



North Northamptonshire Parent Carer Voices - PCF End of Year Summary Report 25-26

Overview

During 2025–26, Northamptonshire Parent Carer Voices (NPCV) has moved beyond the role of just a participation forum and is now operating as a strategic partner within the local SEND system. This shift is evidenced through substantial growth in reach, increased depth of engagement with families, and a more direct contribution to system challenge, co-production and reform planning.

We continue to be rooted in lived experience, providing signposting and support to families while ensuring that those experiences are translated into system-level insight. Over the past year, this has developed into a more structured intelligence function, contributing to the Local Area Partnership's understanding of need, risk and priorities at a time of significant system pressure.

Scale and Demand

NPCV has experienced sustained growth across all areas of activity this year. Our core team has grown from 7 to 10 and Membership increased from 879 to 1,182, reflecting growing trust and visibility within the community. More significantly, direct engagement increased from 2,604 to 5,565 individuals, indicating both increased reach and rising demand within the SEND system.

Engagement is no longer limited to periodic events as NPCV now operates a continuous engagement model blending face to face with digital engagement. Families are accessing workshops, peer networks, social media, training programmes, surveys and digital platforms. This shift reflects the organisation's role as both a trusted entry point for families and a consistent presence within the wider system.

This growth should be understood in context. While it demonstrates success in outreach and engagement, it also reflects increasing system pressure and unmet need. NPCV is therefore expanding its reach AND absorbing demand that would otherwise sit within statutory services

Impact for Families and Communities

NPCV continues to deliver clear and measurable impact at an individual and community level. Families report increased understanding of SEND processes, greater confidence in navigating systems for their children, and reduced isolation through connection with others and higher scores of wellbeing.

Large-scale engagement activity reinforces this. The SEND Family Fun Day brought together nearly 800 attendees in 2025, with all participants reporting improved understanding of available support and the majority reporting increased confidence. Importantly, over half of attendees were new to NPCV, demonstrating the organisation's ability to reach families who are not already engaged.

More broadly, NPCV provides inclusive environments where families feel safe, accepted and understood. This has a significant impact on wellbeing and engagement, particularly for families who may otherwise feel excluded from mainstream opportunities.

System Influence and Strategic Contribution

NPCV's influence at a system level has strengthened considerably over the past year. The organisation has contributed over 1,000 hours of parent carer representation into strategic and operational forums, ensuring that lived experience informs decision-making across the LAP.

Parent carer insight has contributed to tangible areas of system improvement, including clearer speech and language pathways, strengthened focus on Preparing for Adulthood, and increased scrutiny of EHCP quality and consistency. NPCV has also played a key role in shaping discussions around access to services, thresholds and inclusion.

In addition, NPCV has contributed to the development of the Priority action plan and Local SEND Reform Plan by providing structured insight and feedback from workshops, surveys, digital platforms and engagement activity. This ensures that priorities are informed by real experiences rather than assumptions.

However, it is important to recognise the limits of attribution. While NPCV can demonstrate clear influence, system change depends on the actions of multiple partners. Strengthening the ability to evidence direct impact will be a key area of focus moving forward using our co-production QA framework and feedback loop

Development of System Intelligence

A major development during 2025–26 has been NPCV's shift from gathering feedback to generating structured system intelligence. Through large-scale workshops, surveys and digital engagement tools. We have collected and analysed significant volumes of qualitative data.

This data has been used to identify recurring themes, system pressures and priority areas, providing a robust evidence base for strategic discussions. It has also enabled NPCV to move beyond anecdotal feedback and present lived experience in a way that is credible, consistent and aligned with system priorities.

This represents a significant step forward in maturity. NPCV is now contributing voices translated into structured insight that can inform planning, commissioning and improvement activity.

Co-Production and Governance

NPCV has made clear progress in strengthening co-production. The development of a co-production framework and the introduction of structured feedback mechanisms represent important steps towards embedding co-production within system processes. It is intended to strengthen accountability and ensure that feedback leads to action which aligns with national expectations around meaningful co-production and partnership working.

Despite this progress, co-production is not yet fully embedded across the system. While there are examples of strong practice, consistency remains a challenge, and further work is required to ensure that feedback is acted upon in a timely and visible way and that action / impact is communicated.



Position within the Local Area Partnership

NPCV's role within the Local Area Partnership has evolved significantly. The organisation is now recognised as both a strategic partner and a critical friend, balancing collaboration with challenge.

This position brings benefits, including increased influence and visibility but maintaining clarity between the Parent Carer Forum function and system partners will be important in sustaining confidence and independence. At the same time, ensuring that system accountability remains with statutory partners is essential.

Key Challenges and Next Steps

While progress over the past year has been significant, several key challenges remain.

Firstly, there is a need to strengthen the attribution of impact. NPCV can clearly demonstrate influence, but further work is required to link this influence to measurable system change over time.

Secondly, the development of consistent, longitudinal outcome measures will be critical. This will enable the Local Area Partnership to demonstrate improvement over time and to track the impact of reform activity.

Finally, strengthening accountability loops will be essential. Feedback must not only be gathered but acted upon, with clear evidence of response and impact.

Building on the progress made during 2025–26, the focus for 2026–27 will shift from growth to precision, influence and demonstrable impact.

NPCV will move into a more disciplined operating model, recognising that increased demand and finite resource require clear prioritisation of activity that directly influences decision-making and system reform.

1. From Volume to Influence

NPCV will adopt a **high-impact, low-volume participation model**, ensuring that engagement activity is directly aligned to governance and decision-making routes.

This will include:

- More targeted engagement campaigns with clear purpose and outcomes
- Increased use of digital-first methods where they demonstrably reach families
- Prioritisation of activity that feeds directly into boards, reform programs and commissioning discussions



2. Strengthening System Intelligence and Attribution

A key priority will be moving from influence to **evidenced impact**.

NPCV will:

- Further develop its system intelligence function, building on 2025–26 qualitative data analysis
- Introduce clearer tracking of “You said, we did” pathways through governance structures
- Work with partners to establish **shared outcome measures and longitudinal tracking**
- Strengthen the ability to link parent carer feedback to **measurable service change**

This directly addresses a core gap identified in 2025–26: the need to **evidence causality, not just contribution**.

3. Embedding Co-Production Through Delivery, Not Language

While co-production frameworks have been developed, the focus will now shift to **consistent application across the system**.

NPCV will:

- Use its co-production framework and maturity approach to challenge and support partners
- Embed co-production expectations into key workstreams (SEND reform, Priority Action Plan, Local Area Plan)
- Strengthen the role of governance forums (including Stakeholder Board) as **accountability mechanisms for co-production quality**

The emphasis will be on **evidence of co-production in practice**, not commitment in principle.

4. Protecting Inclusion Through Smarter Delivery

Inclusion remains a priority, but delivery will change to ensure sustainability.

NPCV will:

- Work through trusted community partners to reach underrepresented groups
- Use targeted, data-led outreach rather than broad engagement approaches
- Deliver “pop-up” engagement within existing community settings rather than creating new standalone activity

This approach maintains reach while reducing duplication and cost.

5. Leveraging Partnership and Shared Resource

NPCV will take a more explicit position that effective participation is a system enabler and must be resourced accordingly.

This includes:

- Seeking blended and aligned funding where participation supports system priorities (e.g. SEND reform, experts at hand, co-production, engagement)
- Working in partnership with local and regional parent carer groups to share delivery and reduce duplication
- Co-delivering activity where it strengthens reach, consistency and influence

The principle is clear: **if the system depends on participation, it must invest in it**.

6. Workforce Sustainability and Capacity Discipline

A key risk for 2026–27 is attempting to maintain expanded activity levels without sufficient capacity.

NPCV will therefore:

- Actively stop or pause activity that does not demonstrate clear impact
- Focus resource on core functions: representation, co-production, and system feedback
- Maintain lean infrastructure supported by targeted administrative capacity funded through the grant from DfE and NNC

This reflects a shift towards **sustainable, focused delivery rather than reactive expansion**.

7. Clear Strategic Position for 2026–27

The direction for the year ahead can be summarised as:

- **More targeted** – focusing on what drives change
- **More evidenced** – proving impact, not just activity
- **More integrated** – embedded within system governance and reform
- **More sustainable** – operating within realistic capacity

NPCV will continue to act as both **strategic partner and critical friend**, ensuring that:

- Lived experience directly informs system reform
- Families remain visible within decision-making
- Accountability to parent carers is strengthened across the Local Area Partnership

Conclusion

NPCV has demonstrated significant growth and development during 2025–26. The organisation has expanded its reach, strengthened its impact, and taken on a more strategic role within the SEND system.

This transition reflects a combination of community engagement and system influence meaning NPCV is now contributing to the structures and processes that shape how services are designed, delivered and improved.

To sustain this progress, the focus must now shift towards strengthening evidence and embedding accountability. With these foundations in place, NPCV is well positioned to continue engaging with and supporting SEN families while driving meaningful and lasting system change.

Annex A: Key Data and Metrics

Engagement Activity

- Membership: 879 → 1,182 (+34%)
- From 2,604 → **5,565** Parent Carers engaged (781 in March 26) (114% growth)
 - 1837 via events (+182.6% growth)
 - 361 training / workshops (119.5% growth)
- 578 annual survey responses (parents and young people)

Digital Reach

- ~136,000 Facebook views (28 day figure March 26) (86% growth in audience)
- ~5.7K Facebook reach (26.75% growth in content views)
- Significant growth in visibility and audience reach
- Audiences are returning to engage with content multiple times suggesting increasing trust and relevance.
- The growth in digital engagement is reflected in real world participation demonstrating online reach is translating into meaningful engagement and service uptake
- Digital engagement is not operating in isolation, it is functioning as a key access route into Support, co-production and system feedback.

Flagship Event Impact (SEND Family Fun Day)

- ~800 attendees
- 56% new families
- 100% reported improved understanding
- 85% reported increased confidence

System Influence

- ~1,040 hours of strategic engagement annually
- Active contribution to:
 - SEND accountability and Improvement Board
 - SEND Operational Board
 - EHCP quality assurance framework co-chair
 - EHCP audits & moderation
 - Termly SEND workshops/ Meet the teams
 - Stakeholder Board
 - SEND survey
 - PINS
 - EBSA
 - Preparing for Adulthood
 - Ordinarily available provision
 - Speech & language pathway clarity
 - ASD / ADHD pathway innovation
 - Short Breaks / PCAS framework
 - Local Offer improvements/ steering group
 - Priority Action Plan



Northamptonshire Parent Carer Voices



- SEND reform planning / Local Area Plan
- Experts at hand
- Maturity Matrix moderation
- Home to school Transport