

Kent Primary Head Teachers Executive

Notes of a meeting held at the Russell Hotel, Maidstone on Monday, 29 November 2010.

Apologies

Anne Hooker, Heather Overton, Carol Townsend, Ruth Doughty, John Letts, Helen Jones, Laura Pearson, Richard Sutton-Smith

1. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting did not note apologies from some Head Teachers. The Executive were asked to email Renee Davies in order to ensure apologies are noted for the minutes.

Executive members are asked to note the amendment to future dates, which have been changed to take account of SATs (the May meeting will now take place on the 16th).

Rosalind Turner congratulated the forum on the work undertaken to date on the Primary Head Teachers Conference and confirmed that County are happy to support the administrative work around the conference.

2. Budget Update

Keith Abbott provided the executive with an update in relation to formula funding.

Pupil premium funding is not new money to the education system, but rather recycled from within. Schools with a static role and low FSM are likely to be the losers in the system. The Local Government Settlement will be confirmed on 6th December. That same week we will see the specific detail around the DSG and grant. Some grants will be frozen at current levels but we don't yet know what will be tipped into the main DSG. There are some significant risks for Kent if this happens as South East authorities traditionally loose out.

Kent will face a £340m budget cut. There is a much bigger hit in years 1 and 2. The document sent to Policy Overview Scrutiny Committee last week sighted a £34m saving for CFE in year one. There is a scrutiny committee on 14 January and a forum meeting after that. There are significant gaps in the information at present but County will do all it can to get information out to schools in a timely way. As soon as county has a proper picture there will be an item sent out to all schools via e-bulletin.

Keith Abbott highlighted the importance of looking carefully at the minimum funding guarantee within the context of other budgetary pressures. The funding formula already takes account of deprivation, and given the Pupil Premium is not

new money and we need to consider how funding can be targeted through robust analysis. Simon Pleace and Bob Smith will be at the meetings regarding the consultation on the funding formula.

3. Bold Steps for Kent

Mrs Whittle highlighted the opportunities within bold steps. These include the changes in Health and the increased role for the Local Authority, ideas such as a county service for speech and language and a different approach to education, working in partnership with schools as autonomous organisations. At local level delivery will be through 12 district teams.

Head Teachers shared that they would like to think that Bold Steps will make the changes necessary, and asked whether support will be available to Primary Schools to move towards academies, and is it the political view in Kent that this is to be encouraged?

Mrs Whittle shared that politically all schools will be supported whatever their type. There is concern that primaries may not be able to sustain the funding required as an academy, but the County has an open mind about the different models and types of schools.

With regard to the White Paper, Rosalind highlighted that we need to be clear about what we want for Kent in all of this, and how we work together to ensure that Kent's voice is clearly communicated.

4. Special Educational Needs Review

Colin Feltham updated the Executive on work to review SEN provision, including the work by the SEN strategy group. This is supported by four sub groups and progress is being made under core principles:

- Needs are best met by a continuum of provision
- Clarify of what is expected of mainstream schools
- Equity of school funding whether children are in mainstream or specialist provision
- Parent Choice
- Acceptance that children may be on the role of one school attending the buildings of another
- Funding must be delegated locally and as close to the point of delivery as possible
- Equitable organized cost effective suite of services focused on improving outcomes.

Questions for the future include how we intend to manage the delegation and devolution of other resources and whether some of the services would be better

delivered by a locality group. The timetable for delivery of a draft strategy is December, with a consultation in the New Year.

Concerns/comments from the Primary Executive included:

- The only information you get on the in year admissions form is that the child is out of school and it does not give details about whether they have any special educational needs.
- Nigel Utton suggested funding should always follow the child.

5. Preventative Services Managers

The Preventative Services Managers (PSMs) have management responsibilities for Children's Centres, CAF Coordinator, PSA's and FLO's. They are very closely linked to our Children's Social Services District Managers. Relationships are managed through Children's Services Operational Managers Groups. The agenda for those meetings examines work and processes in place to support individual children. There may also be a specific function to support district collaboration and special projects.

There are a number of challenges to the role, e.g. CAF, short term contracts of staff, funding for Children's Centres and how we move from universal provision to targeted support.

Debra Hines asked if there is an alternative to exclusions? There seems to be a great deal of preventive provision. The PSMs highlighted CAF is the first intervention, but if it is a complex case and already has Social Services intervention or if you are concerned then please get in touch with your Preventative Services Manager.

Rosalind Turner highlighted the action being taken to combat the challenges of the OfSTED judgement. Primary Heads Shared that they feel they need to know what heads could do. Nick Fenton has suggested that all heads could spend a day in the duty desk. Heads suggested that we need to be clear what can be done in schools to support families practically on a day to day basis. Head Teachers shared that they are supportive of the LA and understand the impact of reports of this nature. There was an acknowledgement that we all have a corporate responsibility. We think we have a structure that is working; we need to be prepared to evidence the judgements to OfSTED.

Nigel Utton asked the question whether the new social workers are of sufficient quality, as there are concerns that some new social workers do not understand the system, locality or language being used, and in some cases do not have good English. Rosilind said that she would investigate the induction, but that she had been assured that this is robust and supports staff to understand the systems and protocols across a range of partners.

Joy Ackroyd provided an update on the KCT. The major partners are committed to the development of partnership activity. Joy would urge everyone to maintain partnership focus. We have had good school engagement in early meetings of each LCT board. There is a need to strengthen the link between the Executive and the KCT. J Pye was the former representative, and the Executive needs to consider how they wish to be represented in the future.

6. Update on Traded Services

Molly Norley provided the Executive with an update on Traded Services. With regard to changes in the DSG allocation to schools, Members have decided that services should be on offer to schools as from September 2011. In order for that to be achieved, schools will receive an indicative budget by the end of May 2011 to allow them to consider the services to be traded and make decisions. To underpin this change the following timetable will be put in place:

- The Headteacher and Governors group will develop proposals for moving forward in the next two months
- These will be discussed at the Primary Forum meeting of 7th February 2011
- Consultation with Headteachers and Governors February/March 2011
- Responses will be reviewed early in April to support decision making on the DSG allocation at the end of April 2011
- Indicative budgets will be issued at the end of May 2011
- Service information will be available in June/July
- Services will start on 1st September 2011.

7. AOB

(i) Forward Plan of discussion items

- White Paper
- Safeguarding including an update for schools on the issues that schools need to be aware of
- Conference feedback from working group

(ii) Confirmation of representatives

Nigel Utton confirmed as SACRE Rep
Rowena Lyn will attend Kent Safeguarding Children Board.