

KGA



**Minutes of the KGA County Governors Meeting
Held on Monday 30 October 2017
Held in John Wigan Room, Oakwood House, Oakwood Park
Maidstone ME16 8AE**

➤ **Welcome and Chairman's Report**

Janice Brooke, Chair of the KGA, welcomed all governors to the meeting. She explained that she had been appointed as Chair of the Kent Governance Association in September and was pleased to have been offered the position. She thanked Jack Keeler who had stood in as Interim Chair having been chair previously and his assistance had been invaluable. Governors were urged to sign up on CPD On-line for the Assembly and District meetings as it would make for catering for numbers at the events easier.

➤ **Simon Pleave (Revenue & Finance Manager, KCC)**

National Funding Formula

Simon Pleave introduced himself to governors and showed a presentation on screen.

• **National Context**

- SofS announcement in mid-July confirming introduction of NFF and an additional £1.3bn of funding for schools
- This is in addition to the £1.3bn announced on the 2015 spending review
- National school budgets increasing from just under £41bn in 2017-18 to £43.5bn in 2019-20, an increase of 6.3%
- Approx half of the 2.6bn relates to pupil growth
- Soft NFF confirmed for 2018 – 2019 and 2019-20
 - o Meaning we can still operate a local funding formula
 - o And still a key role for Schools' Funding Forum
 - o But some tough decisions and competing priorities
- Governments intention is to implement Hard NFF in the future (exact date unspecified) but our understanding is that this is subject to a change in primary legislation

• **How does a Soft NFF Work?**

- The NFF factors & rates are applied to all schools
- Maximum gains are capped at +3%
- Check that all schools are receiving +0.5%
- Then check that schools are receiving at least the Minimum Funding Levels (trumps +3%)
 - o Primary = £3,300 in 18-19 and £3,500 in 19-20 per pupil
 - o Secondary = £4,600 in 18 – 19 and £4,900 in 19-20 per pupil
- Revised school figures are then aggregated up to LA level to provide a revised Schools Block

• **What does this mean in £'s**

- Schools block – using current school data
 - o 2018 – 19 = +£27.6m (+3.3%)
 - o 2019 – 20 = +£22.3M (+£2.6%)
- This is before including rising pupil population
- High Needs block = + £2.1m in 2018-2019, +0.9m in 2019-20
- Central School Services block = - £171k in 2018-19 and then a further £197k in 2019-20

Larger primary schools in affluent areas were likely to attract the funding level. If a school was in an area of high need, the school would attract different funding. Grammar schools will attract the Minimum funding level in the secondary sector.

There was a rising pupil population in Kent so there would be more money available. There was a growing demand for High Needs with a small increase in funding. There would be a period of the High Needs budget being capped.

- **Big Picture on DSG**

Shown on screen for the benefit of governors. Kent would attract a 7.4% increase in funding. 3% of which was genuine new money.

- **How do we compare to OLAs?**

In relation to Kent

- Our average DSG per pupil increases from £4,145 to £4,452
- Our ranked position changes from 140 to 114, +26
- We were 8.8% below the national average and we will be 5.5% below
- We will receive a 7.4% increase when NFF implemented (+5.9% over the next 2 years)

Kent was the 10th worst funded school at 140 out of 150 but with the funding would increase its position to 114. There was still an inequity between London Boroughs compared to what Kent received.

- **Local Flexibility**

- We can continue to move funding from Schools Block to meet pressure in High Needs Block
 - o Restructured to 0.5% of Schools block to £43m but requires Forum approval
- We can choose a local Minimum Funding Guarantee rate of between (0% and 1.5% (stability v fairness?))
- We can introduce a Minimum Funding Level factor in our local funding formula

Kent could look to have a Minimum Funding Guarantee rate. Governors would need to be aware if their school was in receipt of MFG.

- **Other Issues**

- The NFF lump sum rate is £10k lower than our current rate
- The NFF rates for English as Additional Language pupils are significantly lower than our current rates.
- The NFF no longer includes a LAC factor, but the Pupil Premium Plus has increased from £1,900 to £2,300 per LAC pupil from 2018-19
- PFI factor will now be increased annually by RPIX

The area changing most was the rate for children with EAL which would reduce from £3k+ to around £1k+ which was a significant decrease. LAC money would be coming into schools in a different route via PP.

- **KCC Consultation with Schools**

- Today we have launched our consultation with all schools – runs for just over 4 weeks – closes on Sunday 26 November
- Consultation consists of
- Consultation document (word and pdf)
- Individual School Illustration Model (excel)
- Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (word and pdf)
- Online response form – need to register to submit

- **Which Overarching Principles should we follow?**

- Should we look to move towards the NFF factors and rates asap?
- Should we ignore NFF and focus on our local priorities~?
- Should we look to move towards the NFF but also take into consideration local circumstances?

- **If we went with Option a)**

Slide shown on screen. There was local discretion on whether to go with Option A or do something different.

- **KCC Consultation with Schools**

- Initial question on general principle
- Followed by 18 specific proposals about changes to individual factors/rates and other matters
- Prioritisation question – top 5 most important to you
- Invite comments on our EqIA
- General comments

An individual school illustration accompanied the consultation. To make an evaluation, there would be three options to choose from: Lump sum, Minimum Funding Guarantee, and Minimum Funding Level. Each of the criteria would show what the impact would be on an individual school. Option C would take into consideration some local circumstances and would seem to be a possible way forward.

Was there a possibility of a small schools' grant? There was a proposal in the consultation called Sparcity which could possibly help if a school was in a very rural area. In those cases, the most a small school could attract was £25K. The information and list of schools which would attract Sparcity funding was listed in the funding document.

- **Timetable**

- 30 – October launch all school consultation
- During November – Headteacher Briefings
- 22 November – Update KCC CYPE Cabinet Committee
- 1 December – SFF meeting
- 11 December – KCC Cabinet leading to a decision on formula changes
- January/February – school budgets calculated

The timetable would affect every maintained school or academy. Academy funding hung off or calculated off the local funding formula.

Governors raised the following questions:

- **How was the LA proposing that the process would work and would the largest response feed into what would happen?** The LA genuinely wanted responses from the school and what their views were.
- **Was there any possibility that primary schools with less than 1 form entry could be eligible for the extra funding?** There was no allowance for a tiered lump sum and was not something the LA could do within the current School Finance regulations.
- **If the Government's policy was to try and reduce the differences between the schools, why was the 3% added which increased the gap in the long term?** In reality, the LA could choose to put more money in lower attainment or deprivation. Not every school would attract extra funding. If the LA chose to put more money into KS4 then all schools would be entitled to the extra funding.
- **Was 3% the maximum that could be applied?** Not every school would attract a % increase.
- **Would the results of the consultation be transparent?** Yes.
- **Were consultations legally binding?** The LA had a legal duty to consult but could ignore the results; that would be a foolish thing to do.
- **Was it possible to review the research for Option C?** Simon Pleace commented that at the time of the meeting it had been a feeling of members. Some schools would gain, and some would be losers.
- **Were you expecting schools to give a unified response?** Some people within one school would have different responses but the LA was encouraging schools to submit one result per school.
- **What is happening with the budget for special schools?** Special Schools would receive a minimal increase from the DfE.
- **In relation to Option B which was for a more even distribution of funding, what was the LA's proposal?** No modelling had been undertaken for option B as that had not been reviewed at the current time. A model could be built up fairly quickly. It was the 18 questions within the consultation that schools were being asked to respond to.
- **How could schools make a decision without having all the information?** The current funding level plus 3.3% was Option B. Option C was trying to achieve a balance between Options A and B.

Governors were asked to submit any further questions via the Chair which would be forwarded to Simon Pleace to be answered.

The Chair thanked Mr Pleace for his presentation to governors.

➤ **Patrick Leeson (Corporate Director) Children, Young People & Education**
Update on Results in Kent

Patrick Leeson explained that if there had been a fairer adjustment of funding, Kent would have moved higher up the ranking for funding. The questions in the consultation document were important for the LA to consider which schools would gain and those who would lose. The consultation was not a vote as the LA had a responsibility to look out for the losers.

There were a number of schools in Kent approaching a deficit position given that there had been 7 years of flat cash. The LA had also looked at various levels of funding in budgets that were spent on staffing and some schools spent at least 80% on staffing. Governors were advised to review the benchmarking closely as the level of spend going forward would require some adjustment. Although there was extra coming into the Kent system i.e. £50M plus £12M to come. Schools would have to try and reduce their costs and look at different ways of delivery.

Schools Finance were already working with the AEOs (Area Education Officers) with a number of schools in terms of financial recovery and planning over the next three years.

If a school was receiving help, would the LA inform the GB or was it the school that would point out the position to the GB? Patrick Leeson replied that he would be amazed if the GB was not aware that the school was receiving help.

Patrick Leeson went through the presentation shown on screen for the benefit of governors.

- **2017 Results EYFS**
 - The provisional Early Years Foundation Results of 74.3% were in line with the 2016 figure of 74.8%
 - The outcome was above the Emerging National figure of 70.7%
- **2017 Results Key Stage 1**
 - In Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined, 68.3% of Kent pupils met or exceeded the expected standard compared with 63.7% nationally
 - In Reading, 79% of pupils in Kent met or exceeded the expected standard, compared with 76% nationally
 - In Writing, 72% of Kent pupils met or exceeded the expected standard, compared with 68% nationally
 - In Mathematics, 785 of pupils in Kent met or exceeded the expected standard, compared with 75% nationally

The results showed that schools were building well on increased pupil outcomes in EYFS and it also raised the bar for KS2. Therefore, there should be better outcomes for KS2. Governors were urged to review the progress rates between KS1 and KS2. There should be a certain level of expectation with the children over the next 4 years and what they will achieve at the end of KS2. The most important thing in the system was progress and the rates of progress are what governors should pay most attention to. Every year the children were in school they should make a certain level of progress given their individual starting points.

- **2017 Results Key Stage 2**
 - 64% of Kent pupils met or exceeded the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined, compared with 61% nationally
 - In Reading, 74% of pupils in Kent met or exceeded the expected standard, compared to 71% nationally
 - In Writing, 80% of pupils met or exceeded the expected standard, compared to 76% nationally
 - In Mathematics, 76% of pupils met or exceeded the expected standard, compared to 75% nationally
 - In Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling, 76% of pupils met or exceeded the expected standard compared to 77% nationally

There had been an increase in the levels of learning and attainment for Maths because of the change in the National Curriculum but overall standards in KS2 were continuing to improve year on year. The results were better than the previous year and the national average. The slight 'wobble' was GPS (Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling) at 76% compared to 77% nationally. Kent struggled but a greater focus was required on the subject. The children needed to be competent in their writing to be able to move on to secondary school.

- **KS2 Achievement Gap**
 - At KS2, the FSM gap is 25.4% - the same as the previous year (42.3% pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths compared to 37% in 2016)
 - For SEN pupils, the gap is 53% compared to 52% in 2016 (19.4% of SEN pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths compared to 16% in 2016)
 - The Gender Gap is 7% compared to 5% in 2016

- **2017 Results Key Stage 4**

At KS4 in 2017, comparisons with performance in 2016 are difficult to make, given the implementation of new grades and more demanding examinations

- For the basic measure, the proportion of pupils achieving good grades (9-4) in English and mathematics, the figure is 63.2%, similar to 2016
 - Performance is the old measure of the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more good GCSE grades (standard pass) including English and mathematics is 60%. This is an improvement on last year's figure of 57% and the 2016 national average.
 - So far, 50% of Secondary schools have met or exceeded their 2016 performance in this measure
- New GCSE syllabuses were kicking in for the first time in 2017 and making things difficult for students to achieve the required standards. The results were positive at an enormous time of change.

- **2017 Results Key Stage 4**

- The average Attainment 8 score for Kent is 47.1 compared to 50.4 in 2016
- The Progress 8 score is -0.11 compared to 0.04 in 2016, when the national average was -0.03
- Performance in the English Baccalaureate measure has fallen by 2.1% this year to 27.4%, however this is above the 2016 national figure of 24.8%

- **Results Post 16**

At Post 16, a new grading system has been introduced and consequently, 2017 results cannot be directly compared to those in 2016:

- 75% of schools across Kent improved Average Points Score per entry at A level compared to 2016 figures
- 41% of schools met or exceeded the 2016 national figures for Average Points Score per entry at A level
- 60% of schools met or exceeded the 2016 national figures for Average Points Score per entry at Applied General level
- 55% of schools met or exceeded the 2016 national figures for Average Points Score per entry at Technical level
- The Kent Average Points Score currently shows improved figures compared to 2016 and exceeds the national average for 2016

Question: Progress 8 was made up of averages? Was the LA calculating the hard numbers to measure attainment and progress in that way?

Patrick Leeson replied that it was measured by individual school and calculated on general averages.

➤ **Review of High Needs Funding – Findings and Proposals**

Patrick Leeson explained that spending on High Needs Funding had increased more than had been anticipated and spend would be in the region of £27M for the current academic year. However, the LA could not go on spending at that rate of increase and had to look at the process, how the schools were using the money and see if useful changes could be made. Up to 2014 – 2015 High Needs funding did not exist as children had statements and some of those children received additional funding as they had high levels of complex needs. New concepts were introduced for children with special needs and where schools were spending £6K on children that had needs which the LA would have to top up. High Needs funding was introduced in 2015 and would allocate the funding to schools without a child having to have an EHCP which was designed to get earlier intervention to meet the needs of the child and to avoid the costs of the statutory assessment

- **The Review:**

- Delivered the first point
- It delivered earlier intervention
- It had not delivered a reduction in the requests for statutory assessment was not at 16%. Most of the requests were coming from parents, not the schools, as they wanted the security of the statutory plan going forward.
- It was the GBs' job in terms of strategy and policy for SEN to commit to working much more closely with parents to persuade them that what the school was providing was good support when their children had particular needs
- When do you need a statutory plan? When leaving primary school to go to a special school. Half of the children in primary schools supported by High Needs funded went on to a special school and not a mainstream secondary school.

When a child had complex needs, it was important for the school to work with the health services and for some children who have a physical impairment, Social Services to assist the family and their child. For most EHCPs there was an educational need only which could be addressed in school and what the school should be focussing on is learning and progress. The question for the review is what the money was being used for when allocated to a mainstream school.

- **Overarching Aims of the Review**

- To ensure the High Needs top up budget was more predictable and more closely linked to patterns of need
- To ensure the budget continues to fund the top up required by schools to support the pupils with the most complex needs that may otherwise warrant statutory assessment
- To ensure the budget is used well in tandem with other resources such as LIFT to get the best outcomes for pupils
- To develop new models of funding as the increase in HNF is not sustainable
- Patrick Leeson assured governors that High Needs Funding was not being cut or reduced, but changes needed to be made about who it was for and need to return to the idea that the funding was for the children with the most complex needs in the school. The complex needs would need to be defined.

- **Best Practice**

Schools, regardless of size, with proportionally smaller numbers of children with HNF:

- Identified their universal offer for SEN as a whole school response (whole school budget) or graduated approach; included details of Quality First Teaching (QFT) and in class differentiation; highlighting SEN is the class teacher's responsibility
- Plan SEN provision with class teachers responsible for in-depth provision mapping
- Monitor the progress of SEN pupils and overall effectiveness of the interventions by class teachers with oversight from the SENCo and SMT.

One of the difficulties was that the LA was up against was the fact that parents in the school process were speaking to specialists who advocated one to one teaching? Some children needed interventions, but most children did not need to spend most of the week where they were attached to one other adult.

Provision mapping in schools for children detailed the relevant SEN provision. Children on the autistic spectrum need to have their needs met and it only takes small adjustments to the classroom or environment to make that happen through provision mapping. Whole school training was key. The whole school would need to be expert in speech and language support, autism, and emotional behaviour difficulties i.e. classroom strategies, interventions and ways of communicating with children. An autistic child required a controlled learning programme.

- **Best Practice Schools**

- Focus on developing independent learning skills as well as achieving SEN outcomes
- Involve pupils and parents in planning provision
- Have trained teaching assistants (TAs) delivering small group interventions
- Have class teachers work with children with SEN, individually or as part of a group
- Have SMART targets set and tracked for time limited interventions
- Use evidence based interventions

There had been a 17% increase in TAs and a 2% reduction in teachers over the past couple of years.

- **Review Findings**

- The demand for HNF does not always follow a pattern related to pupil profile and levels of need across the schools
- Wide variations in uses and access to HNF in schools across the county
- Over-reliance on a TA providing one to one support and not always evidenced based interventions for pupils
- More inclusive schools with whole school approaches to SEN make less demand on HNF
- Training for all staff is needed to raise capacity in schools to address ASD, Speech & Language and SEMH
- Understanding of 'normally available resource' and 'best endeavours' means some schools do not know their budget and how to support SEN
- Effectiveness and impact of provision is variable re pupil outcomes
- Need to re-visit the criteria and decision-making process for HNF to ensure resources are allocated to pupils with more complex needs and funding is spent on the most effective interventions.
- Schools with similar characteristics (Size, IDACI, Prior Attainment) have very contrasting numbers of High Needs funded pupils, some are out of line with the patterns or trends for most similar schools
- Four groups of schools emerged:
 - o Very inclusive, good provision, little HNF demand
 - o Appropriate levels of demand on HNF; used well
 - o Over reliance on HNF and TAs; some ineffective interventions
 - o Very little use of HNF, do not always engage in LIFT and may not have effective SEN provision

- **Proposals – More Effective targeting of HNF Eligibility, Affordability**

- Focus on pupils with the most complex needs
- Clarify resources available to schools
- Use whole school budget and district LIFT
- Avoid unnecessary statutory assessment and use earlier intervention; back to basic purpose of HNF
- Use HNF review feedback to ensure processes are transparent and have fewer steps in the application process

- **Proposals – Eligibility**

- Clearer criteria so all schools better understand which pupils HNF is targeting in order to apply for HNF
- More explicit about expectation that schools evidence how their normally available resources have been targeted
- Greater emphasis on assess, plan, do and review cycle
- Utilisation of the district LIFT offer as part of the provision
- Expectations of relevant whole school training for the pupils' need type e.g. ASD awareness raising
- Fund the delivery of the best practice evidence based interventions
- Some school costs will not fall within HNF and will not be funded e.g. Disability adaptations

- **From LIFT Review**

- There will be an expectation that a school has sought advice and support from the LIFT prior to HNF application
- LIFT will offer more whole school training
- Each district LIFT Executive will develop a bank of resources and assessment tools to be used by the district schools

- HNF Officers, SEN Provision Evaluation Officers and District Co-Ordinators will meet on a regular basis to discuss packages of support for CYP in receipt of HNF.
- **Proposals – Affordability**
- Top Up
 - o By primary need type e.g. ASD or HI
 - o Graduated to reflect severity
 - o Personalised for 5% most severe (profound)
- Notional top up for smaller schools to continue
- HNF Officers would agree provision (criteria)
- Costed provision plans submitted on application

Patrick Leeson was not advocating the idealability but a school should be able to make a decision about what different children required as every child needed to get on with their learning. There were 23 Special Schools in Kent.

The Chair thanked Mr Leeson for his presentation to governors.

➤ **Graham Willett (Interim Chief Executive)**
Education Services Company - Update

Graham Willett introduced himself to governors and showed a short presentation on screen.

- **Why are we doing this?**
- To secure for the longer term the ability to provide the highest quality services that we can to children, young people and families in Kent.
- To ensure that schools and other settings would continue to be well supported by and work closely with their local authority to deliver the best possible outcomes.

The objective for the company was to develop its work with schools and other companies, strong relationships and partnerships.

- **Things to know about the ESC**
- Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo)
- Limited by Guarantee so surplus is reinvested into the services it provides
- Wholly owned by KCC
- Company board has representatives from all stakeholders as well as independent resources to support the company's activities
- 550+ staff at launch
- >£20million turnover

- **Which Services will ESC Provide**

IN the new Company	Remaining in KCC
School Improvement	Early Help & Preventative Services
Outdoor Education	SEN
Schools Financial Services	Fair Access, Admissions
Early Years and Childcare	Area Education Officers
Education Psychology	Provision, Planning & Operations
Governor Services	Academies Conversion
Skills and Employability	Community, Learning and Skills (CLS)
Education Safeguarding	

The ESC would continue to deliver services on behalf of KCC as well as delivering strategic traded packages.

The new website would also provide you with information and the means to access all KCC services.

- **How are schools getting involved?**
- **Stakeholder & Commissioning Board**
 - o A stakeholder group to support KCC its delivery of services across the Children's directorate
 - o Representation from Chair and Area chairs of Kent Association of Headteachers
 - o All stakeholder groups represented
- **Company Board**
 - o 3 schools NEDS – Headteachers from primary, secondary and special
 - o 1 NED from Early Years Sector
 - o Independent NEDS
 - o KCC NEDS

- **When is all of this happening**

- November 8th 2017
 - o 'soft' launch of name and brand at EduKent Expo
- December 2017 – March 2018:
 - o Increasing publicity about ESC, what it will be doing, how and when etc
- March 2018:
 - o Formal launch of company
- April 1st 2018:
 - 'go live' date
 - Staff transfer into ESC via TUPE
 - Contract between ESC and KCC for provision of services begins

KCC will be the company's biggest client as well as owning the company. Mr Willett confirmed that the services would need to continue to work closely together but this was a way of allowing a different way of delivering services and generating income. It was in KCC's interest to support the company as it wanted it to succeed. It was essential to remember that the company was a core piece of activity for the Council within the Children's Agenda space with the services being delivered alongside those directly from the Council.

Why was there only 1 governor on the Stakeholder Board and not on the Company Board? Mr Willett said that the matter had already been raised and would be reviewed at some point. The company would be independent but wholly owned by KCC. The most important thing to remember was that Kent had great schools and the improvement of schools was supported in the best way it could be. The objective was that every child should go to a good school in Kent of which currently 92% were either good or outstanding. The target was for 95% of schools in Kent to be good or outstanding by 2018. The company would change as it moved forward to deliver its strategic objective

The Chair thanked Mr Willett for his presentation to governors.

Mr Leeson informed everyone that this was his last meeting as he was leaving the authority at the end of the year and the new Corporate Director would be Matt Dunkley. Mr Leeson thanked all governors for their work in supporting the children in Kent.

The Chair informed governors that Mr Leeson had always been a great supporter of governance and had never missed an Assembly meeting. Everyone wished Mr Leeson success for the future.

Date of next KGA Assembly Meeting: Monday 12 March 2018 at the Spitfire Ground, St Lawrence, Kent County Cricket Club, Old Dover Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 3NZ at 19.00 hrs.