



Opportunity: Chair of the Board – VOYPIC

**Voice of Young People in Care
(VOYPIC)**

August 2025

Lead change. Amplify voices. Shape the future for young people in care.



Welcome to VOYPIC

Recruitment of Chair of the Board

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of the Board. This is a pivotal moment for VOYPIC. With the highest number of children in care in Northern Ireland since records began, the need for strong advocacy and bold leadership has never been greater. For over 30 years, VOYPIC has championed the rights, voices, and aspirations of children and young people in and leaving care. Today, we are building on that legacy, deepening our partnerships, influencing policy change at the highest levels, and delivering services that transform lives.

We are seeking an exceptional Chair of the Board to lead us into this next chapter. Someone who will bring strategic vision, inclusive leadership, and the courage to challenge the status quo. You will unite a skilled and committed Board, work in close partnership with our Chief Executive, and ensure that decisions are always shaped by those with lived experience.

As Chair, you will:

- Inspire and guide the Board to deliver our mission and strategic priorities.
- Represent VOYPIC in high-profile forums, building relationships with ministers, policy-makers, media, and community leaders.
- Champion the rights and voices of young people in care, ensuring they are heard where it matters most.
- Support our leadership team to navigate both challenges and opportunities in a changing external environment.



Welcome to VOYPIC

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Whether you are an experienced Chair or stepping into this role for the first time, we are looking for someone who:

- Has a track record of uniting people around a shared vision and purpose.
- Brings political acumen and influence at senior levels.
- Leads with empathy, emotional intelligence, and integrity.
- Shares our values of respect, social justice, and commitment to empowering young people.

This is a voluntary position, requiring approximately 1 day per month, including 6 Board meetings per year and other key engagements. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

Join us at this critical time and help ensure that every child in care feels safe, valued, and loved — and that every young person leaving care can thrive into adulthood.

Peter McClenaghan



Background to VOYPIC

Who we are:

Voice of Young People In Care (VOYPIC) was created in 1993 by a group of children and young people in care and practitioners. We provide help support, and advice to children and young people and care leavers up to the age of 25, with added support, for young people up to the age of 30. In 2023-2024 we supported 621 children and young people.

What we do:

VOYPIC is an independent children's charity that promotes the rights and voice of children in care and young people leaving care. We work together with children and young adults for a better care experience and life after care. We provide services from our four locations in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry, Ballymena, and Lurgan.

Our Vision:

We want every child in care in Northern Ireland to feel safe, valued and loved. We want every young person leaving care to do so with dignity and respect and thrive into adulthood.

Our Work:

Advocacy and Awareness-raising: We raise awareness of the rights of children and young people, their views and experiences of living in and leaving care, and their priorities for change.

Making Connections and Capacity Building: We connect young people with a lived experience of care with their peers. We host regular groups, participation forums and activities that build self-confidence, personal, social and life skills, whilst making new connections and friends.

Independent Advocacy and Advice Service: We support young people to exercise their rights by providing assistance to: voice concerns, access information, resolve issues or to identify available support options.

Youth Participation and Coproduction: We help children and young people to find their voice and set their own agenda for change! We create a culture of listening that enables children and young people to influence the world around them. Our programmes equip and prepare young people to take part in co-production activities.

Influencing Change through Policy Advocacy: We use our specialist knowledge and insight into the views and experiences of children, young people, we work in partnership with them to influence the development of legislation, policy and practice.





Background to VOYPIC

What is care?

Children and young people are placed into the care of a Health and Social Care Trust when it is unsafe for them to remain at home or because their parents are unable to look after them.

Social services will often look to the extended family network to see if they could care for the child. This is known as Kinship Foster Care.

If staying with extended family isn't possible, then a child might be placed in a foster home. These are private homes where a child lives as part of a family. This is called Foster Care.

Some children and young people live in children's homes; these are often houses in the community with residential workers who support young people living there. There are over 4,000 children and young people in care across Northern Ireland, the highest number of children in care since the introduction of the Children (NI) Order in 1996.

Young People Leaving Care

Young people who leave care because they have reached the age of 16-18 are known as care leavers. Last year, 393 young people aged 16-18 left care in Northern Ireland. Young people leaving care may return to parents, move into supported accommodation, live independently, and some remain with their foster carers. Sadly, some young care leavers face homelessness.



Background to VOYPIC

What children say about their involvement in VOYPIC.

"I think it's important for all young people in care to have a voice and to have a decision in things while they are in care. I feel like most people in care do not really have a voice if they are under 18 and it's not fair on them. If they had more say in what decisions are being made or what is happening with their care they would be a lot happier". Male, 17

VOYPIC teach you about how you should be treated and helped to me not to be treated as a baby and how to be reassured on your own mind. They help you make goals and teach you what's achievable'

"I feel the public should hear more positive stories as I feel young people in care are labelled and judged and not given the opportunities regarding work etc".

I wasn't that confident. They helped me with so much. They helped me when my relationship broke down and help me put my life back together'.

'It's been about having fun, seeing friends, having banter and craic and making friends. We don't have much family support – it's just me and the kids. Instead of being lonely it gives me company with other adults so I'm not as isolated'.

'If you want a cup of tea you can just walk in and get a cup of tea they will help me, or if you haven't eaten for a few days you can go in and get a toastie and a chat'.

"I thought it was only me and now I don't feel so alone. Being around people who have similar experiences to you".

- My advocate was able to negotiate with my landlord and came to a payment plan so I was not evicted
- My advocate helped me get transport to enable me to attend my course at Belfast Met
- I got confidence for my interview, help for employment and help with housing issues and benefits
- VOYPIC helped me get out of foster care and into my flat to live on my own
- VOYPIC helped me to open a bank account and get driving lessons
- My advocate helped me not to be made homeless on my 18th Birthday
- My advocate helped me understand what happens at my meetings and Looked After Children Review

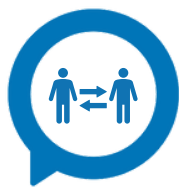
Social media links

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/voypic/>

<https://www.facebook.com/voiceofyoungpeopleincare>

<https://www.instagram.com/voypic>

Our Values



Relationship
Based

Relationship Based

We are driven by the needs and aspirations of children and young people. We listen, learn, and work in partnership with them to ensure their voice is heard. We are dedicated to empowering young people so that they reach their potential in whatever they choose to do.



Commitment

Commitment

We are committed, passionate and enthusiastic champions for change. We are persistent and determined to promote the voice and defend the rights of children and young people in and leaving care.



Social
Justice

Social Justice

We work to a strong moral code rooted in the ideals of social justice. We challenge the oppression and discrimination faced by children and young people in care and seek to reduce the stigma they face in their daily lives.



Respect for Rights

Respect for Rights

We respect the rights of children and young people and are prepared to challenge others to do the same.



Solution
Focused

Solution Focused

We are positive about the future. We are proud of what we do and what we have achieved. We face problems with a solution-oriented mentality and we encourage our staff, stakeholders and young people themselves to be problem solvers.

Role Purpose:

To plan and run Board meetings effectively and ensure the organisation, as a whole, sets, and adheres to, a clear mission, vision, strategy, values, aims and objectives.

Main Responsibilities

1. To ensure that the Board fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the organisation.
2. To work in partnership with the Chief Executive to achieve the agreed aims and objectives.
3. To ensure that there is an effective relationship between Board and the staff/volunteers.
4. To plan and chair the office-bearers' group (if there is one).
5. To lead the Board in fostering organisational ethos and developing strategy and business plans.
6. Undertake a leadership role to ensure the Board fulfils its' non-executive responsibilities for the governance of the organisation including financial and risk management, health and safety, and safeguarding.
7. Provide support and leadership to the Chief Executive and ensure that the organisation is run in accordance with the decisions of the Board and the organisation's governing document.
8. Convene Board meetings, facilitating the Board sub-committee structures, and liaising with the Chief Executive to draft agendas for Board meetings and ensure that the business is covered efficiently and effectively in those meetings.
9. Oversee Board effectiveness and encourage input from Board members including the ex officio representatives of young people in care.
10. Act as the channel of communication between the Directors and staff, in situations where it does not undermine the Organisation's senior management team.
11. Ensure the Board remains attuned to the needs of young people in care, including the organisation's service users.
12. Facilitate Board oversight of the Organisation's shareholding in Vlable Corporate Services.
13. Facilitate Board oversight of the Organisation's partnerships, including joint tenancies with Include Youth.



Main duties

1. Ensuring the Board fulfils its responsibilities.

- 1.1. Plan meetings of the Board, in partnership with the Chief Executive, including agreeing the agenda.
- 1.2. Effectively chair meetings of the Board and see that it functions effectively and carries out its responsibilities.
- 1.3. Ensure there is a quorum present.
- 1.4. Ensure that the Board sets overall strategy and policy objectives and effectively monitors their implementation.
- 1.5. Ensure that the business of meetings is effectively planned and appropriately dealt with and that decisions, when required, are clearly arrived at and recorded and their implementation monitored.
- 1.6. Ensure that satisfactory arrangements are made to identify and appoint the next chair of the Board.
- 1.7. Work in consultation with other office-bearers, Board members, and, where appropriate, the Chief Executive to recruit Board members with relevant expertise and experience.
- 1.8. Ensure that the Board regularly reviews how it is working, its structure, role and relationship to staff and implements agreed changes as necessary.
- 1.9. With the Chief Executive, ensure that all Board members receive appropriate inductions, advice, training and information relating to their role.
- 1.10. Serve as a spokesperson for and/or promoter of the organisation, when appropriate.

2. Helping to achieve the aims and objectives set for the organisation.

- 2.1. Ensure that the Board develops a long-term strategy for the organisation and annual operational plans with clear objectives which can be monitored.
- 2.2. Monitor progress in implementing the annual operational plan.
- 2.3. Ensure that appropriate aims and objectives are set for the acquisition and management of resources (personnel, financial, material) and their achievement monitored.
- 2.4. Provide appropriate supervision and support for the Chief Executive.
- 2.5. Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to support, monitor and review the work of other staff.
- 2.6. Help to promote the organisation to a wider audience of potential donors and beneficiaries.

3. Ensuring an effective relationship between Board and the staff/volunteers.

- 3.1. Ensure that the organisation has appropriate procedures to support, guide and develop staff and volunteers to achieve the agreed aims and objectives.

4. Chairing the Office-Bearers Group.

- 4.1. Plan and chair the meetings of the Office-Bearers Group.
- 4.2. Help make essential decisions between meetings of the Board within the terms of authority delegated by the Board.
- 4.3. Provide support and advice to the Chief Executive as required.
- 4.4. Identify key issues for and assist in planning forthcoming Board meetings.

Number of Board Meetings

There are typically 6 Board Meetings per Annum.

This is a voluntary position; reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

How to Apply

To apply for the role, please send a CV and a covering letter outlining your motivation and suitability for the role to:

Vable Corporate Services HR: hradmin@viablecs.org.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview with a panel of board members.

Closing date is **Friday 12 September 2025 at 12 noon.**





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