

**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES
SELECT COMMITTEE
ON WEDNESDAY, 28 MARCH 2001 at 10.30 a.m.**

**UPDATE REPORT: NEW FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE
LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL: IMPLICATIONS FOR POST 16
PROVISION IN HERTFORDSHIRE**

Report of the Chief Executive

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- 1.1 The DfEE has announced that it is planning to undertake a review of all school funding. To do this it has set up an Education Funding Strategy Group (membership attached App.1). The Group is tasked with producing a fully worked up proposal for a new funding system and a timetable for its implementation.

The Review is working to a very fast timetable. There may be an intention to implement changes from April 2002. It is vital that detailed consultation is built into the timetable, even if this requires the implementation date to be delayed.

- 1.2 The original terms of reference for the Group (attached App.2) has a narrow definition of cost, referring only to:

‘ How the additional costs of employing teachers in areas where LEAs need to pay more to recruit and retain them should be funded.’ (However we understand this may be widened to reflect some other pay costs).

This would still ignore the true additional cost of provision for the South East counties. As Members will see there is no reference to the Area Cost Adjustment. Any proposal for specific cost adjustments will fail to reflect all the high cost effects of the South East. Clearly this raises significant concerns for Hertfordshire and all SE education authorities.

- 1.3 The Chair of the South East England Regional Assembly, David Shakespeare will be writing to David Blunkett requesting that he intervene and ensure that the terms of reference for the review are widened to allow for a full consideration of the high costs faced in the south east, as reflected in the ACA. (Draft letter attached App.3).
- 1.4 HCC’s Chief Executive is writing to all South East education authorities to alert them to the issue and to suggest that they alert their elected Members, MPs, schools, local LSC and local representatives of the bodies participating in the review to its implications.

He is also proposing to write to all Hertfordshire MPs to request that they support HCC's concerns through their own representations to ministers. (Draft letter attached for comment App.4).

2. Summary

Members are asked to agree to support a campaign with SE Education Authorities to persuade government to widen the terms of reference of the Education Funding Strategy Group to include consideration of the ACA in full, and not in partial elements, and to seek to mobilise the support and action of Hertfordshire's MPs, schools, LSC and other representative bodies.