

## **Select Committee - Grammar Schools and Social Mobility**

### **Hearing 3: Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

#### **Witness Guide for Members**

Below are suggested themes and questions. They have been provided in advance to the witnesses to allow them to prepare for the types of issues that Members may be interested to explore. All Members are welcome to ask these questions or pose additional ones to the witnesses via the Committee Chairman.

#### **Themes and Questions**

##### **Keith Abbott – Direction, Education Planning and Access (KCC)**

- Please introduce yourself and provide an outline of the role and responsibilities of your post.
- Is the increased numbers of free schools and academies in Kent having any bearing on parents and children choosing selective or non-selective education?
- How can we ensure that socially disadvantaged children are able to take advantage of the growing numbers of Grammar school places available in the county?
- Does the location of Grammar schools and the competition for places in the west of the county impact on the ability of FSM children to access a Grammar school place? Which schools in this area are being proactive in attracting more FSM pupils and how successful have they been?
- To what extent do Grammar schools' individual selection processes including additional tests (i.e. Folkestone/Dover tests) and oversubscription criteria make it easier or harder for FSM children to access a Grammar school place in differing parts of the county?
- Are FSM children and their parents dissuaded from applying for a Grammar school place based on barriers such as school expenses, travel time and cost, and the perception of an elitist culture in Grammar schools?
- Is distance from home to Grammar school a potential barrier to accessing selective education for children from low income backgrounds? If so, what can be done to help with the cost of travelling?
- What are we doing to encourage academically able SEND children to apply for Grammar schools?
- What, in your view, can Kent County Council do to promote social mobility in access to Grammar schools?
- Are there any other issues that you would like to raise with the Committee?