CONSTITUTION

The organisation shall be called Hackney SEND Parent Carer Forum; hereafter referred to as HSPCF.

Hackney SEND Parent Carer Forum (HSPCF) is a non-profit pan-disability organisation led by parents and carers of children and young people aged 0-25 with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We exist to represent and amplify the collective voices, perspectives and experiences of local families who use Hackney SEND services. We work in partnership with the Local Authority, Education, Health, and Social Care to improve outcomes and ensure that services are designed and delivered through genuine co-production across all areas of SEND Services.

Members of the HSPCF

We are made up of parents and carers who live in Hackney whose child or young person aged 025 with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Also, non-residents of Hackney whose child or young person age 0-25 with special educational needs and/or disabilities accesses education or SEND services in the London Borough of Hackney.

Equality Act Definition

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

1. Area

This Constitution applies to the Hackney SEND Parent Carer Forum. The Parent Carer Forum handles developing and maintaining its own governance structures in partnership with parents and carers of children and young people with SEND.

1.1 Hosting Arrangement and Governance Scope

The Hackney SEND Parent Carer Forum is currently hosted by City & Hackney Carers Centre. These governing documents regulate the internal conduct, decision-making, and governance of the Forum. Legal, employment, and financial liabilities that are still with the Host organisation are subject to the terms of the Hosting Agreement and relevant statutory requirements.

2. Aims of the HSPCF

2.1 Work in partnership with North East London Foundation Trust Integrated Care System, Hackney Education and Hackney Child and Adult Social Care to ensure the voices of parents and carers are heard.

2.2 Empower and support parent/carer participation development across Hackney.

2.3 Provide training for Steering Group and HSPCF members to enable them to fully take part in the Forum.

2.4 Engage in Co-production training involving all stakeholders.

2.5 Consult with and inform the membership to promote the best possible outcomes for all children and young people aged 0-25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and their families in the London Borough of Hackney.

2.6 Ensure that good practice, shared knowledge, and collective expertise continue to develop and strengthen. HSPCF will establish and maintain a clear, effective, and sustainable structure that preserves and enhances the Forum's effectiveness always following its Non-Negotiable Core Values. (see appendix)

2.7 HSPCF is part of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) whose membership is made up of all Parent Carer Forums in England. As part of this membership, the HSPCF will actively take part in the London Regional Parent Carer Forum Network. This ensures that the collective voice of Hackney families informs regional and national policy, and that the Forum stays updated on best practices across the capital. NNPCF representatives, who are all parent carers, work with a broad range of organisations including Department of Education,
Department of Health and Social Care, Council for Disabled Children, British Academy of Childhood Disability, and IPSEA. To find out more go to www.nnpcf.org.uk

2.8 The HSPCF does not provide individual advocacy or representation for families. While the Forum uses individual experiences to inform strategic change. It cannot take up individual cases or attend personal meetings (e.g., EHCP reviews or tribunals) on behalf of a parent. Members seeking individual support will be signposted to the appropriate local advocacy services or the local SENDIAGS.

3. Governance and Steering Group

The HSPCF Representative is a member of the HSPCF and has a remit to fulfil the role as described in the constitution.

3.1 Formation of the Official Steering Group

a) The formation of the official Steering Group was conducted via an open application process. As the number of qualified candidates was within the maximum capacity defined in Clause 3.3, those individuals were formally ratified to their positions without a ballot. All members met the eligibility criteria defined in Section 4.

b) From December 2025, where any vacancy arises in the Steering Group, elections may be held and HSPCF members can vote for new members to join the official Steering Group.

3.2 Steering Group Composition

a) The Steering Group members shall consist of no less than four and no more than twelve members.

b) Steering Group members shall be elected for a term of four years and shall be eligible to stand for re-election at the end of their term. A Steering Group member's term shall automatically cease if they no longer meet the eligibility criteria set out in Clause 4.

c) The Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected from within the Steering Group.

d) Each Officer role shall be held for an initial term of four years. At the end of this term, the Officer may continue in the same role for a further period up to four years without the requirement for re-election, providing they continue to meet the eligibility criteria set out in Clause 4.

e) No individual shall hold the same Officer role for more than eight consecutive years.

f) Upon reaching eight consecutive years, the individual must step down from the Officer role and may stand for re-election to the Steering Group following the election process.

g) If re-elected to the Steering Group, the individual may stand again for an Officer role subject to election by the Steering Group.

h) The Chair and Vice-Chair act as the administrator of the wider forum WhatsApp group and ensure it is used following the forum's guidelines. (Steering Group members may act as administrators if it is agreed upon).

4. Election Process for Steering Group Members

4.1 Any parent carer of a child or young person aged 0-25 with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) who is currently a member of the Hackney SEND Parent Carer Forum (HSPCF) shall be eligible to stand for election to the Steering Group if they meet either of the following criteria:

a) They are residents of the London Borough of Hackney.

b) They are non-residents of the London Borough of Hackney, and their child or young person currently accessing education and SEND services provided within the London Borough of Hackney. i.e., attending at a Hackney-based educational setting, receipt of a Hackney-issued Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or active engagement with Hackney SEND support services.

c) No two individuals from the same household shall serve simultaneously on the Steering Group. This restriction shall also apply to immediate family members, including spouses, partners, parents, children, siblings, or other relatives living at the same household.

d) Any member with a close familial relationship to a candidate standing for election must declare the relationship. Where a conflict of interest is identified that member, may be asked to abstain from voting in the relevant election.

4.2 Application Requirements

Candidates must submit a personal statement outlining:

- Why they wish to join the Steering Group.
- What they will contribute.
- How they will represent the wider community of SEND families in Hackney.

4.3 Nomination Procedure

a) Nominations open 4 weeks before the AGM or before a by-election if a mid-year vacancy arises.

b) Nominations must be sent in writing to the HSPCF Coordinator or Chair at least 14 days prior to the election date.

c) All nominations are reviewed by a neutral election panel (consisting of at least 2 current Steering Group members and one independent observer or external stakeholder (e.g., not Local Authority).

d) Steering Group members standing for election or re-election cannot sit on the election panel.

4.4 Voting Process

a) Voting will only take place if the number of candidates exceeds the number of available vacancies.

b) Each eligible HSPCF member is entitled to cast one vote.

c) Voting may be conducted in-person at the AGM or online via a secure voting platform.

The voting method will be agreed by the Steering Group and notified to members no less than 7 days prior to voting.

4.5 Election Result

a) Candidates with the highest number of votes will be appointed.

b) In case of a tie, a second vote may be held, or the Chair may cast a deciding vote if agreed by the election panel.

4.6 Term Commencement and Induction

a) Newly elected members begin their term at once following the announcement of results.

b) *All new Steering Group members must:*

- Sign the Code of Conduct.
- Complete a DBS check (if needed).
- Complete an induction within four weeks of appointment.

4.7 Mid-Term Vacancies

In case of a mid-term resignation, a by-election may be held, or the Steering Group may co-opt a member until the next AGM provided it does not exceed the maximum group size. The co-opted member may not have full voting rights.

5. Steering Group Resignation Protocols

a) The resigning member must send a formal written resignation letter to the Chair.

b) The Chair or a designated Steering Group member will offer an exit interview (via phone, in-person, or email) to reflect on the member's experience, gather feedback, and ensure a smooth transition.

c) Immediate Revocation of Access: All passwords to email accounts and other digital platforms the individual had access to must be changed without delay.

d) Account Access Termination: The resigning member must be denied access to all HSPCF related accounts and platforms at once upon resignation.

e) Removal from Communication Channels: The individual must also be removed from all Steering Group communication channels, including the Steering Group WhatsApp group, without exception.

f) Continued Involvement in the Wider Forum: The individual may continue to be a member of the wider HSPCF forum and will remain included in all general forum communications, including the the HSPCF wider forum WhatsApp group.

5.1 Resignation of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary or Treasurer

a) The Officer must send a formal written notice of resignation to all members of the Steering Group.

b) In the event that the resigning officer is the Chair, the Vice-Chair or another Steering Group member appointed by majority vote, will offer an exit interview (via phone, in person, or email) to reflect on the member's experience, gather feedback, and ensure a smooth transition.

c) For all other officer resignations, the Chair or designated Steering Group member will offer an exit interview (via phone, in-person, or email) to reflect on the member's experience, gather feedback, and ensure a smooth transition.

d) Security and Access Update - All administrative and digital access associated with that role (including email accounts, platform permissions, and WhatsApp Administrator status) will be revoked at once in line with clause 5(c)-5(e).

e) Priority Consideration for Runner-Up - Where the resigning officer was elected and there was a recorded runner-up candidate. The runner-up will be offered the opportunity first to take on the officer role, if they accept, this must be confirmed by a majority vote of the Steering Group.

f) Interim Appointment - If no suitable runner-up exists, the Steering Group may appoint another existing Steering Group member to act in the role on an interim basis by majority vote, to ensure continuity of governance.

g) Election to Fill the Vacancy - A formal internal election from within the Steering Group will take place, within 8 weeks, where practical or within 12 weeks of the resignation.

h) Continuation as Steering Group Member The resigning officer may continue as a general Steering Group member unless they also resign from the Steering Group or must step down under the Constitution.

i) Multiple Vacancies - If 2 or more officer roles become vacant at the same time, a Special General Meeting (SGM) must be called within 21 days to maintain effective governance.

j) Communication to Membership - All HSPCF members will be informed of the vacancy and the arrangements for filling it through a Forum wide communication may be explored.

6. Steering Group Requirements

a) Must have lived SEND experience.

b) Be committed to co-production and collaboration with the Local Authority, Health, Education and Social Care Services.

c) All members of the Steering Group may have to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This is due to their oversight responsibilities on the use of public funds by Hackney SEND Parent Carer Forum, as well as their access to and oversight of the collection and handling of member data.

d) All Steering Group members must sign the Hackney SEND Parent Carer Form Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interest form.

e) Members must also adhere to all organisational policies and procedures.

7. Rules for Steering Group members and Attendees

7.1 The Chair and Vice-chair will handle managing the agenda and ensure that all members are given opportunity to be heard.

7.2 The agenda should be driven by education, health, social care and leisure issues affecting Parents and Carers of children with SEND in Hackney. Strategy, overall priorities, and objectives are agreed at the AGM and in consultation with the wider Parent Carer Forum.

7.3 If items on the agenda require input from a representative of a statutory or voluntary body, the appropriate individual should be given adequate notice of the agenda item and invited as a guest at the HSPCF meetings.

7.4 If the HSPCF agrees to delegate responsibility for specific tasks to sub-groups, these should be trusted by all Steering Group members to undertake the task following the best interests of all members represented.

7.5 An individual outside the Steering Group, but within the membership of the HSPCF, can be delegated to represent the HSPCF on an external body providing this has been agreed prior to the meeting by the Steering Group.

7.6 If Steering Group members undertake representative roles on other steering groups, committees or external meetings related to the objectives of the HSPCF, they must ensure that they share information and feedback to the HSPCF within 14 days of attending such meetings.

7.7 If any Steering Group member has a conflict or duality of interest in any matters arising, they must declare this at the earliest opportunity, or when that matter is discussed, and advise the Steering Group accordingly. The declaration shall be recorded in the minutes.

The Steering Group member must withdraw from both discussion and voting on that matter. Local Authority, Education, or Health Authority employees, who wish to take part as Steering Group members must also follow this Constitution and their respective professional and employer codes of conduct.

7.8 Steering Group members and attendees are:

a) To always abide by the Constitution and all other HSPCF Governance Policies and Procedures.

b) To always adhere to the Code of Conduct and core values.

c) To actively contribute to the work of HSPCF as delegated to them under the terms of the forum policy.

d) To consult with and inform the members of relevant issues arising from the HSPCF, and to gather views and opinions from local parents and carers to bring to HSPCF meetings for discussion and decision making.

e) To champion issues relevant to families and children and young people with SEND up to 25 years of age.

f) The HSPCF's focus is working in partnership with education, health, and social care agencies to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND through coproduction and consultation. Government funding does not allow HSPCF to engage directly in campaigning; however, the Forum may agree to support and share information on relevant campaigns, as agreed by the Steering Group.

g) SEND-related fundraising or awareness posts may be shared at the discretion of the Steering Group; sharing does not imply endorsement, and the forum is not an advertising platform.

7.9 Steering Group Meeting Arrangements

a) Visitors, speakers, and other attendees: These are to attend by invitation only and after majority agreement from HSPCF Steering Group either at a steering group meeting or otherwise through general correspondence.
b) Minutes are to be circulated within 14 days after an HSPCF meeting.
c) Frequency of Meetings: The Steering Group will meet at least every 6 weeks with additional shorter meetings in between where is needed. An Annual General Meeting (AGM) may be held every 12 months. Where Steering Group members' terms expire or vacancies arise, elections shall take place at the AGM following this Constitution. Failure to meet the required meeting frequency shall not invalidate decisions properly taken at quorate meetings.

d) Structure of Meetings: A draft agenda to be circulated a minimum of 7 days prior to the HSPCF meeting. Constitutional and policy amendments must follow Section 13.

e) Agenda Submissions: Agenda items must be sent at least 10 days prior to the meeting. Items sent after circulation of the draft agenda may only be considered with agreement of majority of Steering Group members present.

f) Times, dates, and venues: Are to be agreed by HSPCF Steering Group. A schedule of HSPCF meetings will be drawn up each year at the Annual General Meeting or by mutual consensus thereafter. Primary consideration will be that meetings are held in term times and at varied hours of the day and days of the week to be as inclusive as possible.

g) Accessibility and additional needs: Meetings of the Steering Group will be held in meeting spaces that are inclusive and meet the various needs of its members and potential members, considering adjustments for disabilities, home/work situations, and caring responsibilities.

7.10 Each member of the Steering Group

a) Will have 1 vote each.

b) The Steering Group recognises that there will be differences of opinion and priority between members. Decisions will be made by consensus where possible or where not possible by majority.

c) The Chair will have the casting vote if a majority is not reached.

d) There should be a quorum of no less than 50% of Steering Group members present for a decision to be made, subject to a minimum of three members.

e) The Steering Group shall exercise its responsibilities reasonably, in good faith, and in the best interests of Hackney SEND Parent Carer Forum and its membership.

f) *Expenses and Recognition of Participation:*

- Out-of-pocket Expenses: Members may claim for actual costs incurred while on Forum business (e.g., travel via public transport or receipted childcare).
- Stipends/Honoraria: At its discretion, the Steering Group may offer a flat-rate stipend to recognise the 'lived experience' expertise provided by parent representatives in strategic meetings.
- Employment Status: To ensure compliance with national guidelines, it is explicitly stated that these payments are not wages and do not create an employer-employee relationship.
- Accountability: All such payments will be recorded and made available for inspection as per the Financial Policy, outlined in Section 12.3 of this Constitution.

g) HSPCF will provide regular feedback to its membership via updates on the official website and through quarterly newsletters. This communication will include outcomes from consultation, participation work undertaken, and the tangible effect these activities have had on local services.

8. Attendance and participation in Steering Group

8.1 Members are expected to attend all Steering Group meetings, as these are held only twice per term. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they should inform the HSPCF Coordinator or Chair in advance via email, WhatsApp, or Basecamp.

8.2 Any member who misses three Steering Group meetings may be asked to step down from their role. Consideration will be given in cases where circumstances beyond the member's control prevent attendance.

8.3 If a Steering Group member consistently fails to meet their commitments, does not contribute meaningfully, or does not participate in required activities (including attending meetings, engaging in working groups, or representing parent voices), the Steering Group by majority vote may ask the member to step down. This ensures accountability and the effective functioning of the Forum.

8.4 Membership will be reviewed annually to ensure the representation remains inclusive and reflective of the borough's SEND community.

8.5 Each member will be responsible for representing the views of a wider group of parents. Thus, each member should have a system of networking and sending information to other parents.

8.6 A parent wishing to be a member of the HSPCF Steering Group will produce a personal statement detailing how they would be representative of other parents.

8.7 The Steering Group shall comprise at least 80% parent carers. Places may also be held by specialist workers representing small community groups (e.g., Traveller's, Somali Community, Orthodox Jewish Community and Elective Home Education Community). Such specialist workers will be nominated by their respective community groups of parents.

9. Conflict of Interest and Eligibility

9.1 The Hackney SEND Parent Carer Forum (HSPCF) recognises that some members may hold paid or voluntary roles within organisations operating in similar, related, or overlapping areas to the Forum's work, including but not limited to SEND provision, advocacy, service delivery, commissioning, policy development, or formal representation.

a) Individuals holding such roles are welcome to be members of the wider HSPCF and may participate fully in general Forum activities, consultations, and engagement opportunities.

b) To protect the independence, integrity, and credibility of the Forum, and to avoid actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest, individuals who hold a significant paid or voluntary position within a similar or related organisation shall not be eligible to serve on the HSPCF Steering Group or to hold any decision-making, officer, or governance role.

c) For the purposes of this Constitution, a significant position includes, but is not limited to, roles involving:

- Governance or trusteeship
- Senior leadership or management
- Paid employment or consultancy
- Commissioning or contractual decision-making
- Formal representation on behalf of another organisation

9.2 Where a conflict of interest could arise:

All members, Steering Group members, and office holders must complete and maintain a Declaration of Interest form, declaring any actual or potential conflicts of interest, and must update this declaration promptly if their circumstances change.

a) Where a conflict of interest arises that does not fall under Clause 9.1(c), the Steering Group may require the individual to withdraw from specific discussions, decisions, or activities, following the HSPCF Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest procedures.

b) Failure to declare a conflict of interest or acting in a manner that compromises or is reasonably perceived to compromise the independence or reputation of the Forum, may result in suspension or termination of membership or role, in accordance with Section 15 of this Constitution.

c) The Steering Group shall decide, acting reasonably, whether a role constitutes a significant position for the purposes of this clause.

d) We are committed to acting fairly, proportionately, and respectfully in all matters relating to conduct, resignation, and dispute resolution.

10. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

10.1 The Annual General Meeting may be held within 12 months of the previous AGM. In exceptional circumstances, the Steering Group may postpone the AGM for up to a period of no more than six additional months, provided that members are notified in writing of the reason for postponement and given a revised date.

10.2 At the AGM, the following will take place:

a) An annual report from the Steering Group and the Chair(s) including a summary of achievements and activities carried out by the HSPCF, during the preceding year.

b) Members who meet the eligibility criteria set out in Clauses 4.1 and 4.2 may stand for election, vote, or can be elected if there are vacancies.

c) The Steering Group shall review the constitution in advance and work with the members by sharing it for feedback.

d) All HSPCF members are invited to attend the AGM and vote for steering group members if there are vacancies.

11. Special General Meetings (SGM)

a) Special General Meeting may be called by the Chair or Vice Chair if half of the membership of the Steering Group request such a meeting in writing stating the business to be considered.

b) Where the Steering Group consents to an SGM being held, the relevant officer shall call such a meeting giving at least 14 days' notice to all members. The notice shall state the business to be discussed.

12. Finance/Expenses

12.1 Grant Compliance

The disbursement of any funds held by HSPCF shall be strictly commensurate with the conditions of its grants (e.g., Department for Education / Contact) and solely to further the aims of Forums as set out in Section 2 of this Constitution.

12.2 Financial Controls

- **Bank Account:** HSPCF shall maintain a bank account in the name of the Forum
- **Authorised Signatories:** There must be at least two authorised signatories for all financial transactions.
- **Independence:** The 2 signatories must not be related, be partners, or live in the same household to prevent financial mismanagement or perceived conflict of interest.
- **Approval:** All expenditure must be approved by the Steering Group or following the limits set in the HSPCF Financial Policy.

12.3 Reporting and Oversight

- The Treasurer shall provide a written financial report to the Steering Group every quarter, detailing income, expenditure, and remaining balances.
- Annual Account: An annual statement of accounts shall be prepared and presented to the membership at the AGM.
- Audit/Inspection: The accounts shall be available for inspection by any member of the Steering Group or by the grant-funding body upon reasonable request.

12.4 Expenses and Recognition

- Out-of-pocket Expenses: Steering Group members and volunteers may claim for actual costs incurred while on Forum business (e.g., travel via public transport or receipted childcare), subject to the production of valid receipts.
- Remuneration: Any flat-rate stipends or honoraria offered to recognise "lived experience" expertise must be processed following the HSPCF Remuneration Policy and HMRC guidelines to ensure they do not create an employer-employee relationship.

13. Changes to the Constitution

13.1 This Constitution is agreed by HSPCF.

13.2 It can be amended as required only with the majority agreement of the HSPCF Steering Group. Proposed amendments must be sent in full written wording at least ten days prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered. These must be circulated with the meeting agenda. Amendments to the Constitution shall not introduced or approved under Any Other Business (AOB).

13.3 In exceptional circumstances requiring urgent amendments for legal or safeguarding reasons, the Steering Group may agree by unanimous vote at a quorate meeting to waive the notice period.

13.4 It will be reviewed annually to ensure it still meets the requirements of the HSPCF.

13.5 The Policy and Procedure Subgroup will be responsible for developing, drafting, and updating HSPCF policies and documents. All amendments must be presented to and approved by majority decision of the Steering Group at a quorate meeting before they take effect.

14. Complaints against HSPCF

14.1 Complaints will be dealt with following HSPCF's Complaints, Grievance, Internal Disciplinary and Procedures Policy.

(The Constitution does not create a separate or parallel complaint process).

Once a complaint or grievance has proceeded to formal review and a written outcome has been issued following the above policy, including completion of any appeal process provided for with the policy, the matter shall be considered formally concluded.

14.2 The Constitution does not provide for automatic reopening of concluded matters. A review may only be considered where clear evidence of a material procedural defect is submitted in writing within the timeframe specified in the relevant policy.

(A material procedural defect means significant failure to follow the process set out in the Complaints, Grievance, Internal Disciplinary and Procedures Policy which has materially affected the fairness or outcome of a decision).

HSPCF reserves the right to manage unreasonable, persistent, repetitive, overlapping, or vexatious complaints and behaviour in accordance with its Complaints, Grievance, Internal Disciplinary and Procedures Policy and general governance duties, to protect the effective functioning, resources, and wellbeing of the Forum.

14.3 The Complaints Officer's role shall carry out their responsibilities as defined in full within the Complaints, Grievance, Internal Disciplinary and Procedures Policy, including oversight of due process, investigation management, communication of outcomes, and appeal handling where applicable. (This Constitution does not extend, reduce, or override the authority of the Complaints Officer as set out in that policy).

15. Termination of Membership or Steering Group Role

15.1 HSPCF reserves the right to suspend or end the membership of any individual in the following circumstances:

- Breach of the Code of Conduct.
- Failure to adhere to organisational policies and procedures.
- Persistent failure to attend meetings without reasonable explanation.
- Breach of confidentiality.
- Conflict of interest not declared.
- Actions that bring HSPCF into disrepute.

15.2 Suspension or termination will be decided by a majority vote of the Steering Group, following consideration of evidence and in accordance with the HSPCF Complaint, Grievance, Internal Disciplinary and Procedures Policy where applicable.

15.3 The individual will have the right to respond in writing before any final decision is made. Where matters constitute alleged misconduct, the disciplinary process set out in the Complaint, Grievance, Internal Disciplinary and Procedures Policy shall be followed.

15.4 Any decision to suspend or end membership must be proportionate, evidence-based and undertaken in accordance with due process as set out in the Complaint, Grievance, Internal Disciplinary and Procedures Policy.

No suspension or termination shall occur outside the procedural safeguards set out in that policy

16. Conflict Resolution

16.1 Where disagreements or disputes arise between members or within the Steering Group:

16.2 The Chair and Vice-Chair will attempt to mediate informally, where appropriate and proportionate.

16.3 If unresolved, the matter may be referred to the HSPCF Complaints Officer, an independent mediator or external facilitator following the Complaint, Grievance, Internal Disciplinary and Procedures Policy.

16.4 All disputes will be managed following the HSPCF's Complaint, Grievance, Internal Disciplinary and Procedures Policy. The Constitution does not allow parallel or repeated processes for the same substantive matter once it has been formally concluded under the Complaint, Grievance, Internal Disciplinary and Procedures Policy, including completion of any appeal stage.

This provision is intended to preserve procedural fairness, finality, and the effective governance of the Forum.

16.5 If necessary, an extraordinary meeting may be called to resolve significant internal disputes.

16.6 Conflict resolution should be conducted following restorative justice practices.

16.7 The Steering Group keeps the authority to decline to reopen, or reconsider matters that have been properly concluded under the Complaint, Grievance, Internal Disciplinary and Procedures Policy, unless a material procedural defect is shown within the relevant timeframe. A decision to reopen a concluded matter shall require a clear majority vote of the non-conflicted Steering Group members present at a quorate meeting. In the absence of such majority, the matter shall remain closed.

17. Transparency and Accountability

17.1 To support transparency, minutes of Annual General Meetings (AGM), Special General Meetings (SGM), and wider Forum meetings will be shared with HSPCF members upon request and made available via email.

17.2 Financial reports will be made available at the AGM.

17.3 Any payments to Steering Group members (e.g., for childcare, travel, or lived-experience stipends) must be recorded, reconciled against receipts, and made available for inspection as per the financial reporting requirements outlined in Section 12.3 of this Constitution.

17.4 HSPCF will publish an annual summary of activity and outcomes achieved through participation and co-production.

18. Data Protection and Information Governance

18.1 Compliance

HSPCF shall adhere to the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

18.2 Consent and Communication

- Newsletters: Member data will only be used for the purpose of sending newsletters and forum updates where explicit "opt-in" consent has been obtained.
- Withdrawal: Members have the right to withdraw consent and "unsubscribe" from communications at any time.

18.3 Data Handling

- Storage: Member data will be stored securely, and access will be limited to Steering Group members with a legitimate administrative need.
- Third Parties: Member data will not be shared with the Local Authority, Health partners, or third parties without explicit prior consent.

18.4 Transparency

A clear Privacy Notice will be available on the HSPCF website, explaining how data is collected, used, and protected.

19. Dissolution of HSPCF

19.1 If HSPCF is no longer able to continue its activities, a Special General Meeting must be called with at least 21 days' notice.

19.2 Dissolution can only occur with a two-thirds majority vote of those present and eligible to vote.

19.3 Any remaining funds will be transferred in accordance with the funder requirement or to a not-for-profit organisation with similar aims.

19.4 All digital and paper records will be securely destroyed or transferred in line with data protection law.

20. Associated Documents and Policies

The following documents form part of the Hackney SEND Parent Carer Forum (HSPCF) governance framework which shall be attached as appendices:

- Code of Conduct
- Role Description - Chair
- Role Description - Vice-Chair
- Role Description – Secretary
- Role Description - Treasurer
- Role Description - Steering Group Member

Policies

- Complaints, Grievance, Internal Disciplinary and Procedures Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Privacy Notice
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- WhatsApp Policy