



## Cumbria Parent Carer Forum

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY AND PROCEDURE

This policy and procedure is designed to ensure that any conflict of interest or potential conflict a member of the Parent Carer Forum might have in relation to their membership of any group or committee which they attend on behalf of the Forum, is declared and dealt with so as to ensure that the Forum operates in line with best practice.

A conflict of interest may arise in the following circumstances:

A Forum member is also a member, trustee or employee of another organisation with similar objectives, particularly one with which there may be perceived to be any element of competition

A Forum member is also a member, trustee or employee of another organisation which stands to gain financially or otherwise from decisions made by a group which the Forum member attends on behalf of the Forum.

A Forum member is also a member, trustee or employee of another group or organisation which enables them to influence strategic decisions in relation to children and young people with SEND and their families in Cumbria.

Ask members to declare any interests at the beginning of any meeting organised by the Forum

Discuss conflicts of interest issues when a Forum member is considering joining the Management Committee of the Forum, a subgroup of the Forum, or a strategic/operational group which the member wants to join as a representative of the Forum

Provide new Management Committee members with a form on which they will declare any interest which is likely to conflict with their duty as a Management Committee members

It should be stressed that there is nothing wrong with a Forum member being in any of these situations – a problem only arises if the member is

involved in any decision which could be seen to conflict with their interest, and fails to declare it.

## RESPONSIBILITY OF FORUM MEMBERS

It is always the responsibility of a Forum member to declare any interest referred to above.

In order to help members to declare interests appropriately the Forum will:

If a Forum member fails to declare an interest which is known to other Forum members, then they will declare it

## WHEN A CONFLICT OF INTEREST ARISES

When a conflict of interest arises between a Forum member's interest in the work of the Forum and a personal or professional interest elsewhere, the member will declare that interest and this will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting in question.

Attendees at the meeting will be asked if they would like to discuss the conflict of interest issue further, and the member in question may be asked to leave the meeting while this discussion takes place. The member will be required to abide by the decisions of the subgroup, or the Forum's Management Committee, where membership of the Management Committee or a strategic/operational group is concerned. Decisions can be challenged through the Forum's complaints procedure.

A member with a declared interest will not be allowed to vote on any item to which their conflict of interest relates, nor will their attendance count towards a quorum at the meeting in question. The member will not normally be asked to leave the meeting while the item in question is being discussed, but may be asked to withdraw if the Chair considers that their presence may unduly influence the outcome of a decision.

Any declaration of conflict of interest made by a member of the Forum will be processed in line with the Data Protection Act and the Forum's own Data Protection Policy.

Approved by: CPCF – Steering Group

Approved on: 7th May 2015

To be Reviewed by: CPCF - May 2017