

**Peterborough Schools Forum Meeting  
Action Notes**

**Meeting: 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025  
09:30 – 11:30**

**Attendees:**

Scott Hudson (SH), Helen Price (HP), Carrie Traill (CT), James Bird (JB), Rachel Davies (RD), Katie Barnett (KB) Cllr Katy Cole (Cllr KC), Jude Macdonald (JM), Andy Lyons (AL), Debbie Hayes (DH), John Gilligan (JG), Helen Andrews (HA), Ian Graham (IG), Lorraine Geco (LG), R Mercuri-Butcher (RMB), Mohammed Younis (MY), Kate Pereira (KP), Rachael Holland (RH), Howard Nelson (HN), Kirsten Jowett (KJ), Robert Sloan (RS),

| Item |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| 1.   | <p><b>Apologies and Declarations of Interest:</b></p> <p>SH confirmed that RS is representing MVL, who sent his apologies.</p> <p>Cllr KC declared her interest as her children attend some of the schools under discussion</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 2.   | <p><b>Minutes and Matters Arising:</b></p> <p>Previous meeting minutes were reviewed and accepted.</p> <p>Actions from the last meeting were discussed, including Academy representation, CEO representation, and letters to MPs.</p> <p>Cllr KC noted she could help with the letter to AP which had not yet been responded to.</p> <p>KJ noted that she provided apologies for last meeting, this was not recorded.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 3.   | <p><b>High Needs Block 25-26:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JB and KB presented the high needs block budget, noting an 8.92% increase in funding but also a projected overspend of 5.7 million for 2024-25. They discussed the rising number and complexity of EHCPs and the need for special placements.</li> <li>Key reasons for the overspend include increasing numbers of EHCPs, complexity of needs, and out-of-county placements.</li> <li>Mitigation strategies include increasing specialist teaching staff, restructuring SEN inclusion services, and introducing a fourth funding band for mainstream schools.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specialist and Mainstream School Funding:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion on the 1.89% increase in top-up funding for special schools and mainstream schools.</li> <li>Concerns were raised about the adequacy of this increase given inflation and pay awards.</li> </ul> <p><b>Out-of-County Placements:</b></p> |

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|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on the challenges and costs associated with out-of-county placements and the need to build local capacity.</li> </ul> <p><b>SEND Working Party:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CT emphasized the need to restart the SEND working party to address the high needs block and invited members to join.</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p><b>Inclusion Funding and Early Years Working Group:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was mentioned that the work on formalizing the Early Years Working Group is ongoing, a term of reference needs to be created. The inclusion funding mechanisms will be carried forward to the next meeting. (CT)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 4. | <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MP Correspondence:</b> Chase Andrew Pakes for a response to the letter sent on 6th February. (Cllr KC)</li> <li>• <b>Growth Policy Review:</b> Bring back a paper on this financial year's growth and future plans to the July forum. (RD)</li> <li>• <b>Growth Bids Clarification:</b> Clarify the policy omission regarding additional funding requests and apologies to the two schools affected. (CT).</li> <li>• <b>Growth Policy Review:</b> Bring back a paper on this financial year's growth and future plans to the July forum. (RD)</li> <li>• <b>Inclusion Funding Mechanisms:</b> Carry forward the discussion on inclusion funding mechanisms to the next meeting. (CT)</li> <li>• <b>Early Years Working Group:</b> Create terms of reference and formalize the early years working group. (CT)</li> <li>• <b>SEND Working Party:</b> Restart the SEND working party and schedule meetings, ensuring representation from previous and new members. (RD)</li> <li>• <b>OAIP Feedback:</b> Provide feedback on the OAIP document and any necessary tweaks before its launch. (JB)</li> <li>• <b>Specialist Teaching Services:</b> Embed increased investment in specialist teaching services, including hiring three additional members of staff. (KB)</li> <li>• <b>Mainstream Funding Banding:</b> Introduce an additional funding banding for mainstream schools to support children who require specialist placements but cannot move due to sufficiency issues. (KB)</li> <li>• <b>Specialist School Capacity:</b> Continue discussions with specialist schools to assess and potentially increase their capacity. (JB, CT)</li> <li>• <b>Sector Workforce Development:</b> Include sector workforce development and utilize sector expertise as key themes in the Local Area Partnership action plan. (JB)</li> <li>• <b>SEND SEF Invites:</b> Ensure all relevant parties, including Early Years representation, receive invites to the SEND SEF meetings. (CT)</li> </ul> |