

DEALT PARENT/CARER MEETING – LANDMARK CENTRE, THURSDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2018, 6.30PM

- JH fed back on Vision and Why a MAT
- Focus – Is it financially viable?
- Each governing body has to look at individual school and viability.
- 3% top slice. Only I01 cost code – actually 2.5% of total income
- High needs Funding, Pupil Premium, Sports Premium, etc., will stay in school.

Q – Is there an intention for CEO to go full time in the future?

A - We don't need to unless MAT expands.

Q - But what schools can join to keep local. DEALT is already proposed to be local.

A - It is a Deal MAT. There is no intention to expand but we cannot say that we never will (eg new schools in Deal) The intention is to keep local.

Q – There is some confusion over the words ‘top slice’. We refer to ‘top slice’ but KCC don’t.

A - KCC refer to de-delegation which means they take funds back.

Q - KCC said for Sandown it was 0.68% taken back and schools choose what to buy extra.

A - JB discussed Deal Parochial who had looked in detail at the figures and for Deal Parochial, they are spending more as a KCC school because they buy back finance etc.

Q - Why have we not got the percentage for each school.

A - Jo H has offered to work it out and this will be presented to each FGB. The comparison will be a like for like in terms of finance support, insurance and delegation (all provided by the MAT)

JH offered to address other issues at the end of the meeting to bring the meeting back on track. JH went through the breakdown, provided to the attendees, of how we can make savings.

Q - Moderation - Academy and KCC have to pay the same amount for Moderation service?

A - Yes we do. BUT it is not statutory.

Q – Who are you answerable to if you self-moderate?

A - All information goes to the DFE whether you are academy or KCC. Ofsted still inspect.

Q – How can we be sure that you are verifying and validating your results?

A – JH discussed the expected standards at the end of Year 2 and 6 which are moderated against. Staff who are trained moderators will be brought in for robustness.

Q – I watched Panorama -Some schools who are academies are ripping up work, etc., to get results?

A - It isn't just academies that can be accused of doing that, the same issues can occur in State schools. DEALT schools do not do that – and will not.

Q - If Bursars are sharing roles, will they lose their job.

A - No – office staff will remain but we will review the situation as people choose to leave to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. Not necessarily replacing like for like.

Q- There was one academy where a child had six teachers in one year. It's worrying that this could happen?

A - But the same can happen in any school.

Q – Sandown lost all TAs. It's not fair.

A - This had nothing to do with becoming an academy. The restructure was already planned to ensure that the school could balance its budget. The restructure was planned with KCC advice and support.

Q – Are all staff genuinely happy about the DEALT proposal?

A - Staff have all been consulted, have discussed it and will continue to discuss the proposal. Feedback has been very positive.

Q- I know a staff member who is not happy.

A - There are a lot of politics surrounding academisation in general and some may be concerned with that situation rather than the specific DEALT proposal. Unions will also be involved to represent staff at the TUPE stage

Q - Supply teachers – Could an option be to employ a teacher to cover the supply?

A – Yes we could. This would be an efficiency saving and also be more effective for the schools.

Q – Why could we not become a federation?

A - It would be difficult to manage seven schools with one Governing Body but we also couldn't federate mixed church (VA) and community schools in a federation.

Q – Sharing SENCO will reduce individual school's access?

A – It is a statutory regulation that all schools must have a SENCO. Increasing provision is a priority.

Q – So you suggest that you will save £28,000 but you have to spend funds on a new system?

A - The finance system has been accounted for in the top slice. It is fully integrated and will be much more time efficient in terms of data input.

Q – Can these savings be made without becoming a MAT?

A - Some could, but most couldn't. JH elaborated on reasons why.

Q – If you had a new HT who had a brilliant system in place, why change it?

A – We wouldn't change it and if it was a brilliant system it would make sense to share the good practice across all of the schools.

Q – Finance shows that we have made a saving. Could KCC object to these figures?

A – We have been open and honest with our figures

Q - So all you have saved is £10,000, between 7 schools, why bother?

A – JH stated that she was charged with showing that schools would not make a big financial loss and there was potential for more savings with future contracts

Q – Salary – Inflation has not been added to costs. This needs to be done?

A – We have done so as far as we can but it is all dependent on external decisions. With regards to pay, there will be a meeting with Heads and we are awaiting more information from government and Kent on this year's pay deal. Budgets were set in April(on a 1% rise) but we have only just heard, 3 weeks ago, that there is a recommendation for teacher pay rises of 3.5%. Unions help to protect staff pay but we also have to recognise that the cost of human resources is a huge part of school budgets.

Q – What will stop the CEO salary going up?

A - The Trustees make that decision and Trustees would not make a decision that would make schools worse off financially. The DFE also now monitors CEO salaries and accounts are published annually.

Q – Financial deals-you can do a comparison yourself- It's easy?

A - JH explained why it is not that easy due to a lack of personnel to undertake it. There is not the capacity. JH explained that we need a person (CFO) to work on the next stage of obtaining financial savings and to negotiate for us. At present, schools are pushed towards KCC, so it needs someone with time and expertise to procure best value. It needs someone to look for opportunities and potential rationale for going ahead – efficiencies.

JH explained about new funding available for Academies only.

JH explained that whilst the overall financial breakdown suggests that we may not be saving a fortune, it will, hopefully, show that we are better off by bulk buying and creating more efficient and effective shared services through a better use of resources. These figures may well be even more advantageous once we had the capacity to investigate more fully, e.g., CFO. Financial savings are not the main driver for the proposal.

Q – Can you guarantee money will go to DEALT from bids?

A – JH explained that you couldn't guarantee anything in education.

Q – Re funding code I18 – Will DEALT still be able to get additional grants for schools?

A - This is nothing to do with whether a school is an academy or not. Schools would still be able to get those.

Q – Will pay still be linked to Performance Management?

A – Yes

Q – Where are the Articles?

A – Will be on website as soon as the Local Governing Body for each school have seen them.

Q – Is there, or will there be, a five year plan?

A – Three year budgets are what schools are required to do.

JB explained that we are trying to be honest and open. DEALT is not about running a private business.

Q- Things can change and you could be in a deficit?

A – Yes it can be the same as any state school.

Q – So your budget is a guess?

A – Not all is prediction. Most can be accurate projections

JH explained KCC deficit budget plan procedure and stated that all schools, state or academy would have to have a deficit recovery plan if they were in deficit.

Q – How are you going to distribute savings to school?

A – How any savings are spent would be agreed by the Heads group and would be targeted towards resourcing to improve educational outcomes.

OTHER ISSUES:

- Keith Abbott letter – We have responded twice but as yet have not received a response.

Q – What if we want out, could we go back to KCC?

A - No, we couldn't revert to KCC

Q – Parents have no say or involvement in the process or the decision?

JH explained the consultation, discussions, and meetings that have been happening.