

We are looking for an independent Chair for the Charging Reference Group

The Charging Reference Group is a group of disabled people and carers from Norfolk who have been working to help Norfolk County Council (NCC) learn more about their lives and in particular the lived experience of the charging system for social care services. Some of the members represent themselves and some attend as representatives of organisations and networks.

The Reference Group was invited to come together by NCC in the light of the Judicial Review in 2020, and has been working together since early summer 2021 with support from ThePublicOffice team. The group has now met together about 11 times in the last year, exploring each others' views and experiences, and seeking to help NCC officers and councillors to understand better the lived experience of council and Government policies and decisions.

Achievements so far

The group helped shape the development of a set of learning materials that share the real stories and experiences of people in Norfolk, and which is already being used in training and development of officers and councillors. They have also helped steer some significant work to redesign aspects of how Disability Related Expenditure is claimed and paid for, in order to make it easier and fairer for community members. This work has been a positive example of NCC learning to work coproductively with those impacted by policies and services.

The journey has not always been smooth, but relationships with senior NCC officers have deepened and strengthened considerably. NCC officers have explicitly said how valuable the input from the Charging Reference Group has been and are committed to continuing to work together. The Group has been developing its own relationships and learning to work together well.

The next chapter

In response to an invitation from NCC, the group has spent the last 3 months exploring how it can transition to become a sustainable, self-managed and independent ongoing source of advice and constructive challenge. NCC have committed resource to support the administration and leadership of the group, and we are now seeking to find an independent Chair to help lead this ground-breaking collaboration.

Who are we looking for?

On the following page you'll find listed what we believe to be the major responsibilities, tasks and ideal experience/attributes for the Chair. We would particularly welcome applications from disabled or neuro-diverse people. It is likely that work will continue to be a hybrid of mainly virtual and some in-person meetings.

Time requirement and payment

We believe the Chair role might require **up to 3 days per month**, but the exact time requirement will depend on the working relationship between the Facilitator (who will be working up to 6 days per month) and the Chair. The office holder can expect compensation of **£200 per day** (plus reasonable expenses).

How to apply:

Please email Esmee esmee@socially-adept.co.uk by **Midday on Friday 16th Sept** with a short CV and a covering letter explaining why you are interested in the role. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an informal interview involving members of the Reference Group and a representative from NCC. Do get in touch if you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you!

CHARGING REFERENCE GROUP CHAIR: PERSON SPECIFICATION

Key Responsibilities - working with the facilitator:

- Creating an environment for productive conversations and collaboration
- Holding oversight of the work of the Reference Group as a whole
- Working with the facilitator in a collaborative way
- Facilitating prioritisation and decision making in the Reference Group
- Holding Reference Group members to account for what they have agreed to do
- Negotiating NCC actions that further the Reference Group priorities
- Holding NCC to account for what they have agreed to do
- Willingness to have difficult, sometimes confronting conversations with NCC

Key Tasks

- Work with the facilitator to plan and design reference group meetings.
- Chair the meetings
- Listen to and support the members at the meetings, helping everyone to contribute and to be heard
- Support the facilitator in managing the work programme (making decisions that help the group achieve its aims)
- Reflect on how members' contributions align with wider strategic questions about disability advocacy; making strategic links where appropriate

Ideal attributes/experience

- Lived experience of disability and/or autism and/or caring
- Passionate about improving outcomes for the disabled community
- Committed to amplifying the voices of disabled people, people with autism and carers, to create change for the better
- Great chairing skills; warm and positive manner
- Good at helping people prioritise and make decisions
- Intuitive feel for how to work with a local authority - its culture and its people
- Skills to work with statutory authorities and hold them to account on tricky issues
- Knows how to work in a Political environment
- Ability to help public service institutions listen to and learn from service users / citizens
- Knowledge of disability advocacy (good to have)
- Located in or near Norfolk, with strong relevant networks
- Mid week availability (for Reference Group meetings themselves)