



Southend SEND Independent Forum Constitution

30th October 2020

The Constitution

Southend SEND Independent Forum and its money will be administered and managed in accordance with the provisions in this constitution. Adoption of this constitution as of the date it is signed. This constitution sets out the rules by which Southend SEND Independent Forum will be governed. These are legally binding on the members.

The Name

The name of the group is Southend SEND Independent Forum.

The Aims and Objectives

- To be the strategic consultative body within the Southend-on-Sea Borough representing families of children with special and additional needs, providing a liaison point for Statutory and Voluntary Agencies within the Southend-on-Sea Borough
- To consult with and inform our membership with a view to ensuring that all children in the Southend-on-Sea Borough with special and additional needs have the best possible outcomes. These outcomes may be updated from time to time in the light of changes to Government 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 which is necessary for the group to carry out their aims and objectives.

Application of the income

- The Southend SEND Independent Forum funds shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the aims and objectives.
- Any member may be given reasonable and proper remuneration for any goods and/or services bought on behalf of or for Southend SEND Independent Forum.
- Travel costs, material costs and venue hire, may all be claimed from the funds, when they are for Southend SEND Independent Forum.
- Members should give receipts or invoice to the treasurer, for payment.
- A bank account will be opened and run by the treasurer. Cheques must be signed by any two of the three nominated signatories.

- Accurate accounts of all income and expenditure must be kept for presentation at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- If Southend SEND Independent Forum is dissolved and there are funds in the bank, the law states that it should pass on any remaining assets to another charitable body. The committee members/trustees at the time will vote for the relevant charity whose beneficiaries are children with special and/or additional needs and/or their families.

Membership

- Membership is open to family members and carers of any child or young adult with special and/or additional needs, up to the age of 25 years and who live in or receive services from the Borough of Southend-on-Sea. Bereaved members are still able to be members for up to 5 years.
- There will also be an associate membership for practitioners, both within the Voluntary and Statutory sectors. This membership will have no voting rights, but will be kept up to date with Southend SEND Independent Forum's newsletter and will be able to attend Open Meetings.
- Membership is not transferable.
- Steering Group members must keep a register of members, either in a written form or held on computer and will ensure compliance with Data Protection Act 1988.
- Each member is entitled to one vote.
- Any member may request to be removed from the list at any time and no longer receive the newsletters.
- If the committee considers that any member's conduct is in any way harmful to the aims and objectives of Southend SEND Independent Forum the committee/steering group will reserve the right to terminate membership.

Management/Meetings

- Southend SEND Independent Forum will be managed by a Committee. This will comprise a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12 members. This will include a Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary. Other roles within the Committee will be appointed as and when required.
- The inaugural Committee members and officers shall be those elected at the initial AGM. The Committee members will be annually elected from the full membership of Southend SEND Independent Forum at the AGM.
- Any Member wishing to be elected as an officer will need to seek nomination by members of the Committee at the first meeting following the AGM.
- The Committee may appoint sub-committees to carry out specific tasks and delegate specific powers as necessary. Sub-committees must report back to the Committee for ratification of any decisions.
- The Committee may have no more than two co-opted members whom will not be entitled to vote
- A quorum of one-third of the Committee will be needed to hold a meeting.
- Each member has one vote.
- The Committee must meet at least six times a year.
- A General Meeting can be called by at least 4 members of the Committee when some special or urgent business has to be considered. Such meetings will be called in writing 21 days in advance. A quorum for such meetings shall consist of a minimum of 8 Members or 5% of the membership. The same rules shall apply to Annual General Meetings.

Amendment to the Constitution

This document may only be amended by a resolution passed at a General Meeting held by the Committee.