**Deputation Request for CSF on 11 November 2024 submitted by Dana Klopot
AI technologies and SEND support**

Introduction
Thank you for the opportunity to speak today on behalf of parents and educators facing the challenges of supporting neurodivergent children in our community. Many families endure long waiting times for assessments, limited access to resources, and difficulties coordinating care across education, health, and social services. These challenges create a significant burden on both families and schools.

Section 1: Setting Out the Issue
The current system struggles to meet the rising demand for SEND support. Many children experience years-long waits for a diagnosis, during which their educational and developmental needs are not fully met. This impacts not only their learning and well-being but also places additional pressure on schools and educators, who may lack the necessary resources to provide adequate support.

Section 2: Potential Solutions
There is a promising role for AI-driven technology in supporting SEND needs by streamlining processes and providing real-time assistance to educators, parents, and specialists. AI can help identify early signs of neurodivergence, facilitate personalized education plans, and improve collaboration among all stakeholders involved in a child's care. Integrating AI into the current system can enhance efficiency and responsiveness, ensuring timely support for children.

- **Early Intervention**: Evidence based research with AI support could assist in flagging developmental or learning challenges that might otherwise go unnoticed until later stages, enabling early intervention.
- **Reducing Administrative Burden**: By automating parts of the Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) process, AI can make it easier to track progress and adjust plans as needed, freeing up valuable time for educators.
- **Enhancing Communication**: AI could improve coordination between parents, schools, and healthcare professionals, ensuring all parties are informed and aligned on a child's needs.

New Mandatory SEND Training for Teachers
With the new mandatory SEND training requirements for teachers, there is an opportunity to provide every teacher in pilot schools with access to SEND and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses through a pilot project. This training would equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively support neurodivergent children, enhancing the overall impact of any technological solutions.

Exploring Public-Private Partnerships for Research and Pilot Programs
We propose that the Council explore the benefits of public-private partnerships or pilot initiatives to assess the impact of AI-assisted technology in supporting SEND students. Through these partnerships, complimentary access to AI solutions and CPD training for teachers could be provided, along with valuable research data to evaluate the effectiveness of AI in the SEND context. This data could inform Council policies on SEND support and shape future interventions.

Closing Remarks

I am here to request that the Council consider the potential of AI technologies to support SEND children. Pilot programmes and research co developed with local authorities, parents and educators could help demonstrate the benefits of AI-assisted support while generating research opportunities to address critical issues for SEND children in the borough.

For Camden Council, this early identification can translate into considerable budget savings. By addressing developmental and learning challenges proactively, AI can reduce the need for more intensive, costly interventions down the line. Early action informed by red flags can decrease the reliance on specialized services, optimize resource allocation, and ultimately make support systems more cost-effective for the Council.