

**MINUTES- MEETING OF THE SCHOOLS' FUNDING FORUM (SFF)**  
**8 March 2013 - John Wigan Room, Oakwood House, Maidstone**

**Present:** Roland Gooding (Chairperson), Phil Sayer (Vice Chairperson), John Dennis, Janice Brookes, Michael Banning, Alison Coppitters, Lynda Downes, Ben Cooper, Neil Willis, Alan Barham, Rosemary Joyce, Mike Smith, Patrick Leeson, Keith Abbott, Sue Rogers, Simon Pleace, Ian Hamilton (Clerk to the SFF), Robert Masters – HT The Judd School (Substitute for Jane Robinson), Beverley Pennekett (Observer Education Funding Agency – EFA)

**Apologies:** Paul Danielson, Jane Robinson, Richard Hitchin, Panna Nagar, John Bird, Rev Simon Foulkes, Christine Fordham, Mike Whiting (Member), Gary Cook (Member)

1.	<p><b>Minutes And Matters Arising</b></p> <p>Beverley Pennekett (BP) from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) attended the meeting as an Observer. As part of the School Funding Reforms the EFA now has observer status at SFF meetings. Their role is to support the local process and provide a national perspective. Roland Gooding (RG) welcomed her to the meeting on behalf of the SFF.</p> <p>The minutes from the SFF meeting on the 7 December 2012 were ratified as a true and accurate account of the meeting.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Sub-Group Feedback</b></p> <p><b>a) Delegated Formula Funding Group (DFFG)</b>  There was no feedback to this item as a meeting had not taken place since the 7 December, the date of the last SFF meeting.</p> <p><b>b) Schools Capital Group (SCG)</b>  Phil Sayer (PS) provided feedback to the group from the two meetings held on the 12 December 2012 and the 6 March 2013. The minutes to these meetings can be viewed by clicking on this link – <a href="#">Minutes Schools Capital Group</a></p> <p><b>c) Early Years Sub Group (EYSG)</b>  There was no feedback to this item as a meeting had not taken place since the 7 December, the date of the last SFF meeting.</p>	
3.	<p><b>KCC Budget Update</b></p> <p>Keith Abbott (KA) provided the group with an update. In 2013-14 Kent County Council (KCC) grant funding has reduced by 9.5%, which</p>	

	<p>equates to £39m. This reduction in funding has been exacerbated as KCC have identified unavoidable pressures in the region of £60m.</p> <p>The Education Service General (ESG) Grant is one of the grants that have seen a reduction as part of the overall £39m. The 2013-14 financial year is the first year of the grant and comparable funding in 2012-13 was £30m, meaning it has dropped by £10m to £20m.</p> <p>The forecast for 2014-15 is a further reduction of government grant funding of £34m.</p> <p>In recent years the central non delegated Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budgets have seen a significant reduction and Education, Learning and Skills (ELS) services have had to evolve in line with the decrease in resources. To ensure that ELS is directing its DSG resource to the maximum benefit after the recent period of education reform, a piece of work will be undertaken to look at the prioritising of KCC's total DSG funding.</p>	
4.	<p><b>2013-14 School Budget Update</b></p> <p>Simon Pleace (SP) gave a presentation to the group; the slides used in the presentation have been circulated to members of the SFF and are displayed on the SFF website.</p> <p>Headlines from the presentation were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KCC pro-forma submitted to EFA on the 22 January and budgets issued to schools on the 1 March.</li> <li>- The number of schools on the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) has increased from 103 in 2012-13 to 211 in 2013-14. This increase is a result of the directed changes to the schools funding formula as part of the DfE School Funding Reforms from April 2013.</li> <li>- Around 22 % of schools are on the MFG by 3% or more. Using the assumption that the MFG will be set at minus 1.5% in the first year of the next spending review period (2015-16), this will mean that 22 % of schools will see a reduction annually in funding per pupil of minus 1.5% for the period 2014-15 to 2015-16.</li> <li>- High Incidence Low cost SEN funding (Prior Attainment) - 86 % of schools have seen either an increase in funding of 6% or more or a decrease in funding of 6% or more.</li> <li>- Deprivation Funding (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)) - 88 % of schools have seen either an increase in funding of 6% or more or a decrease in funding of 6% or more.</li> <li>- Overall School Budget - 20 % of Primary Schools will see an increase in funding of 6% or more and 6% of Primary Schools will see a decrease in funding of 6% or more. This is before the MFG</li> </ul>	

	has been applied.	
5.	<p><b>DfE Review/Consultation – School Funding Reforms 2013-14</b></p> <p>SP presented this item to the group.</p> <p>The DfE launched a review of the 2013-14 School Funding Reforms on the 13 February with a response submission date of the 26 March.</p> <p>The provisional response from the Local Authority (LA) to the 23 questions in the review/consultation was circulated to members of the SFF for discussion.</p> <p>The general view of the LA was that the review should have been done at a later date as Schools and Academies will have little opportunity to reflect on their budgets before the submission deadline of the 26 March. In addition, the DfE have failed to include a review of High Needs funding, there are some questions on High Needs but they do not get to the heart of the matter. In our view this is a significant oversight by the DfE as this is the area that we have the greatest concern in regard to the Funding Reforms.</p> <p>As part of the response to the Review additional comments will be included raising a number of points in respect the changes to High Needs SEN funding.</p> <p>Members of the SFF were asked how they would like to submit a response on behalf of the SFF. It was agreed that a joint response would be made on behalf of the LA and the SFF.</p> <p>It was decided that volunteers from the SFF and the Delegated Funding Formula Group (DFFG) would meet to finalise a joint response.</p> <p>A meeting to compile the response will be arranged during weekend Friday the 15 March</p>	
6..	<p><b>Post 16 Funding – Concerns around the New Funding Formula</b></p> <p>This item was a follow up to item 5 from the SFF meeting held on the 7 December. As an Observer from the EFA was attending the meeting, with the remit of providing a national perspective, members of the SFF felt that it would be helpful to use this opportunity to raise a number of concerns in respect of post 16 funding.</p> <p>Rosemary Joyce (RJ) and Robert Masters (RM) presented a number of points of which the main ones are now listed;</p>	

	<p>Between the period 2010-11 to 2013-14 a number of schools are seeing a reduction in post 16 funding of between 16% and 20%.</p> <p>Schools in the future will not be able to provide the breadth and choice of subjects for post 16 students due to the new funding banding methodology. In the past students were funded on the number of time tabled hours. Now there is a threshold which limits the maximum number of hours funded to 540 for the academic year.</p> <p>Due to the decrease in funding, schools had seen a significant increase to class sizes in order to make their budgets balance. Schools were concerned that choice in subjects would be driven by the economical viability of the subject. In the past classes had a ratio of 20 pupils to 1 teacher, it was now closer to 26/27 pupils to 1 teacher.</p> <p>Transitional funding protection for the Post 16 funding formula introduced in 2010-11 is due to cease in 2014-15. Schools and academies have made efficiency savings that has enabled them to deliver a comparable standard of provision prior to the cuts. The concern now is that the additional reduction in funding will mean that schools and academies have reached a point where they will just not be able to make it work in the future.</p> <p>Selective Schools/Academies in Kent and Medway have completed a pro-forma that details the impact of the reduction in funding to their individual institution. A collective submission of this information on behalf of this group of schools/academies will be submitted to the EFA in due course. It will also be used to lobby Council Members and Members of Parliament.</p> <p>The EFA observer (BP) was asked if she could comment on the concerns raised by the SFF in respect of post 16 funding. Unfortunately she was unable to give a view on this as post 16 funding was not her particular area of expertise.</p>	
6	<p><b>Early Years – 2 Year Old Funding.</b></p> <p>Please note that the agenda incorrectly included two items for number 6. In order to match already circulated papers the numbers have not been changed for the purpose of recording these minutes.</p> <p>SP presented this item to the group and the following information was noted and recommendation made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was noted that providers will be paid at a flat funding rate of £4.85 per hour as detailed in paragraph 2.5 from the paper. The DfE recommended the use of a flat base rate of funding for two year olds and not a base rate plus supplement. Kent have</li> </ul>	

	<p>complied with the DfE recommendation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was noted that the difference between the DfE funding rate of £4.94 and the rate paid to providers of £4.85 would be used for additional support for two year olds with special education needs.</li> <li>- SFF ratified the request that the central budget retains £0.25m from the total allocation of £12.1m to cover the additional administration costs associated with the next phase of early education for two year olds in Kent.</li> </ul>	
7	<p><b>SFF Elections</b></p> <p>Ian Hamilton (IH) presented the paper to the group. The members of the SFF acknowledged the forthcoming elections and noted the timetable for the elections.</p> <p>There was a revision to the proposed election of the chairperson and vice chairperson which was due to be concluded in time for the SFF meeting on the 17 May. The reason for this was that there would be a number of new members elected to the SFF and their appointments to the SFF would be after the voting had taken place. In order for new members to be able to vote it was agreed the election for chairperson and vice chairperson would take place between the two meetings on the 17 May and 12 July.</p> <p>Roland Gooding (RG) announced to the group that he would not be standing for re-election as chairperson of the SFF but would still continue to stand as the representative for Special Schools on the SFF.</p> <p>The 8 March meeting was RGs last scheduled SFF meeting as chairperson for the SFF. Due to the above decision RG kindly agreed to remain as chairperson until an election had taken place for the new chairperson and would chair the SFF meeting scheduled for the 17 May.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Maternity and other staff insurance scheme.</b></p> <p>KA presented the paper to the SFF.</p> <p>Members of the SFF supported the recommended further development of options 2 and 3. Progress on this will be reported back to the SFF in due course.</p>	
9.	<p><b>AOB</b></p>	

	Date of the next meeting 17 May 2013	
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