



Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums (ERPCF) Constitution

May 2021

The Constitution

Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums and its money will be administered and managed in accordance with the provisions in this constitution and underpinned by the seven Nolan Principles. Adoption of this constitution is of the date it is approved by the member forums. This constitution sets out the rules by which Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums will be governed. These are legally binding on the members.

The Name

The name of the group is Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums. It may also be known as ERPCF.

The Aims and Objectives

- We will promote a culture of participation and co-production across the education, health, social care and the voluntary sectors in the Eastern region. This means that we are involved in all aspects of designing, commissioning, delivering and reviewing services as an equal partner.
- We will enable mutual forum to forum support and development, share good practice and facilitate Regional information exchange in the East of England. We will not give advice to Forums; it is up to each individual forum how they make use of the information provided.
- We will enable appointed Regional Reps to provide representation at Regional Meetings including working with Governmental and Local Authority Regional Forums, groups and charities to improve the life outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and /or Disabilities (SEND), their parents, carers and their families by ensuring that parent carers have a voice. As the people who share the everyday lives, experiences, highs and lows of living with and supporting those with SEND, it is vital that the lived experience of parent carers across the East of England is captured and used by Reps to influence the decisions that affect families and to contribute to developing and improving services that meet the needs of our disabled children and young people.
- We will raise the profile and the needs of children and young people with SEND across our region, and across England through the NNPCF.

- The Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums will hold and administer ring fenced funds provided by and on behalf of the Peer Network, to recompense and reimburse parent carers who attend Peer Network events, as set out in the Peer Network recompense policy.

Powers

In furtherance of the aims and objectives the group may:

- Employ and remunerate staff.
- Raise funds by any lawful means except permanent trading.
- Accept gifts and donations for the group.
- Do anything else within the law and with due transparency which is necessary for the group to carry out their aims and objectives.

Application of the income

1. The Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums funds shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the aims and objectives.
2. Any member may be given reasonable and proper remuneration for any goods and/or services bought on behalf of or for the Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums.
3. Travel costs, material & speaker's costs and venue hire, may all be claimed from the funds, when they are for the furtherance of Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums aims.
4. Members should claim for monies due in accordance with the ERPCF Remuneration and Reimbursement Policy.
5. An online bank account will be opened and run by the bookkeeper. Cheques must be signed by any two of the three nominated signatories. Bank statements will be sent directly to the ERPCF Secretary for confirmation of online payments made.
6. Accurate accounts of all income and expenditure must be kept for presentation at each ERPCF Meeting.

Membership

1. Membership of the Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums comprises the 11 Parent Carer Forums in the NNPCF East of England region who are in receipt of the DfE Grant for parent participation for their Local / Unitary Authority.
2. These local Parent Carer Forums have automatic membership of the Eastern Region; it is not dependent on any financial grant that Forums may make to the ERPCF to cover running costs. Membership is not transferable.

3. Each Parent Carer Forum may have up to three contact names and email addresses on the ERPCF Contact List. All information and communication to Forums will be sent to these email addresses. The Contact List will be updated termly, if necessary, at the ERPCF Meeting. Contact names and emails addresses will be held on computer and in a manner that ensures compliance with General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR).
4. Each Forum is entitled to one vote.
5. If a Forum ceases to be eligible to receive the DfE Grant, it ceases to be a member of the Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums.
6. If the ERPCF Steering Group considers that a forum's conduct is in any way harmful to the aims and objectives of Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums, goes against the NNPCF Code of Conduct or does not adhere to the Nolan principles of public life, the steering group will reserve the right to terminate membership.

Management/Meetings

1. The Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums will be managed by a Steering Group. This will comprise of a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 4 members. This will include at least two from the posts of Chair, Vice-Chair and East of England NNPCF Rep. Other roles within the Steering Group will be appointed as and when required.
2. The Vice Chair will be elected at the May ERPCF Meeting by the member Forums by straight majority. The Vice Chair remains in post for a minimum of two years and then becomes Chair for a minimum two-year term. It is possible for the ERPCF members to extend the terms of both the Chair and the Vice Chair by special resolution, to a maximum of 6 years as Chair (3 x two-year terms). If the Chair steps down it is expected that the Vice Chair will automatically assume the position of Chair. If the Vice Chair steps down, a replacement Vice Chair is elected immediately. The NNPCF East of England Rep is elected according to NNPCF regulations.
3. The ERPCF Secretary will be an employee of the ERPCF and will be paid via a payroll. The hourly rate of pay will be the same as the hourly rate paid to parent reps across the whole of the Eastern Region, as agreed by member forums at an ERPCF meeting.
4. The Steering Group may appoint sub-committees to carry out specific tasks and delegate specific powers as necessary. Sub-committees must report back to the Steering Group for ratification of any decisions. Individuals working on sub-committees would be paid rep expenses at the Eastern Region hourly rate at the time.
5. If any Steering Group member, sub-committee member, forum representative at an ERPCF meeting or member forum has a conflict or duality of interest with any matters arising they will declare this at the earliest opportunity, or when that particular discussion arises and advise the ERPCF Steering Group of such. Any person or member forum may in such circumstances lose their right to participate on that particular matter and a member forum may in such circumstances lose their right to vote on that matter.

ERPCF Meetings

6. The ERPCF Chair is responsible for managing the agenda of a meeting and ensuring that all members have the opportunity to be heard.
7. A quorum of 51% of the active member forums will be needed to hold an ERPCF meeting. [For example, if there are 11 active member forums in receipt of the DfE grant, then 6 Forums must be represented at an ERPCF meeting for it to be quorate].
8. Each forum has one vote.
9. The ERPCF must meet at least three times a year, during term time.
10. Visitors, speakers and other attendees may attend by invitation of the Chair only.
11. A draft Agenda will be circulated a minimum of 7 days prior to the meeting and Minutes are to be circulated within 21 days of an ERPCF Meeting.
12. An extraordinary ERPCF Meeting can be called if requested by at least 51% of member forums or 2 steering group members when some special or urgent business has to be considered. Such meetings will be called in writing 21 days in advance when possible, but can be arranged more quickly if there is agreement from 60% of members. A quorum for such meetings shall consist of representatives from a minimum of 60% of Member forums, excluding the steering group representatives. Meetings can be physical, virtual or if required, agreement to special resolutions can be obtained by email or other methods.
13. Any Special resolutions considered by the ERPCF at a regular or extraordinary ERPCF Meeting must be passed by a minimum of 60% of member forums.

Dissolution of the ERPCF

An Extraordinary Meeting may be called to dissolve the ERPCF if 33% of member forums request such a meeting in writing. The organisation may be dissolved subsequently by agreement of two thirds of Member Forums. If Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums is dissolved, any remaining assets including funds in the bank, will be passed to a charitable body or a CIC. The member forums will vote by a straight majority to agree a relevant charity or CIC, whose beneficiaries are children with special and/or additional needs and/or their families.

Amendment to this Constitution

This document may only be amended by a resolution passed by a 60% majority of member forums.

Approved by an Extraordinary ERPCF Vote on 1st May 2021.

10 Votes were cast. 10 PCFs accepted the Constitution. 11 PCFs were eligible to vote.