

Voluntary Sector Forum - Norfolk

Terms of Reference

Purpose

Whilst recognising and valuing the expertise that each organisation brings to the Forum, it will provide a central point of contact for voluntary and community groups to participate in, influence developments of and impact on the strategic planning, design, delivery and commissioning of services for children and young people and their families in Norfolk, with particular reference to 'Every Child Matters' and the Children Act 2004.

Representation: To elect representatives onto appropriate partnerships to ensure that the views of the voluntary sector are included in key developments.

Information: using existing and new networks to ensure that all organisations both large and small are able to receive up to date information about key developments affecting those working with children and young people.

Consultation: providing a central resource to facilitate and undertake consultation with voluntary and community organisations and their service users.

Lobbying: to provide a means whereby the collective voice of the voluntary sector can help promote the work of the sector and influence all appropriate decision-makers.

Partnership: to improve partnership working between statutory and voluntary organisations, and within the voluntary sector, enabling a strategic approach to service planning, design, resourcing, commissioning and delivery and avoiding duplication of work.

Capacity building: to encourage best practice in working with children, young people and their families for voluntary and community organisations.

Membership

- Voluntary, community and self-help not-for-profit organisations that provide services to children and young people and their families in Norfolk.
- Voluntary Sector Infrastructure organisations that provide information and services to organisations working with children and young people

Ethos: all Forum members will be expected to work in a non-discriminatory, non-judgemental, inclusive and 'a-political' manner, respecting the views of other members at all times. The Forum reserves the right to request the withdrawal of the membership of any organisation that fails to work within this ethos or brings the Forum into disrepute.

Chair, Vice Chair: To be elected for a maximum period of three years, revisable annually by the membership in a clearly defined process for each role.

Secretariat: to be appointed by the members of the Forum and to be hosted by a voluntary sector agency or co-ordinating agency who will operate within an agreed term of reference and memorandum of understanding.

Over-Sight / Scrutiny of Secretariat Role

Chair and Vice Chair to hold quarterly meeting with host organisation NCC.

Definitions:

Voluntary, community and self-help organisations are 'self-governing bodies of people who have joined together voluntarily to take action for the benefit of the community and are established otherwise than for profit or for gain'. This excludes all statutory bodies and semi-independent offshoots of local authorities who will however be invited to Forum meetings as deemed appropriate by the membership but will not have voting status.