

**DRAFT MINUTES
MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS' FUNDING FORUM (SFF)**

8:00 – 11:00, 29 June 2018

John Wigan Room, Oakwood House, Oakwood Park, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8AE

Present: John Dennis (Chairperson), Phil Sayer (Vice Chairperson), David Whitehead, Alison Coppiters (Observer), Tracy Thomas, Darren Waters, Ben Cooper, Lynda Downes, Mark Tomkins, Sue Birchall, Sue Beauchamp, Annabel Lilley, Louise Burgess, Cerranne Litton, Mark Seymour, Neil Willis, Mike Smith, David Gleed, Roger Gough (Cabinet Member), Keith Abbott, Simon Pleace, Ian Hamilton (Clerk), Siobhan Cheeseman, Louise Langley, David Lucas

Apologies: Tracey McCartney, David Stanley, Michael Powis, Richard Powell, Matt Dunkley, David Anderson.

1.

Welcome and Introductions

Since the last SFF meeting on the 27 April there have been a number of changes to the membership of SFF.

Changes to members fall into the following groups

Newly Appointed Members			
Name	Position and School	Group representing	Period of appointment
Tracy Thomas	Headteacher (HT)- Marden Primary School	Local Authority- (LA) Primary Schools	June 2018 to June 2021
Darren Waters	HT – Kingswood Primary and Ulcombe C of E Schools	LA – Primary Schools	June 2018 to June 2021
Sue Birchall	Business Manager, The Malling School	LA – Non-selective	June 2018 to June 2021
Sue Beauchamp	HT – The Two Bridges PRU	LA – Pupil Referral Units	June 2018 to June 2021
David Anderson	HT- Queen Elizabeth Grammar School	Academies	June 2018 to June 2021
Mark Seymour	Finance Director – Tenterden Schools Trust	Academies	June 2018 to June 2021
David Gleed	Principal and Chief Executive – North Kent College	Post 16 Education	June 2018 to June 2021

Past Members that have been Reappointed			
Name	Position and School	Group representing	Period of appointment
David Stanley	Chair of Governors (COG) – Littlebourne Primary School	LA - Governors	June 2018 to June 2021
David Whitehead	CEO-The Potential In Everyone Academy Trust	Academies	June 2018 to June 2021
Members that have not been Reappointed			
Name	Position and School		
Janice Brook	COG – Dartford Grammar School for Girls		
Alison Coppiters	HT – Sedleys Primary School		
Rosemary Joyce	Principal – Tonbridge Grammar School		
Michael Blanning	Governor – North West Alternative Provision		
Carl Roberts	HT- Malling Secondary School		
<p>John Dennis (JD) as Chairperson of the SFF welcomed the new members to the SFF and thanked those members that were on the SFF and had not been reappointed for their contribution to SFF matters during their period of membership.</p> <p>Alison Coppiters who had been a member of the SFF representing LA primary schools (with a focus on small primary schools) for over a decade and was attending her last SFF meeting (due to her retirement as HT of Sedley’s Primary School at the end of the summer term) was thanked her for her long and effective service on the SFF and was presented with a small gift in recognition of this.</p>			
2.	Minutes and matters arising form the SFF meeting held on the 27 April 2018		
Two matters of accuracy were raised in the Draft Minutes the first by JD and the second by David Whitehead (DW)			

	<p>1) Item 8 third paragraph included the wording 'September 2018', this should have read September 2017.</p> <p>Action taken - The correct date will be included in the final version of the minutes.</p> <p>2) A paragraph in Item 3 read – 'For Mainstream High Needs the £5m decrease was a result of the actions taken that were instigated by the High Needs funding review. For further detail on the High Needs funding review, see item 3 SFF minutes 1 December 2017'. It was agreed that this paragraph would be rewritten, and the revised version would be presented to the SFF for approval.</p> <p>Action taken – Prior to the next SFF meeting on the 28 September, revised wording would be shared with JD, DW and Louise Langley (Head of SEN) for their consideration. The final agreed text would then be presented to the SFF at the meeting on the 28 September for full ratification by the Forum.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Kent Commission Plan (KCP)</p> <p>Keith Abbott (KA) presented this item to members of the SFF. KA had presented an item on the Kent's Commissioning Plan (KCP) at the SFF meeting on the 27 April and was now providing an update on events since that meeting.</p> <p>The position reported at the last SFF was that Kent estimated a shortfall of £101m in capital funding in order to provide the number of school places required by 2020. Senior Officers from Kent were due to meet with DfE on 1st May to talk about the severity of the situation.</p> <p>The meeting with the DfE was productive and further discussions will take place in due course. In addition to the meeting, the DfE also published details of Free School Wave 13 and 14 bidding round which may impact on the KCP in helping to address the £101m gap.</p> <p>In June 2018, after a delay of over 18 months the DfE announced details of Wave 13 bidding round and at the same time also announced some information about the Wave 14 round. The structure of both of these is different to what we have seen before:</p> <p>Wave 13 – Bids are due by 5 November (decisions around Easter 2019 at the earliest) and any bids have to meet requirements in respect of a clear demand for Basic Need and be in areas of low standards. The DfE have identified 90 areas across the county that they wish to target. These are a mixture of areas with low standards or low take up of Free Schools, where DfE are concerned that parts of England (mainly the North and North East) have not felt the "benefits" of the Free School model. Kent only has 3 of the 90 identified areas – Gravesham, Thanet and Ashford. It is expected that a maximum of 35 projects nationally will be approved in this round but any schools resulting from this will probably not be ready to open until 2022 at the earliest.</p> <p>Wave 14 – this round will be for Special Schools and Alternative Provision only. 35 projects will be approved by DfE. All bids will need LA approval. Detail of the</p>	

	<p>process were published at the end of July 2018. Proposals must come via LAs and are required by 15 October and essentially each LA can put a proposal forward for one school and one AP establishment. Decisions after Easter 2019 is likely. Again, it is hard to see anything from this round opening until 2022 at the earliest. We are in the process of looking at this alongside the KCP as we prepare the 2019-23 version. The LA have started to talk to some potential sponsors.</p> <p>Alongside this the DfE also announced the Selective Schools Expansion Fund of £50m per annum for 4 years. Bids had to be submitted by individual schools by 3 August. We are in the midst of discussions with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSA) and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as to how they will evaluate these bids against our KCP, especially as we will have a new one in draft form by November.</p> <p>A further update will be provided to members of the SFF in due course.</p>	
4	<p>Balance Control Mechanism (BCM)</p> <p>Simon Pleace (SP) and Siobhan Cheeseman (SC) presented this item to members of the SFF. To access the paper supporting this item click on this link Item 4 Balance Control Mechanism</p> <p>The following recommendations were ratified by LA School members of the SFF and will take effect from the financial year 2018-19:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The percentage of uncommitted reserves will be calculated on a school's total income on codes I01 to I05 plus I18 as at the 31st March. 2. The percentage allowed to be retained for uncommitted purposes will be increased by 50%. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary Schools, Pupil Referral Units will increase from 8% to 12% - Secondary Schools will increase from 5% to 7.5% 3. Special Schools will be included in the BCM and the threshold will be set at 12% for uncommitted reserves. 4. The permitted exceptions would remain unchanged. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital projects • Late allocations • Funding held on behalf of other schools • Other grant income and funding sources <p>Kent's Financial Scheme for schools will now be updated to reflect these agreed changes to the BCM, and a communication will be sent to all schools to inform them in September 2018.</p>	
5	High Needs Funding	

<p>a) HT Briefings</p> <p>KA presented this item to members of the SFF. The purpose of this item was to update the SFF on future plans to manage what the LA spends on High Needs. In order to help formulate the overall plan the LA had been engaging with Headteachers at briefings across the county. KA presented the slides used at the summer term briefings, to access these slides click on this link Item4a Headteacher Meetings Update on High Needs</p> <p>The next step in the process is to formalise a plan to manage the future spend on High Needs and to share the proposed plan with the SFF at the meeting on the 28 September in order to seek SFF approval.</p> <p>b) Latest Position High Needs Funding</p> <p>SP presented this item to the SFF, to access slides click on this link Item 4b High Needs Budget 2017-18.</p> <p>An update on the High Needs Budget has become a standard item on the SFF agenda. The headline figure from the information presented is that as at June 2018 the year end High Needs forecast spend for 2018-19 has increased by £8. 9m during the period 2017-18 to 2018-19. The £8. 9 increase is also the amount that the High Needs Budget is overspent and at this point in time there is not a solution to cover this shortfall. This means that the DSG reserve deficit will increase by this amount.</p> <p>c) Education Select Committee – Kent’s Response to The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Inquiry</p> <p>KA presented this item to the SFF. It has been well documented in recent SFF minutes of the considerable financial pressure the LA is experiencing in funding High Need Pupils/Students.</p> <p>The pressure experienced by Kent is also being experienced by many other LAs and as a result the Education Select Committee have called for evidence to support their inquiry looking at Special Educational Needs and Disability.</p> <p>The information presented by KA was Kent’s submission to this inquiry. To access the document submitted, click on this link Item 4c Education Select Committee – Kent’s Response to The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Inquiry</p> <p>d) Further Education (FE) Colleges Funding Block Arrangement (acl accounting)</p> <p>David Lucas a consultant from acl consulting presented this item to the SFF. To access the presentation click on this link Item 4d Further Education Funding Block Arrangement (acl accounting).</p> <p>FE College High Needs funding is allocated using the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) directed Place Plus funding methodology. In order to comply with this an individually costed assessment needs to be done for each student. In Kent</p>	<p>Senior LA Officer/s</p>
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	<p>there are around 800 students attending FE Colleges of which a significant proportion are annually new entrants to the institutions. Due to the volume and turnover of students it takes until at least December to confirm the funding a College will receive. The logistics of this process are unsatisfactory for all concerned, and a difficulty highlighted is where colleges have to commit to employing staff before receiving confirmation of funding.</p> <p>Both the LA and FE Colleges felt that their must be a more pragmatic and effective process/system that could be applied in order to allocate funding for High Needs Students (HNS) in FE Colleges. Both parties thought the idea of a Block Grant seemed a suitable solution, but before any further work could be carried out on this the LA needed to confirm that the concept of a Block Grant would not contravene the ESFAs Place Plus funding methodology directive. A meeting was arranged between Kent and the ESFA at the end of March to confirm with the ESFA that they were in agreement with the direction of travel of a Block Grant. The ESFA confirmed that Kent would still be compliant with ESFA regulations if they applied a Block Grant in the future, but requested that they be kept up to date on its development.</p> <p>The LA with the agreement of Kent FE Colleges commissioned a consulting to carry out a review to develop a process that would deliver a Block Grant for FE Colleges.</p> <p>The presentation provided to the SFF was an update on the progress to date as at the 29th June. At this point all Colleges had been visited and the findings from those visits were still to be collated into a report for consideration.</p> <p>The findings from the report and future developments of a Block Grant payment to FE Colleges will be presented to the SFF in due course.</p>	Simon Pleace
6	<p>Schools in Deficit (Confidential)</p> <p>SC presented this paper to the SFF. The contents of the paper are confidential so papers were circulated at the meeting and then handed back into the clerk at the end of the item.</p> <p>Members of SFF were requested to note the contents of the confidential report which they all accordingly complied with.</p> <p>There were no further actions required resulting from the discussion of the content in the report.</p>	
7	<p>Update for 2019-20 – Feedback from DfE and F40 Meetings</p> <p>SP presented this item to the SFF. To access paper click on this link Item 7 Feedback from DfE and F40 Meetings</p>	

	<p>In June the ESFA arranged two meetings one in London and the other in the Midlands for LA Finance Officers. The title of these meetings was 'Policy Development' and the purpose of the meeting was to present the intended schools funding policy for the 2019-20 to a group of LA officers for comments prior to publication at the end of July.</p> <p>The update shared with SFF members was the information shared with LA Officers at the London meeting. The ESFA emphasized as it was not published policy they were happy with the contents of the meeting being shared with SFF members as long it was clearly stated that the policy was subject to change, but specifically requested that it was not shared with the broader audience outside of the SFF.</p> <p>In keeping with this reasonable request from the ESFA, the LA have not published the slide used in the presentation to the SFF and have also made SFF members aware of the need to not communicate the contents of this item outside of the SFF meeting.</p>																
8	<p>Split Site Funding</p> <p>SP presented this item to the SFF. To access paper click on this link – Item 8 Split Site Funding</p> <p>Members of the SFF recommended the introduction of a Split Site Factor in Kent's local Funding Formula</p> <p>However, they did not support the possible criteria presented in the paper and requested that a more detailed piece of work is carried out to come up with an objective criteria that recognises the unavoidable costs for schools operating on a split site.</p> <p>A further piece of work will now be carried out to identify an objective criteria for Split Site Funding and the outcome of this piece of work will be reported back to the SFF in due course.</p>	Ian Hamilton															
	<p>AOB</p> <p>None</p>																
	<p>SFF meetings – Academic Year September 2018 to August 2019</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th><th>Timings</th><th>Venue</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>28 September 2018</td><td>10:00 to 12:30</td><td>Hilton Hotel – Maidstone ME14 5AA</td></tr> <tr> <td>30 November 2018</td><td>8:00 to 12:00</td><td>Mercure Maidstone Great Danes Hotel (MMGDH) ME17 1RE</td></tr> <tr> <td>3 May 2019</td><td>8:00 to 12:00</td><td>MMGDH – ME17 1RE</td></tr> <tr> <td>28 June 2019</td><td>8:00 to 12:00</td><td>MMGDH – ME17 1RE</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Date	Timings	Venue	28 September 2018	10:00 to 12:30	Hilton Hotel – Maidstone ME14 5AA	30 November 2018	8:00 to 12:00	Mercure Maidstone Great Danes Hotel (MMGDH) ME17 1RE	3 May 2019	8:00 to 12:00	MMGDH – ME17 1RE	28 June 2019	8:00 to 12:00	MMGDH – ME17 1RE	
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