



Commission Opportunity: Parent Carer Forum Development, Participation and Communications Project

Listen 4 Change Parent Carer Forum (St Helens)

Contract Type: Self-Employed Contractor Commission

Contract Period: 1st September 2026 – 31st March 2027

Contract Value: Up to £12,000

About Listen 4 Change

Listen 4 Change is an independent Parent Carer Forum led by parent carer volunteers. The forum works to ensure that the voices and experiences of families of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) aged 0–25 are heard and influence local services and decision-making across St Helens.

Funded through the Department for Education Parent Carer Participation Grant, administered by Contact, the forum is seeking to commission a suitably experienced self-employed individual to deliver a time-limited project supporting parent carer participation, engagement, communications and strategic representation.

About the Commission

This is a freelance, self-employed contractor opportunity and does not constitute employment. Expressions of interest are welcomed from sole traders, freelancers and consultants able to invoice for services delivered under this commission.

The successful contractor will work under the strategic direction of the Listen 4 Change Steering Group and Chair but will determine how project outcomes are delivered. The contractor will be responsible for managing their own working arrangements and meeting all tax, National Insurance and other obligations associated with self-employment.

The commission will run from **1st September 2026 to 31st March 2027** and will focus on:

- Increasing parent carer engagement and participation.
- Supporting effective governance and coordination of forum activities.
- Ensuring parent carer voice informs local SEND developments.
- Delivering communications, events and engagement opportunities.
- Supporting the sustainability and future development of the forum.

Project Purpose

To maintain and strengthen the Parent Carer Forum by:

- Increasing parent carer engagement and participation.
- Supporting effective governance and coordination of forum activities.
- Ensuring parent carer voice informs local SEND developments.
- Delivering communications, events and engagement opportunities.
- Supporting the sustainability and future development of the forum beyond March 2027.

We are looking for someone with the following:

Essential

- Experience of participation, engagement, co-production or community development.
- Strong communication and relationship-building skills.
- Experience of organising meetings, events or community engagement activities.
- Experience of managing newsletters, websites, social media and communications.
- Good understanding of the SEND system, SEND services and the experiences of parent carers.
- Ability to work independently and manage competing priorities.
- Experience of working alongside voluntary, community or public sector organisations.

Desirable

- Lived experience as a parent carer of a child or young person with SEND.
- Experience supporting governance, volunteer-led groups or community organisations.
- Knowledge and understanding of Parent Carer Forums.

Expected Outputs

The successful contractor will be expected to deliver agreed outputs including:

- Coordination and support for Steering Group meetings.
- Parent carer engagement activities and events.
- Management of forum communications, newsletters and digital platforms.
- Monitoring and management of the Listen 4 Change inbox.
- Attendance at agreed strategic meetings.
- Collection and analysis of parent carer feedback.
- Activity and grant monitoring reports.
- End-of-project handover and recommendations.

Expression of Interest Process

Interested individuals are invited to submit:

1. A Current CV (maximum 2 pages)

Please include relevant experience and qualifications.

2. An Expression of Interest (Approximately 1 page maximum 2 pages)

Your expression of interest should outline:

- Why you are interested in this commission.
- How your skills, experience and approach meet the requirements of the project.
- How you would deliver the expected outputs and outcomes.
- How you would engage and build relationships with parent carers, volunteers and strategic partners.
- Any relevant experience of SEND, participation, engagement, co-production or community development.

3. Proposed Delivery Plan

Please provide a brief outline timeline showing how you would approach the work between September 2026 and March 2027, including key milestones, activities and deliverables.

Project Responsibilities

1. Parent Carer Participation and Engagement

The contractor will:

- Act as the primary contact point for parent carers and key stakeholders.
- Maintain and grow parent carer membership and engagement.
- Gather, record and analyse parent carer feedback and lived experience.
- Identify emerging themes and issues affecting SEND families.
- Identify, recruit and support parent volunteers and parent carer representatives to strengthen participation and sustainability.
- Support parent carers to engage in local participation opportunities and strategic discussions where appropriate.

2. Forum Coordination and Governance

The contractor will:

- Coordinate Steering Group meetings and associated administration.
- Prepare agendas, action logs and meeting notes.
- Support the review and development of forum policies, procedures and governance documents.
- Maintain membership, participation and volunteer records.
- Support implementation of agreed Steering Group priorities.
- Ensure key governance documents, contact lists and operational records are maintained and accessible.

3. Strategic Participation

The contractor will:

- Attend agreed strategic meetings on behalf of the forum, which may include Steering Group meetings, Keeping in Touch (KIT) meetings, SEND Partnership Board meetings, Cheshire and Merseyside Parent Carer Forum meetings and other agreed

participation forums. Maintain relationships with local authority, health and education partners.

- Ensure parent carer feedback is represented within strategic discussions.
- Provide concise written updates to the Steering Group on relevant developments.

4. Communications and Promotion

The contractor will:

- Monitor and manage the L4C inbox.
- Respond to routine enquiries, information requests and signposting enquiries.
- Escalate governance, safeguarding, strategic or sensitive matters to the Chair and/or Steering Group as appropriate.
- Prepare and distribute forum newsletters and manage member communications.
- Maintain L4C social media platforms, website content and L4C page on the Local Offer website.
- Promote opportunities for participation and engagement.
- Develop accessible communications that encourage wider parent carer involvement.

5. Events and Community Engagement

The contractor will:

- Plan, coordinate and promote parent carer engagement activities.
- Host online and face-to-face events.
- Gather and record feedback from events and engagement activities.
- Ensure learning and insights are captured and shared with the Steering Group.

6. Grant Monitoring and Sustainability

The contractor will:

- Maintain participation records and evidence required for grant reporting.
- Maintain evidence of participation, engagement and impact.
- Contribute information, activity updates and recommendations requested by the Steering Group to support discussions regarding future sustainability and forum development.
- Produce a short end-of-project summary report with recommendations for next steps.
- Produce handover documentation including updated contact lists, key activity records and transition recommendations for future arrangements.

Expected Outputs

By 31 March 2027 the contractor will have delivered:

- Minimum of 4 Steering Group meetings coordinated and supported.
- Minimum of 6 newsletters (monthly).
- Maintain an active and responsive social media presence, with a minimum of one post per week.
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date website content, ensuring key information, events, newsletters and opportunities are published promptly.
- Timely (within 7 days) action of all emails received

- 13 Parent carer engagement activities delivered, including Listen 4 Change's AGM.
- 12 Strategic meetings attended and reported back.
- 13 Parent carer feedback collected, recorded and themed.
- 2 Quarterly activity/grant monitoring reports produced.
- 1 End-of-project report including recommendations for future sustainability and development.

Informal Conversations

We welcome informal conversations with anyone interested in the commission before submitting an expression of interest. This is an opportunity to discuss the project, ask questions and understand the expectations of the work.

To arrange an informal conversation, please contact:

Laura Burling
laura@co-designedsolutions.co.uk
07808 774233

Expression of Interest and Delivery Plan Deadline: Wednesday 22nd July 2026

Interviews: Monday 10th August 2026

Commission Start Date: Tuesday 1st September 2026

We particularly welcome expressions of interest from people with lived experience of caring for a child or young person with SEND and from individuals committed to strengthening parent carer participation and influence, that can meet the specifications of the commission.