needs to be continued after the project has come to an end. This is because medical malpractice insurance is on a "claims made basis". The effect of this is that the policy which responds to a claim is the one in place at the point in time that the claim is made, not the one in place at the time of the incident which caused the injury. Adults can make a claim up to three years after they have suffered harm and a child to the age of 21.

Insurance provision will be reviewed as part of the HDRC Research Governance Approval process and where necessary, will be referred to the Council's Insurance Manager.

## 6.7 Informed Consent

Informed consent is one of the founding principles of research ethics and involves providing sufficient and appropriate information about the research to allow participants to make a meaningful choice about whether or not to take part, ensuring there is no coercion (either explicit or implicit) for them to participate.

There must be appropriate arrangements in place to obtain informed consent from research participants, unless there are sound legal or ethically approved reasons not to obtain informed consent. Where informed consent is not to be recorded or explicitly secured, a full statement justifying this approach should be submitted as part of the research governance review.

Information about the research should be provided in an accessible format aimed at the intended audience, usually in written form to ensure participants can access the information later.

Research should not normally proceed until participants have given their consent and this has been recorded. Typically, this can be done by asking participants to sign an informed consent form but in some cases, it may be more appropriate to use alternative approaches to record consent.

The informed consent process and any related documentation (e.g. Informed Consent Form, Participant Information Sheet) will be reviewed as part of the research governance application process.

## 6.8 Data

### 6.8.1 Collection and Security of Participant Data in Research

All researchers have the responsibility to ensure appropriate information security standards are fully met. This applies to core systems and peripheral components used to collect or process data including all portable devices, removable media such as CD, USB sticks etc. and physical security and includes by means of internet, surface mail and electronic mail that may be used to share data.

Data should be collected, processed, and stored in compliance with the approved protocol and in adherence with the relevant Data Protection Regulations and the

Council's Data Protection Policy, Data Handling Policy, Processing of Special Category Data Policy and Information Security Management Policy.

### 6.8.2 Data Sharing

The sharing of data is an essential part of working in a collaborative research environment. To share data, there must be safeguards in place to control the context in which data are shared to ensure:

- The security of the data, including its intellectual property.
- The maintenance of participant anonymity (unless appropriate approvals have been sought to use identifiable data).
- Successful transfer (sending and receipt) of data.
- Correct use of the data.
- Appropriate storage, retention, and destruction of data.

Researchers must adhere to the Council's Data Sharing Policy.

Data sharing requests for research purposes should be submitted for review via the HDRC Research Governance portal (include website) for approval via the HDRC research governance application process.

Data/Information Sharing Agreements should be completed when setting up 'on-going' or 'routine' information sharing arrangements with third parties, including for research purposes. However, they are not needed when information is shared in one-off circumstances but a record of the decision and the reasons for sharing information should be kept.

All Data/Information Sharing Agreements should be signed off by the Council's Data Protection Officer and a register of all Information Sharing Agreements maintained.

### 6.8.3 Data Protection Impact Assessment

Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is a process to help identify and minimise the data protection risks of a project. The Council DPIA Guidance should be followed for research related DPIAs.

A DPIA should be completed for processing that is likely to result in a high risk to individuals. This includes some specified types of processing. The Council DPIA Screening Questionnaire should be completed to confirm if/when a DPIA is required.
The DPIA must describe the nature, scope, context and purposes of the processing, assess necessity, proportionality and compliance measures, identify and assess risks to individuals; and identify any additional measures to mitigate those risks.

If a DPIA is deemed necessary, this must be completed and submitted with the research governance application.

The DPIA must be approved by the Data Protection Officer/Team and relevant Information Asset Owner prior to commencing processing of data.

## 6.9 Research Conduct

### 6.9.1 Monitoring and Reporting

Research studies will be subject to monitoring by the HDRC Research Governance Officers, either as part of a planned programme of monitoring or triggered monitoring, to ensure the integrity of the research and protection of participants and their data.

Research studies led by the Council may be subject to an independent audit by the Chief Internal Auditor to provide independent assurance that the study complies with the requirements as set out in the Research Governance Policy. In these circumstances, the researcher must cooperate with any investigation and provide access to all information in connection with the research project.

Researchers will be required to submit reports at the frequency requested by the HDRC Research Governance Officers when the research or amendment is approved. The HDRC Research Governance Officers must be notified that the research project has ended and a final report, detailing the outcome of the research, must be submitted to the HDRC within 12 months of the project completing.

These reports may be shared and scrutinised with the HDRC Management, Executive or Independent Steering Committees.

### 6.9.2 Research Amendments

Amendments are changes made to a research study after approval has been given through the research governance process.

An amendment to a research study can be categorised either as substantial or non-substantial. Examples can be found on the HRA website.

All amendments should be agreed with the Sponsor. Once agreed, the researcher must notify the HDRC Research Governance Officers of amendments to the approved research project via the HDRC Research Governance portal.

Amendments will be triaged by the HDRC Research Governance Officers within 10 working days to determine the type of review required (e.g. proportionate or full review) and whether the necessary additional approvals are in place for the amendment (e.g. external REC/HRA). If additional approvals are required, the HDRC Research Governance Officers will advise the lead researcher. The risk of the study may be recategorised as a result of the review.

Feedback on amendments will be provided by the HDRC Research Governance Officers to the lead researcher within 10 working days. This may be that the amendment is approved or not approved.

### 6.9.3 Research Misconduct and Fraud

Research misconduct and fraud includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Piracy (the deliberate exploitation of ideas or work of others without acknowledgement)
- Fabrication
- Falsification
- Fraud (including the invention of data, misuse of research funds or research equipment)
- Wilful destruction of research materials
- Plagiarism (the copying of ideas, data or text, or any combinations of the three, without permission or acknowledgement)
- Deception in proposing, carrying out or reporting the results of research
- Deliberate or negligent deviations from accepted practice in carrying out research
- Not obtaining informed consent where required from research subjects
- Deliberate or negligent protocol violations
- Deliberate inappropriate omission of data that do not fit expected results.
- Publication of data known to be false or misleading.
- Unauthorised use of information which was acquired confidentially.
- Failure to obtain appropriate approval to conduct research.
- Failure to work in a way which adequately controls risks.
- Deliberate maligning of a scientist's research reputation based on false information.
- Colluding in, or concealing, the misconduct of others.

Misconduct also includes failure to follow any protocols contained in any ethical consent that has been given for the research and/or any protocols set out in the guidelines of appropriate recognised professional, academic, scientific, and governmental bodies and/or procedures that avoid unreasonable risk or harm to humans, other living organisms or the environment.

Misconduct in research does not include honest and reasonable error, or honest and reasonable differences in interpretation or in judgement in evaluating research methods or results, or misconduct (including gross misconduct) unrelated to research activity. All research misconduct will be managed in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Policy.

If research misconduct or fraud is suspected all employees of the Council, the HDRC and external research collaborators have a responsibility to report any incident of fraud or misconduct, whether this has been witnessed or for which there are reasonable grounds for suspicion. Suspicion of fraud or financial irregularities should be reported

promptly to the Council's Chief Internal Auditor and the HDRC Research Governance Officers.

Suspicion of research misconduct that does not involve fraud should be reported to the HDRC Research Governance Officers.

## 6.10 Dissemination of Research Results

Researchers have a duty to the research community and to members of the public to ensure that their results are appropriately published and disseminated as widely as possible.

6.10.1 Knowledge mobilisation and implementation

When developing a research proposal, researchers should plan how to share any knowledge gained from the research project and how to effectively share it in a way that can bring about impact and change, and drive the mobilisation of findings to inform decision making. Knowledge mobilisation strategies should be integrated throughout the research programme, involving and engaging the public in plans. The researcher should identify and plan who would be the most appropriate person to share any research findings, how best to communicate such findings to mobilise knowledge. This could be Council colleagues, head of service and external organisations.

Further information and advice can be sought from the HDRC's Public Engagement Officer.

### 6.10.2 Publication

It is acknowledged that publications generated by the Council will cover a broad spectrum of work, therefore a 'one size fits all' strategy for publication will not meet the requirements for all types of research, although the following principles apply:

- Researchers should strive to maximise the visibility of their work.
- All research should be published in high quality peer review journals wherever appropriate.
- The cost of publication fees should be considered during the planning stage of the research.
- Original articles take priority over reviews, commentaries, book chapters and editorials.
- Protocol funder requirements and any contractual arrangements with third parties must be adhered to prior to dissemination of any results; this is the Lead Researchers responsibility.
- It is good practice that all results are made publicly available within 12 months of project completion.
- It is the Lead Researcher's responsibility to include any publication fees in grant applications to ensure that funds are available to publish.

- The format of authorship must be agreed upon before a project commences and must be documented to avoid potential conflicts later.
- All collaborators must be provided with an opportunity to comment on the manuscript and be appropriately acknowledged in any publications.
- Research participants should have the opportunity to receive a copy of results. It is the responsibility of the Lead Researcher to ensure that a suitable report is prepared and disseminated.
- Prior to any publication, consent should be sought from Coventry City Council and the NIHR at least 30 days in advance of submission for publication.
- All publications shall acknowledge the funding made available for Coventry HDRC by the NIHR. For guidance on the wording of acknowledgements relating to the funding connected to the NIHR HDRC award, please visit this link.

**6.10.3 Affiliation**

Affiliation should be detailed as 'Coventry City Council' for employees whose substantive employer is the Council.

**6.10.4 Acknowledgements**

Researchers, partners and other individuals and organisations who use the HDRC should include acknowledgement of that support in the acknowledgements section of any publication or output, for example:

**Acknowledgement and disclaimer:**

*'This independent research funded by [name of funder] and carried out at the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) Coventry. The views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the [name of funder], the NIHR [if not the funder], the Department of Health and Social Care or Coventry City Council.'*

**Acknowledgement only (for use within broader set of acknowledgements / disclaimers):**

*'The research was carried out at the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) Coventry.'*

The NIHR have comprehensive guidance[3] for acknowledging their funding/support of research which should be followed where applicable.

**6.10.5 Notification of Research Output**

All Council staff are required (subject to any publisher restrictions) to deposit details of any research outputs, including peer reviewed abstracts, journal articles, oral presentations and book chapters, on to the HDRC Publication Database by sending to coventryhdrc@coventry.gov.uk within 28 days of publication.

Outputs for research will be shared with the NIHR via NIHR HDRC Coventry.

Researchers should notify funders of any research outputs where applicable and required in contracts.

**6.10.6 Wider Dissemination**

If the results of any projects are considered to be of wider public interest, then the HDRC and Council Communications Team must be consulted prior to any communications with outside media.

## 6.11 Finance

NIHR Coventry HDRC should be involved in grant applications for research projects to ensure appropriate funding is included for the HDRC and Council. All grant applications should have due regard to the Council's Financial Procedure Rules as set out in Part 3F of the Constitution.

All bids require some form of financial approval so ensure that you have spoken to Finance early in the planning stages with regard to directly and indirectly incurred staff costs (for example, consumables, travel costs and recruitment), support service and estates costs**.**

Before submitting a bid for research grant funding, officers must ensure the requirements for grant bids (Rule 2.3, Part 3F Financial Procedure Rules) are met. Where the submission of the bid requires that it must be matched funded, joint approval in writing by the relevant Director and the Director of Finance and Resources or Head of Finance, upon delegation, must be given in writing and following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member. Where there is no requirement for the submission of the bid to be match funded, approval by the relevant Director and Finance Manager or their nominee, must be given in writing and following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member.

Approval must also be sought prior to the acceptance of any resulting grant income (Rule 2.3.2, Part 3F Financial Procedure Rules) and prior to any grant expenditure (Rule 2.3.4, Part 3F Financial Procedure Rules).

For research that requires resources to be provided, Council approval should be obtained in accordance with the Constitution.

Officers should contact the Council's Corporate Capital Finance Team for any assistance or advice.

## 6.12 Contracts

The Council aims to conduct research in collaboration with other organisations. The duties and responsibilities of all external bodies involved in research carried out by the

Council will be defined in clear written contracts, which include the service parameters, monitoring of the agreement and contract negotiation and renewal where appropriate.

Every contract made by the Council, including those for research, should comply with the Contracts Procedure Rules set out in the Council Constitution[6].

Contracts for works, goods and services related to research studies should be reviewed and signed by the relevant team lead.

Researchers must not contract with external organisations or sign contracts on behalf of the Council.

6.13 **Training**

Training requirements will vary between projects. Researchers and others involved in managing and conducting research should be appropriately qualified by education, training, and experience, or otherwise competent under the supervision of a suitably qualified person, to perform their tasks.

## 7. References


1. UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care (2023) https://www.hra.nhs.uk/planning-and-improving-research/policies-standards-legislation/uk-policy-framework-health-social-care-research/
2. NIHR Include Guidance - https://sites.google.com/nihr.ac.uk/include/home/guidance
3. Equality, diversity and inclusion commitment – Coventry City Council
4. NIHR HDRC Coventry The Guiding Principles for Public Involvement
5. NIHR Research Outputs and Publication Guidance - https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/nihr-research-outputs-and-publications-guidance/12250
6. Coventry City Council Constitution
7. One Coventry Plan
8. Whistleblowing Policy


## 8. Appendix

1. Coventry HDRC Research Governance Process Flowchart
2. Flowchart to assist applicants when deciding whether Coventry HDRC's research governance process applies to their project
3. Research governance application form guidance

The signatories to this agreement are listed below

## Document Control:

### Version History

| Version | Status | Date | Author | Summary of Changes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Final approved version | 10th March 2025 | Sue Frossell | |
| | | | | |

### Reviewers

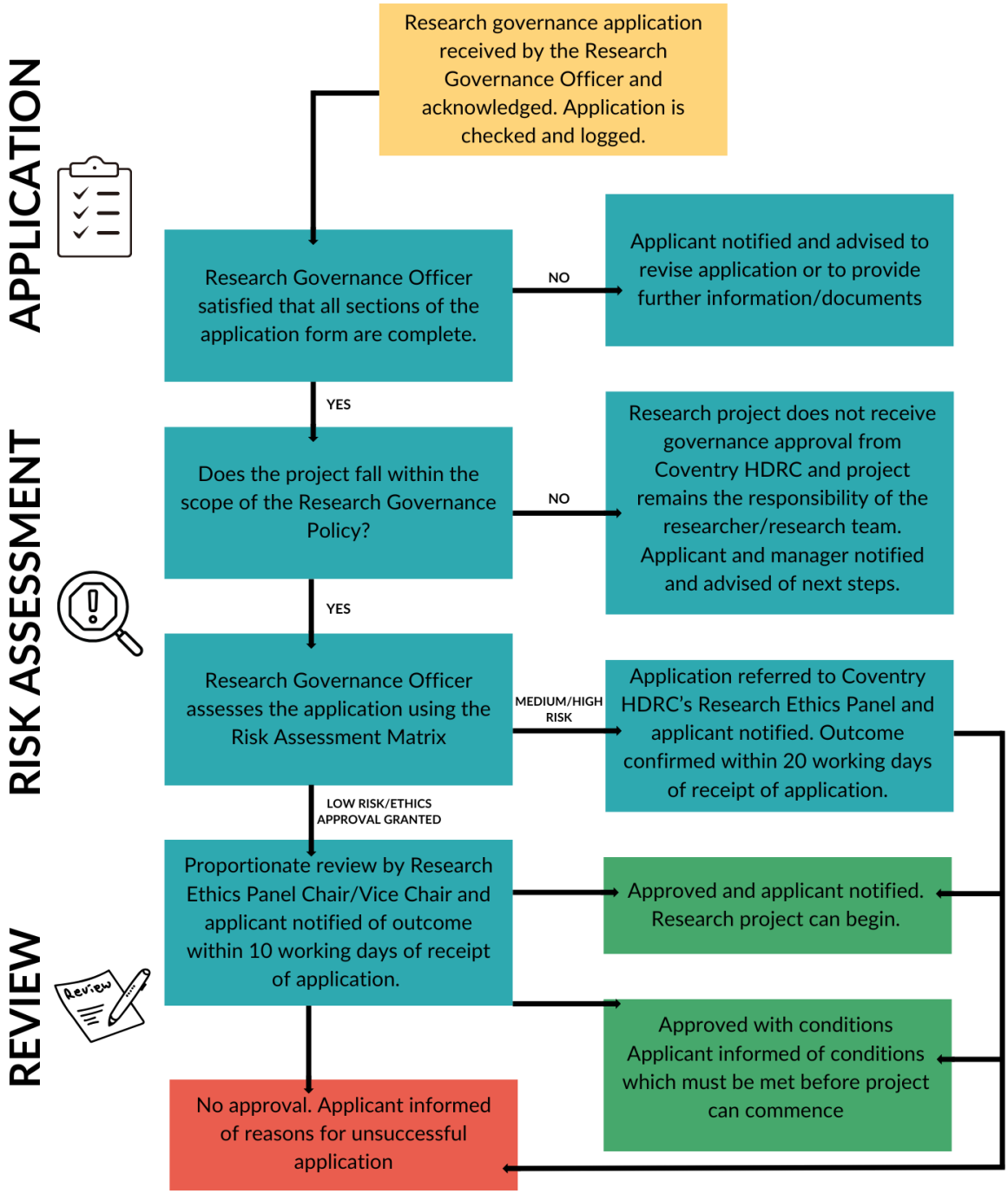
| Name | Role | Business Area |
|---|---|---|
| | | |

**Appendix 1**

Coventry HDRC Research Governance Process Flowchart

Coventry City Council

# COVENTRY HDRC RESEARCH GOVERNANCE PROCESS

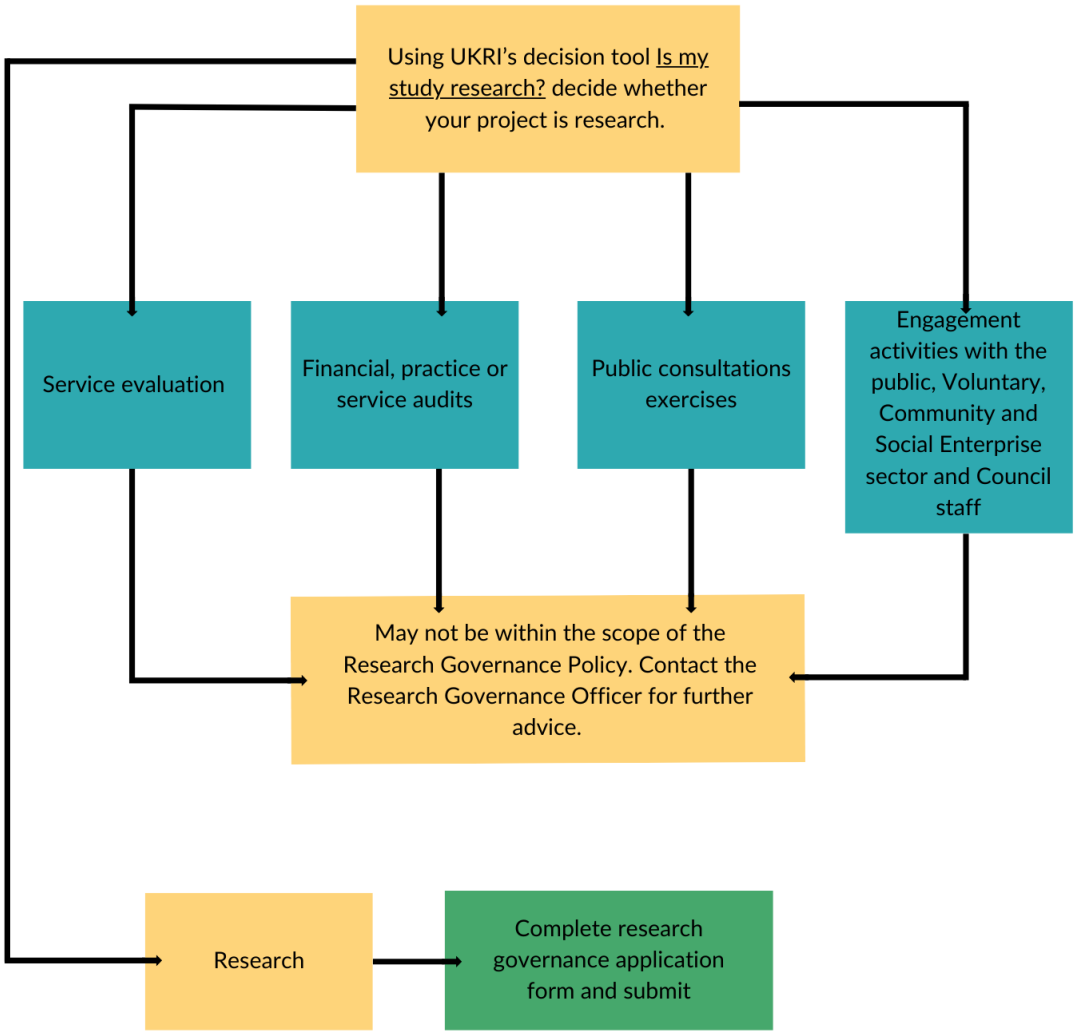


Coventry City Council

**Appendix 2**

Flowchart to assist applicants when deciding whether Coventry HDRC's research governance process applies to their project

**Please use this flowchart to decide whether or not Coventry HDRC's research governance process applies to your project.**




**Appendix 3**

Coventry City Council

NIHR | Health Determinants Research Collaboration Coventry

Research Governance Application Form Guidance

This guide will help you complete the Coventry HDRC Research Governance application form. Please read it fully before completing the form. It provides useful questions and pointers to consider when completing the application form.

The application form should normally be completed by the main researcher. Answering the questions on the form in the most detailed and comprehensive way as possible will allow us to fully assess your application. Any applications that are not fully completed will be sent back to the researcher.

If you require a paper version of the application form, please contact the Research Governance Officer CoventryHDRC@coventry.gov.uk

Before you begin, please ensure you have read the Research Governance Policy. The policy and the research governance process will only apply to projects that focus on the wider determinants of health.

**What information will I need to provide?**

When you begin the application, you will be asked to create a profile. Once this has been done, you will be able to save your progress and return to your application at any time. Once it has been submitted, please contact the Research Governance Officer at CoventryHDRC@coventry.gov.uk if you have any amendments.

To complete this form, you will need to provide the following information:

- Aims/objectives of the project
- Details of those involved in the project
- Details of your line manager/supervisor
- Details of a sponsor
- Details of any ethics approvals
- Costs and details of any funding

It would also be helpful if the following documents can be submitted along with your application:

- Consent form
- Participant information sheet
- Questionnaire
- Privacy notice
- Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)
- DBS certificate (if required)

Recruitment documents help people make informed decisions about whether to participate in a research study. Template recruitment documents are available on Coventry HDRC's website for you to download and use.

Once you have submitted your application, you will not be able to make further changes.

1. Project type

- Have you used the Medical Research Council and NHS Health Research Authority decision tool **https://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk/research/** to check whether your project is research?

2. Research project title

- Please provide the title of your research project.

3. Researcher details

- Please provide information about all relevant parties involved in the project. If they are not yet known, this information will need to be provided before the project can start.
- If the project is being carried out as part of a formal university qualification, you will need to include this information in this section.
- If an academic institution is involved in the project, please include this information.
- Please add details of any previous research experience, including where you have undertaken or led research projects.

4. Is your project within scope?

- All projects that investigate issues concerning the wider determinants of health will be subject to Coventry HDRC's review and approvals process.
- Anything that falls outside of this scope will be recorded by Coventry HDRC, but the project will not be subject to Coventry HDRC's review and approvals process.
- Responsibility for the project will remain with the researcher/research team.

5. DBS check

If your project involves work with children under the age of 16 or work with vulnerable groups, all researchers in the team will need to provide a current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and to provide a copy of the certificate with their application.

6. Conflict of interests

- If anyone involved in the research project, including the researcher, the research team or collaborators, have any direct personal involvement (e.g financial, shareholding, personal relationships, etc) in Coventry City Council or if a possible conflict of interest is likely to arise, please include details in the relevant section. You may wish to refer to the Research Governance Policy and the Council's Constitution for further information about conflict of interests.

7. Sponsor details

It is the researcher's responsibility to identify a project sponsor. A sponsor is usually the organisation which employs the main researcher or the funding organisation.

- The Research Sponsor will ensure:

- Researchers are supported and held to account for the professional conduct of research
- Proposed research is worthwhile and offers value for money
- Responsibilities of the organisations and individuals involved are clearly defined and agreed, and that the contracts are signed where required
- Progress of the research project is monitored
- Appropriate insurance or indemnity arrangements are in place

For internal applicants, a sponsor could be the researcher's Line or Service manager.

8. Resourcing and funding details

- If you require any resources to be provided by the Council, please include it in this section.
- Please include the estimated cost of the research project, which should include the costs of preparation, conducting, analysing and communicating your findings. Details of any funding attached to the project, including the name of the funder and the amount, should also be included.

9. Ethics approval

- If your project has received external ethics approval, please include details here, including the name of the relevant ethics committee and a copy of the approval.

11. Research project details

- In this section, you can either answer the questions or complete the research protocol template and upload it.

**Planned start and date of research**

- The start date should be at least 3 weeks from the date you submit your application.

**Background/aims and objectives**

- Please provide as much information as possible, including details of the project, what you are planning to do and find out, how your research will add knowledge to this area, and why you are carrying out this piece of research.

**Research methods**

- Give details of the research methods
- Is the research qualitative (statistical), quantitative (seeking experiences or views, evaluating quality) or mixed methods?
- What type of data will you be collecting and how will you collect it?
- Will you be using audio or video recording equipment?

**Participants**

- Who will your research target?
- How did you decide on your sample size and how will participants be selected?
- How will you recruit participants?
- Where will participants be recruited from?
- How will you ensure participants have given their informed consent? Please provide copies of your Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form. Templates are available on Coventry HDRC's website and any questions should be directed the Research Governance Officer CoventryHDRC@coventry.gov.uk
- How will you ensure participants are aware of their right to withdraw their consent to participate or their consent to the processing of personal data?
- Are you satisfied that all participants have capacity to make their own decisions and understand the risks?
- Details of the complaints procedure must be given to participants.
- Where will the research take place? Have you given consideration to issues of sensitivity or privacy?
    - Steps you have taken to consider equality and diversity issues in your research plan.
- You will need to provide participants with a privacy notice. Templates are available on Coventry HDRC's website. Questions should be referred to either your own organisation's data protection team or if you are an internal applicant, please contact dpoteam@coventry.gov.uk

**Data protection**

- Give details of how personal data will be collected, managed and stored.
- Explain who will have overall control of the data collected – who is the Data Controller/Data Processor?
- Give details of how you will ensure personal data is collected, stored and/or transferred securely at all times throughout the research project.
- Give details of how and when data will be destroyed following completion of the research project. Please note, researchers will need to follow the Council's retention periods.
- Explain how you have considered and will address consent for the preservation and potential sharing and reuse of data, where applicable.
- You will need to complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment and an approved copy must be submitted along with your application. A template is available on Coventry HDRC's website. Internal applicants should contact dpoteam@coventry.gov.uk with any questions and external applicants should contact their organisation's own DPO team.

**Feedback**

- Include details of how you will feedback your findings to the participants.
- Give details of how you will share your research findings, particularly who or which department it will be shared with and how you will ensure that it is shared with the individuals/teams or organisations that are ideally placed to effect change.
- Consider how your research project will create impact.
- If you are intending to publish your work, a copy must be provided to the Council.

**Glossary of terms**

| Term | Explanation |
|---|---|
| Research Governance Officer | The Council Officer who is the main point of contact for all research governance applications. |
| Public Involvement Officer | The Council Officer who is the main point of contact for matters relating to public involvement and engagement. |
| Research Ethics Committee | A committee made up of multidisciplinary professionals both within and outside of the Council and lay members, responsible for reviewing research projects, with the purpose of ensuring the rights, safety, dignity, and wellbeing of research participants are protected. Further information about the composition and role of the Research Ethics Committee can be found in the Terms of Reference. |
| Personal data | Any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'); an identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person. (definitions taken from latest legislation*) |