



# **SEND Voices Wokingham EGM**

**3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022**

**Purpose of this evening:**

**SEND Voices Wokingham's Proposal to move to Charitable Incorporated Organisation Status**

## Background

SEND Voices Wokingham is the independent Parent Carer Forum for Wokingham Borough. A Parent Carer Forum is a group of Parent Carers of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They work with local authorities, education settings, health and social care providers to make sure that the planning and provision of services for families takes full account of parent carer views and experiences, so that those services can be effective, timely and the best use of resources.

We are currently a constituted group with a voluntary committee of parents of children and young people with SEND who all live in the Wokingham Borough. We are supported by a part-time paid Participation Coordinator

Parent Carer Forums have evolved hugely over the last 12 years. Nationally, most Parent Carer Forums have moved from being a Constituted Community Group (where the Steering Committee is liable for all the finances) to legal entities such as Charities and CiC's. .

## Our core purpose will remain the same, to be:

*The Independent voice of families of children with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities, aged 0-25, representing their experiences to improve lives.*

Our work, in partnership with Education, Health and Social Care, to make sure the services they commission, plan and deliver meet the needs of children and young people in Wokingham Borough will remain the same. We will continue to listen to families through our events, training courses, consultations and surveys and represent their experiences, views and priorities.

## Why Should SEND Voices Wokingham become a charity?

Moving to a charity will enable the forum to:

- Apply for charity discounts
- Apply for additional funds to offer more support for our families which is beyond our DfE Family Engagement remit.
- Remove financial liability from the Steering Committee.

## Why Should SEND Voices Wokingham become a charity?

Through our work on the SEND Innovation & Improvement Programme, feedback from our Annual SEND survey and the demand to attend the Local Offer Live, we know that parents would like more information and support about SEND.

To enable us to expand what we do we need to move from our current structure of a Constituted Community Group to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Foundation Model). This will allow us to raise more funds and expand the information and support we are able to offer to parents and carers in the Borough.