



National Network of Parent Carer Forums

'Our Strength Is Our Shared Experience'

## Conference Motions

As we approach the end of the implementation period for the Children and Families Act, the NNPCF steering group has been reviewing its strategy for the next 2-3 years in conjunction with member parent carer forums and our major stakeholders. In a series of workshops between March and July we have looked at our vision and mission as an organisation; our objectives and our priorities; and how we manage the work that we do. It is essential that we coproduce our strategy with our membership and have sought to do this through regional meetings, a targeted survey, reviewing the aims and objectives of member forums, your feedback at conference and through SEND reform implementation surveys.

Regional steering group members have been keeping you up to date on this work and been feeding back your thoughts throughout the process and on September 14<sup>th</sup> and October 18<sup>th</sup> we held two webinars to share our proposals. It is vital that as well as participating in every stage of the development of the strategy, that our membership has the final say on it and so prior to our conference and AGM on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of November we are asking our member forums to vote on our strategy for the next 2-3 years.

Each forum has one vote and voting is open between October 18<sup>th</sup> and November 18<sup>th</sup>.

The NNPCF steering group recommends the adoption of the following motions:

1. Does your parent carer forum approve the adoption of the following wording as the new vision and mission for the NNPCF?

*The National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) is the independent national voice of parent carer forums.*

*Our mission is to deliver better outcomes for families living with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We aim to:*

- *create a culture of participation and co-production across the education, health, social care and the voluntary sectors. This means that we are involved in all aspects of designing, commissioning, delivering and reviewing services as an equal partner.*
- *empower our members to ensure that their voices are heard at a local, regional and national level*
- *inspire our partners by sharing good practice and knowledge.*

*Our vision is for the best possible opportunities and futures for all children and young people with SEND and their families*

2. Does your parent carer forum agree that the NNPCF should set up a new Community Interest Company (CIC)?
3. Does your parent carer forum agree the NNPCF should transfer its operations to the new CIC?
4. Does your parent carer forum authorise the NNPCF Steering Group to set up a CIC?
5. Does your parent carer forum authorise the NNPCF Steering Group to transfer operations of the NNPCF to the new CIC?

## NNPCF strategy Frequently Asked Questions

### Vision, mission, objectives and priorities (conference motion 1)

*What is a “vision and mission”?*

- It tells us what we do; how we do it; who we do it for; and why we do it.

*What is a set of “objectives and priorities?”*

- This describes what we are going to change to make our vision and mission happen.
- So, this is the translation of our vision and mission into real, tangible goals
- In turn, we can translate these into specific pieces of work that the NNPCF does.

*Why do we need to review our vision, mission, objectives and priorities?*

- Feedback from our members and our stakeholders have told us that they want the NNPCF to have a sharper focus – we need to be able to explain more clearly the work we do and why we are doing it.
- The implementation phase of the Children and Families Act has dominated our work since September 2014 (and before). With the end of this phase in April 2018 we felt this was a good time to review our relevance.

*How did we do this?*

- We started with what our members have been telling us about the NNPCF and we also asked some specific questions in some surveys (for details, see the next question).
- The NNPCF steering group held a two-day workshop in March at which we drafted some initial language and ways of working.
- These drafts were shared with our members who gave us some excellent feedback and we have made some significant changes to reflect this.

### *How was it co-produced?*

#### Vision and Mission

- We asked all of our members to participate in a survey of what words were most important to them about the parent carer forum movement. Over 50 forums responded to the survey and we used the words that you said were most important to you in our vision and mission.
- We collated the governance documents from a sample of over 50 of our member forums and performed an analysis on what you said your visions, missions and aims are. We reflected these words in our vision and mission.
- Steering group members talked to members in their region about what was most important to them.

#### Objectives and Priorities

- We took the feedback you gave us at the 2016 conference and analysed it to understand what your burning issues and priorities were.
- We looked at the data that came from the last two SEND surveys to analyse the key messages that these were giving us.
- We compiled all of the feedback from our regional meetings to see which issues were coming up most often across the country.
- Whilst there are other issues that are not currently prioritised, we chose those that were raised with the greatest frequency and having the greatest impact.

### *Will the VMOP change?*

- A vision and mission should not change very often but it should be reviewed every few years or if something really significant changes
- We will review our priorities every year
- And, if something really big comes up that isn't on the list or something changes, we will, of course, respond to this.

### *What happens next?*

- The VMOP were presented in a webinar on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September. You can view this webinar here: <https://youtu.be/mwgkaGqXJ1A>

- If you would like more information, please contact your regional steering group representative or the NNPCF co-chairs.
- We will be asking you to vote on the vision and mission to formally adopt this before our conference in November.
- We are busy translating the Objectives and Priorities into a set of talking points (where we stand on each of our priorities); workstreams and a list of people we need to influence. We will co-produce the content of these talking points with you in workshops at our Conference in November.

## Our organisation structure

### *What is our current organisation structure?*

- At the moment, the NNPCF is a “constituted group”. This means that we have a constitution that governs what can and cannot do and sets out how we make decisions.
- This means that the NNPCF is not a separate “legal entity”. A legal entity is an organisation that exists in the eyes of the law and can enter into legal and contractual arrangements.
- Therefore, the NNPCF is dependent upon Contact (previously Contact A Family) as the contract holder from the Department for Education and our host charity for all of our legal undertakings.

### *Do we want to be an independent organisation?*

The NNPCF steering group recommends that we become an independent organisation.

- One of the most important things about the NNPCF is our independence – we are the independent voice of Parent Carer Forums. We feel our legal structure should reflect this.
- Being an independent organisation would give us more control about who we do business with and how we do business with them. Currently, we are part of a contract awarded by the DfE and legally we have little control over who runs that contract and how they chose to do it.

- In all likelihood, members of the NNPCF steering group will need to become employees of the NNPCF to comply with HMRC rules. The NNPCF will need to be a separate legal entity in order for us to do this.
- Finally, we think it's time we grew up! Many of our member forums have been through this evolution to set up as a separate legal entity and the NNPCF is no different.

### *Does this mean we've fallen out with Contact (previously Contact A Family)?*

- No. Quite the opposite. The parent participation movement and the NNPCF have grown in size, confidence and capability with the guidance and support of Contact. We are incredibly grateful to everything that Contact has done for the NNPCF. We just think that this is the next stage in our development.
- To use the analogy of a family - we think of this as taking the next steps towards a child growing up and leaving. It is not a divorce!

### *What are the down sides of being independent?*

- There is an extra administrative burden to being independent. Currently, Contact provide us with much of our administrative support such as bank accounts, accounting, HR and audit. We would have to manage and pay for this ourselves.
- There is a risk that the extra effort of being independent will distract the NNPCF from our core purpose – being the voice of parent carer forums and working to improve the lives of our children.
- The NNPCF steering group are aware of these risks and feel confident that we can manage them. On balance, we believe that the benefits of being independent outweigh any risks.

### *What does being independent mean?*

- We will need to set up our own legal entity. There are two types of legal entity that we have considered, a Community Interest Company (CIC) or a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
- We recommend that we set up a CIC.

### *What is the difference between a CIO and a CIC?*

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation is:

- A charity that is governed by the Charity Act and is regulated by the charity commission.
- It has limited liability.
- It must deliver a charitable purpose and there are constraints on certain activities most notably campaigning and lobbying.
- It is run by trustees who cannot be paid for their work as trustees.
- It can access charitable funding and there are some tax benefits

A Community Interest Company is:

- A company that is governed by the Companies Act and is regulated by Companies House.
- It has limited liability.
- It must pass a community interest test which means that it cannot operate for financial advantage, the benefit of employees or political purposes.
- It is run by directors who can be paid for their work as directors.
- It can access different sources of funding such as issuing share capital.

### *Why do we think that being a CIC is the right answer for the NNPCF?*

The main benefit of being a CIC is that it has a simpler and easier governance structure than a charity.

- We think it is important that the NNPCF is run by parents and carers who are chosen from the regions. This means the people who are running the NNPCF to have a direct link to a region, to our member forums and to our individual members. This means they stay connected to the everyday lives of our members and it means that our members can hold the NNPCF to account.
- A CIC allows us to retain our existing decision making model under which the regional steering group members run the organisation. As a CIC, regional steering group members would become the directors of the organisation.
- Under the charity model, we would have to adopt a more complicated decision making structure. We would either need to appoint a set of

independent trustees (which would risk breaking the link with our membership) or enter into more complicated arrangements for regional steering group members to be paid via their regions to enable them to serve as trustees. None of our regions are set up to be able to do this at present.

### *How do we do this?*

There are two steps in the process:

1. We need to set up a CIC. This will mean creating the governance documentation for a CIC and applying to Companies House.  
We need our membership to approve this step. This is what AGM motion number 2 does.
2. We will then need to transfer the activities and operations of the NNPCF into the new company. This will mean things like setting up a bank account and transferring some of the contracts that Contact holds to the NNPCF.  
Again, we need our membership to approve this step. This is what AGM motion number 3 does.

Both of these steps will require quite a lot of administrative work by the steering group. We would like the membership to authorise the steering group to do this work and delegate to them the authority to get on with it. This means that the steering group will not have to come back to the membership to make every decision throughout the process. We all understand that this would not be practical, take too long and cost too much.

This is what AGM motions 4 and 5 do.

### *How long will this take?*

We are in no rush. The Department for Education is currently in the process of re-issuing the contracts for strategic participation. The contracts will take effect in April 2018. We will not be in a position to bid for these contracts and we do not want to bid for these contracts for the foreseeable future. We are not ready to take this on yet.

We plan to work with whoever wins the parent carer strategic participation contract over the next 18 months to set up the NNPCF as an independent organisation. The DfE has indicated that they are supportive of our strategy and will be requiring the new contract holder to support our efforts.

### *What are the next steps?*

Our membership will have the final say on our strategy. We are holding a vote on four motions to seek your approval of this approach.

Voting is open between 18 October and 18<sup>th</sup> November. Voting will take place electronically and each parent carer forum will have one vote.

You can find the link here to vote here:

<https://fame.op-online.co.uk/q.asp?sid=461&k=jboehzwcfi>

We will announce the results at our AGM on the 27<sup>th</sup> of November.