

Peterborough Awarded Share of £88m Youth Funding

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Peterborough is expected to benefit from a portion of a new £88 million youth services fund, part of a government scheme aimed at expanding access to extracurricular activities for young people across England.

The initiative, announced by Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, will see funds distributed to local authorities for projects such as youth clubs, sports, and music programmes. Although

the specific allocation for Peterborough has yet to be disclosed, the city council confirmed it had secured funding.

Councillor Katy Cole, Peterborough City Council's Cabinet Member for Children's Services, said the council was "absolutely delighted" to receive support from the scheme, which aims to help young people develop outside the classroom in what ministers described as an increasingly "digital world."

Plans are underway to establish the region's first dedicated "youth zone" in Peterborough, a facility designed to provide a wide range of structured activities and support for young people. This move is part of the council's wider ambition to position Peterborough as a "child-friendly city."

Peterborough City Council is currently led by a minority Labour administration. Council leader Dennis Jones, a former youth and community worker, welcomed the funding. "Too many people have told us for too long that there is nothing for young people to do," he said. "This announcement is a step in the right direction and aligns with our broader goals for children and young people in the city."

While the initiative is being positioned by the Labour-led government as a flagship youth policy, critics have raised concerns nationally about the broader effectiveness of such schemes. In recent years, successive governments have scaled back local youth services, often citing budget constraints. The current funding drive is seen by some as an effort to reverse earlier reductions.

Nevertheless, the funding presents a timely opportunity for cities like Peterborough, which has long faced challenges around youth engagement and social mobility. The council is expected to draw up an action plan in the coming months outlining how the funding will be spent and which areas will benefit first.

The government has said the investment is designed to equip young people with more opportunities close to home, offering alternatives to screen time and building community ties through positive, structured activities.