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To: Resources and Infrastructure Children, Families & Education Policy Overview Committee

Date: 24 November 2010

Subject: Deputy Cabinet Members and Service Director's Verbal Update

Classification: Unrestricted

The Deputy Cabinet Members and Service Director's Verbal Update includes:

Budget for CFE

Detailed information is also provided in Items B2 and B3 of the agenda.

Academies

The latest position on the number of outstanding schools converting to academy status is as follows:

- 5 Schools have already transferred to the new 'Academy Status'.
- 2 schools are due to transfer on 1st November 2010.
- 3 Schools are due to transfer on 1st December 2010.
- 5 Schools are due to transfer on 1st January 2011.

The financial impact of the Local Authority budget will be updated at the meeting.

Comprehensive Spending Review

Local Authority

- Overall resource savings to councils of 28 per cent over the four years.
- Ring-fencing of some local government revenue grants will end from 2011-12. The number of separate core grants will be radically reduced from over 90 to fewer than 10, excluding schools, police and fire. More than £4 billion of revenue grants will be rolled into formula grant.
- The Department for Communities and Local Government is devolving over £1.6 billion to local government.

* The verbal report is accompanied by a written report relating to this topic.

- The Govt. is ending the previous top-down performance framework for councils. LAs will be able to cease reporting any of the 4,700 local area agreement targets.

Schools: Revenue

- The 5 to 16s schools budget will rise by 0.1 per cent in real terms each year. In total this equates to an increase of £3.6 billion, which includes the new £2.5 billion pupil premium and includes funding for the increase in pupil numbers.
- A number of grants are being mainstreamed into the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). We have concerns that whilst the current cash value of these is being protected at a national level, their distribution between local authorities could be varied
- A number of emerging budget pressures are surfacing since the Comprehensive Spending Review announcements. The new Carbon Reduction Commitment (estimated to cost KCC schools over £1m per annum), confirmation that the Secretary of State that the settlement for schools assumes efficiencies of £1billion nationally through procurement and back office savings.

Schools: Capital

- Government confirmed education Capital being reduced by 60%.
- Indications suggest that some of this reduction may also be applied to schools' Devolved Formula Capital grants
- The Govt. will provide £15.8 billion of capital over CSR period for new schools, rebuilding or refurbishing the 600 schools that were approved for continuation through the Building Schools for the Future and Academies programme and investing in new school provision in areas of demographic pressure.
- The Govt. will transfer responsibility for the revenue costs of local government Private Finance Initiative projects from local government to the sponsoring department to remove perverse incentives for projects to be delivered through PFI.

***BSF & James Review**

- We have received confirmation of funding but still have some uncertainty about the scale of support as Government indicated an overall expectation of 40% reduction for the Isle of Sheppey and Skinners' Kent academy.
- No further announcements have been made about the other BSF and Academies projects in the pipeline, although the confirmation of the support for only the 600 schemes already agreed suggests that there will be no support for any of our BSF schemes that were stopped. The Sebastian "James" Review of education Capital is expected to report by the end of the year. We have some sense of direction, but do not know how the Government will react to proposals.

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School Organisation

Federations

The Governing Bodies of the following schools have begun consultation on federating:

- Oak Trees and Bell Wood Primary Schools, Maidstone - with effect from 12 January 2011. Federation to be led by Mrs R Wiles, Advisory Headteacher.
- Loose Infant and Junior Schools - with effect from 1 April 2011. The federation to be led by Mrs J Pye, Headteacher of Loose Junior School.

Diocesan and Payne Smith CEP School

At the meeting of SOAB on 9 November 2010 the Board received a proposal to consult on the possible amalgamation of Diocesan and Payne Smith (DPS) school and Kingsmead Community School, both in Canterbury. The proposal is to amalgamate both schools and establish a new Voluntary Controlled 2FE school on the Kingsmead site. This would provide a greatly improved learning environment for all students and secure the long term future of both schools, providing greater organisational flexibility, economies of scale and potentially better standards for all. Funding for the extensive improvements which would be undertaken would come from joint contributions from both KCC (up to £2m from money set aside for the acquisition of a new greenfield site which is no longer available) and a substantial contribution from the Diocese of Canterbury using the proceeds of a capital receipt from the sale of the DPS site. The proposal is for the two schools to amalgamate from September 2012 subject to the outcome of extensive public consultation to take place beforehand. The intention is for the Diocese of Canterbury to submit an application to the Secretary of State for exemption from the requirement to run a competition process. Depending on the outcome of this application and the progress of the public consultation, a final decision would be made by the Cabinet Member by the end of the current academic year (without competition) or by January 2012 (following a competition process).

Services for Schools

- CFE has run 12 District Headteachers' Meetings to launch the new district structures and introduce the CFE district teams, and to propose a traded services vehicle with schools, in order to provide sustainable support for schools who won't all need this, where feedback from schools has been received on what services they would like to receive from the Local Authority.
- A 'Services for Schools' Group, comprising of Officers, plus Sarah Hohler, Gary Cooke and Bryan Sweetland has met. The group are focussing on three main strands:
 1. Ensuring that there is a clear offer of services to academies from 1 January 2011

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2. Bringing together all KCC trading activities with schools in line with the “Change to keep succeeding” proposals
3. Undertaking work to look at the advantages and disadvantages of the various trading models that could be adopted

School openings

St John's

- A new £25 million building for St John's Catholic Comprehensive School in Gravesend was officially opened by the Archbishop of Southwark Peter Smith on 15th September.
- The stunning school has been designed to help transform the way students learn. A key part to the design is open plan rooms and a new ethos where students take more responsibility for their own learning. The iconic building features a Cathedral-like "heart" space and first floor art loft with floor to ceiling windows.
- Funding for the school came through BSF.

St George's

- A new £21 million building and refurbished facilities at St George's CoE Foundation School was officially opened by the Right Reverend Trevor Willmott, the Archbishop of Dover on 29 September 2010.
- Funding for the school came through BSF.

Sissinghurst

- Gary Cooke attended a 'Topping Off' ceremony at the new site on 9th September. Mrs Penfold, the Headteacher, laid the first roof tile.
- This is a 5 class voluntary aided (VA) primary school on a new site replacing the existing unfit for purpose school. The total cost of the build amounts to £4.7m of which £3.954m is Government grant (Targeted Capital Fund) and £746K funded by the Local Authority. In addition in accordance with the arrangements for VA schools the Local Authority was required to purchase the new school site (at a cost of £425K) - The new school is scheduled to be finished by April 2011

Grange Park

- Her Royal Highness Sophie Countess of Wessex, Patron of the National Autistic Society, opened Grange Park School's new building on Tuesday 21 September 2010.
- Grange Park is a special school for secondary aged pupils with Autism Spectrum Conditions.
- The new school has been built adjacent to Wrotham School to allow greater links between the two school communities, including offering a more flexible curriculum. This means better integration opportunities and easier access to mainstream lessons for some pupils
- The architects have incorporated the latest knowledge on sensory perceptual issues into the design to provide an environment, which minimises impact on pupils with autism. The design was also minimised the environmental impact.

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Local Democracy Week

- The Cabinet and Deputy Cabinet Members visited a variety of schools during the week to foster the knowledge of local democracy and promote the idea of democratic participation at a local level. Members were very impressed by the pupils they met, who they felt were brimming with incisive and interesting questions.

Schools Funding Forum

- An update will be provided at the meeting.

Kent Schools Admissions Forum

- An update will be provided at the meeting.