

Tim Loughton M.P.
East Worthing and Shoreham



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

12 September 2018

Dear Damian

State of school funding in East Worthing and Shoreham

I write further to my letter of 14th May as I have just received a response from the Schools' Minister and follows up on further correspondence and meetings we have had earlier in the year around the subject of funding for schools in West Sussex. You were also sent a letter on 29th June signed by all the council leaders in West Sussex regarding the continued iniquity of the funding formula which has my full support. In particular I would draw your attention to the opening paragraph:

'The recent changes to the National Funding Formula have led to increased funding for a significant number of our schools, particularly secondary funding provided for our country. However, even after this funding increase, West Sussex still has the eighth lowest Primary Unit of Funding (PUF) and sixth lowest Secondary Unit of Funding (SUF) in the country. We recognise that deprivation is an important factor to consider in school funding, and are not making the argument to be funded at the same level as some of the most deprived areas of England. We do, however, believe that our schools should receive similar funding to those in the areas of other County Councils and of our statistical neighbours. Currently this is not the case.'

It would be a mistake to think that this is just politicians from West Sussex inevitably pleading an exceptional case for West Sussex and we recognise that many other shire counties in particular are also under great pressure however soundly they have run their finances. In our case this is of course the accumulated culmination of years of being at the bottom of the funding table so that 'slack' has long since been cut, reserves have been used up and many schools are 'running on empty.'

This is also an issue which has catalysed opinion across the whole County from all quarters. Noticeably in the second stage of the consultation on the National Funding Formula for schools last year, the Department received 25,222 responses. No fewer than 9% of these were from respondents in West Sussex which must have been one of the highest if not the highest response. The Department also received a number of separate representations from schools, organisations and individuals in West Sussex regarding funding for schools.

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The East Worthing and Shoreham Constituency includes

Coombes, Fishergate, Kingston Buci, Lancing, Shoreham, Sompting, Southwick,
and the eastern wards of Worthing: Broadwater, Gaisford, Offington and Selden.

Last year I convened a series of roundtable meetings with all the heads of schools in my constituency to hear from them about the impact that funding constraints were having on their individual schools. Many provided further detailed information which I incorporated in a letter to your predecessor Justine Greening on August 10th 2017. This summer I repeated the exercise with Chairs of school governors as well as attending individual meetings of governors and briefings with heads and governors at schools. As a result they have furnished me with a detailed update of the extreme pressures that they are still under and the difficult decisions that they have already taken or are now facing, and that is in light of the additional £28m which has been allocated to West Sussex.

At these meetings I outlined the results of the recent meeting between West Sussex MPs and you where we again robustly put forward the case:

- The additional £28m allocated to West Sussex schools was welcome and obviously translated into differing funding uplifts to individual schools but it came nowhere near bridging the shortfall now being faced across all schools.
- The new 'Fair Funding Formula' which West Sussex MPs had strongly pushed for and which had been promised in the Conservative Party manifesto in 2015 was again welcome but the final formula was still deficient. It relied too heavily on deprivation criteria weightings in particular which do not work fairly in counties like West Sussex. Therefore as far as MPs were concerned this is still a 'work in progress.'
- We were especially worried about the very serious state of the finances of special schools which were in any case not covered by the new funding formula. I have raised this issue in the Commons since and the position remains dire.

I have therefore compiled the following summary of the main actual cutbacks that schools in my constituency are having to implement NOW. These are not theoretical but real decisions that are being made by heads and governing bodies due to funding shortages after considering the additional £28m allocated to West Sussex and the changes to the funding formula. I have anonymised the specific schools but there are obviously many common themes:

- Where pupil levels have been increasing, allocated budgets have not risen proportionately so per capita funding is falling.
- Shortfalls are being clawed back by reducing staffing costs which in some cases account for 90% of a school's budget. Redundancies, fewer working hours, non-returning maternity leave cases are commonplace.
- With fewer staff, more responsibility is shared across the schools and children are gaining less attention as a result of increasing class sizes.
- As opposed to growing and developing the school and creating ways to do so, senior leadership teams are covering classes to remove the need of supply teachers. There now very few cases where senior management can be said to be top heavy.
- Extracurricular activities and trips are being culled due to costs.
- Infrastructure investments and developments are being delayed or ruled out completely due to increasing contractor costs and the shrinking proportion of the school budget for maintenance and replacement equipment that is left after staffing costs.

Medium size Primary School

- Teaching assistant support has been reduced by over 200 hours.
- Reduced their budget for Continuous Personal Development and training for staff.
- Their Inclusion Co-ordinator has not been replaced.
- Unable to replace aging or antiquated IT equipment due to costs.
- Budget forecasts for the next 3 years show substantial deficits.

Junior School

- Carry forward 2012-2014 = £100,000 Per Annum – Now at -£40,000.
- Salaries have increased by 10% between 2013 and now, £220,000 extra required from funding structure for salaries.
- Senior Leadership reduced by 33% since 2011. Middle Leadership reduced also.
- Class sizes typically 32-33. 113 more pupils yet the increase in teachers is 0.8 FTE.
- Support staff hours increased by 125 hours per week. Time being used for severe and complex needs yet less favourable for those with less complex needs.
- Savings arising within teaching mean less of a commitment is being made for those who need it most, and more of a general teaching model exists. Also a level of inexperience as the cheapest teachers are those who are newly qualified.
- Professional Development = £0 – Was £3,000-£5,000 previously
- Extended Curriculum = £500 – Was £19,000-£20,000 previously
- Learning Resources = £35,000 – Was £70,000-£120,000 previously
- Current total budget of just £10,000 for Premises Development – Was £40,000-£60,000 previously.
- Contractor Costs risen by 4% as opposed to 2.5-3.6% - £12,000 in 2015, now £41,000.
- Estimating deficit = £36,000 (this could increase to as much as £70,000)
- Funding per child = £3,600.
- 86.8% of expenditure is staff salaries and overtime – 77.3% back in 2011
- Academic support salaries now above £400,000 – Compared to just under £300,000 in 2011.
- Administration salaries now above £120,000 – Compared to just over £100,000 in 2011.

Medium sized Primary School

- Non-qualified teachers such as Higher-Level Teaching Assistants are being used to cover classes so the school cuts costs on Supply Staff – Parents unhappy
- Senior Management covering classes which restricts their own day to day roles of developing the school.
- All supply costs have been cut for next year.
- Numerous cuts within Teaching Assistant posts, creating greater workloads for Teachers.
- Unable to pay overtime – Time off in lieu instead but creates backlog and constraints.
- Counselling levels have fallen due to cut backs – less time with those with behavioural difficulties which then directly affects those within the classes they are disrupting.
- Regarding facilities, the roof to the main hall is being repaired bit by bit because of costs.
- Window/Toilet refurbishment projects are being deferred, as well as a planned refurbishment to the schools swimming facilities. The latter waiting to secure all monies from grant funding.
- Total allocation of a little under £2,000,000, compared to £2,200,000+ in 2014/15
- Basic funding of £3,235 per pupil compared to £3,200 in 2014.
- Total amount per pupil now at £3,500 compared to £3,700 in 2014.



Special School

- 2 year time frame before all finances will be spent on staffing costs as opposed to developing and growing the future of the school.
- Class sizes will have to increase to ensure staff cover across the board, ultimately limiting the levels of attention each child will receive from their teachers. Staffing levels will become unsafe and not fit for purpose.
- Higher dependency on fundraising to make money for the school. Using teachers free time, largely unpaid, to ensure these events are possible.
- Carry over of approximately £350,000, achieved by penny pinching and savings. Next year estimates to break even, and two years from now, the school will be in deficit if trends continue.
- In September 2018, there will be at least 9 more pupils than in September 2017 but no additional teaching staff. This represents a 10% increase in student population, all of whom have SEN.
- Next year will be the 3rd year of functioning with a reduced Senior Leadership Team as the Headteacher did not replace her own Deputy position when she became Head in a bid to reduce costs. Leadership Team are now on their knees

Secondary Academy

- One Vice Principal, plus equivalent of 6 teachers lost in 4 years, with 2 Teaching Assistants also lost. Other staff cuts are as follows: one administrator, one from premises team, one ICT Technician, one science technician, one HR Officer, two cover administrators, one DT technician, and one pastoral role.
- More focus on in house training as opposed to external and more costly options.
- Reduced numbers of cover staff for break duties, fewer after school clubs particularly outside of PE, external support required to run drama production.
- Increased class sizes of sometimes up to 35 have occurred.
- Reduced drama curriculum, fewer teaching hours for some subjects at KS5, technology curriculum has been reduced and in subjects running less access to more expensive elements, woodwork/metalwork more concentration on drawing, similar in art less opportunity to use more expensive materials paint/clay etc.
- Reduced curriculum at KS5 in languages, technology, arts subjects, unable to invest in ICT refresh at anything like levels required to maintain provision for students and staff.
- Teaching staff costs are now lower than 2 years ago despite unfunded pay rises and increases in employer contributions.
- Support staff costs are going to be £60,000 higher in the next academic year in relation to two years ago.

Small Primary School

- Formula Funding produced a budget £30,000 down on the previous year. Following similar steps and processes that occurred within 2017/18, a shortfall of £17,000 is present. The only cut backs that can be made to cover the £17,000 shortfall is through redundancies and limiting working hours of some support staff. Therefore directly affecting the levels of support on offer for the children.
- Offsite Trips and PE (Which arises due to the lack of playing fields etc) is at risk as teacher levels reduce. fewer teachers will limit availability for supervision off site.
- Every teacher is responsible for leading an area of the curriculum. This is in addition to planning and preparing for teaching their class. Now the teachers must plan and develop their subject in their own time

- Teaching staff no longer have a budget for their area of the curriculum. In the past, Subject Leaders would cost their action plan and ask for an appropriate budget to manage resources throughout the year.
- There has been no supply cover for staff courses this year.
- Headteacher has covered Year 5 & 6 Music for the last 5 years and this year covers Year 5 & 6 Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time. A Headteacher would not normally be expected to teach for more than 1 day a week in a school of their size.
- They can only replace computing hardware if their PTFA can fund it. Issues arise which affect the quality of teaching and the resources being used.
- Have had to make three redundancies to Teaching Assistant members which will take affect at the end of the academic year. Other TAs have had to take cuts in their hours of work.

Secondary Academy

- Narrowed the curriculum on offer to cut costs, resulting in three teachers being made redundant.
- Lost £410 per pupil since 2014/15 which has had to be recuperated by cutting staffing costs.
- They have had to reduce their support staff by one teaching assistant.
- Capitation for each subject area had been significantly reduced.
- Unable to meet the demand for counselling in the school (Currently a four month waiting list) and KS states that this would be his first port of call if changes were implemented.

Small Primary School

- May have to reduce swimming lessons if voluntary contributions decline.
- Music lessons on offer have reduced because music provider is fixed on a price.
- Intervention teacher is reducing her time from 3 days a week to 1.5.
- Senior leadership team are acting as supply teachers as supply budget reduced by 26% compared to 2015/16.
- Number of pupils has increased by 90 in the same period of time, meaning cut backs and constraints are felt across the board.
- Supply cover for training has been cut. Very little CPD is available as a result.
- When cover does occur, those who are filling in are less qualified than desired.
- Fewer drama groups and workshops as a result of costs. Narrows enriching experiences for the children.
- Fewer teachers and teaching assistants per child from September 2018. Arisen as a result of not extending temp contracts and not replacing those who are not returning to work post mat leave.
- Non staff curriculum budget has been reduced by 33% year on year. At its lowest level for 7 years. Within the same 7 year period, pupil numbers increased from 224-415.
- IT equipment budget has been hit, yet outdated resources will soon need replacing.
- No funding for improvement projects since 2016/2017. Staff tend to fill these gaps with hours amassing to 55-60 a week, with SLT working 70 hour weeks.
- Sources of income for school improvements now are ploughed back in to cover overheads.
- No funding available for those who experience financial difficulties unless they are in receipt of pupil premium.
- The cost of a UIFSM meal will exceed that of the allotted budget set out within funding.



Small Primary School

- 2018/19 lump sum remains at £150,000. 2019/20 lump sum to reduce to £130,000. 2020/21 lump sum to reduce to £110,000
- The school could only provide a balanced budget last year as they had a maternity leave that they did not cover.
- One part-time teacher and one full-time teacher short for 2016-17 and part of 2017-18. The school could not afford to cover this.
- There is an increase in staffing costs for support staff from April 2018 due to 2018 national pay award. Average 46p per person per hour for majority of their staff.
- There will be an additional increase due in 2019/20.
- An increase in cost of over £650 for class support staff working 32.5 hours a week over a full calendar year for this year. Similar increase planned for 2019/20.
- Employer National Insurance contributions have increased.
- In September 2018 they have been told to budget a 2% increase in costs for Teaching Staff.
- No additional funding has been made available to the school to cover the additional staffing costs – this is funded purely from the School Budget Share.
- The cost of each hot meal is expected to rise by 5p per meal ordered from September. UIFSM & FSM funding not being increased to cover this cost.
- The carry-over from 2017/18 was £37679.48. Without this the school would not be able to produce a balanced budget for 2018/19 without having to make reductions.
- Staff commitments for 2018/19 don't currently allow for additional time for training or overtime claims or cover for staff absence. Additional funds are expected to drip in over the year and any profit from breakfast club will be used to cover additional staffing costs if required.
- Each child in the school is worth a minimum of £2746.99 based on this years per pupil funding.
- SEN additional top up funding for those with EHCPs is expected to reduce and in some cases be withdrawn. Services for support to come directly to the schools is being reduced also. The school may have to source this support externally in the future.
- Must maintain cuts of approximately £37,000 over the course of the next academic year as well as find an additional £20,000 lost for the planned changes to the lump sum.

Small Primary School

- Had to cut Teaching Assistant support by 2.6 posts
- A fall of 20 training days across the staffing network.
- Unable to maintain current provision for off site visits through subsidy from Parent Teacher Association
- Maintained their curriculum offer but are increasingly having to ask parents for donations to support this
- During this period the school has had a large number of children with complex needs and have had to often support these children in small groups rather than 1 to 1.
- The school have not been able to pursue improvements to the fabric of the building such as improving play space and necessary improvement to IT provision, due to lack of funds.

Small Primary School

- Although no teachers have been lost, 2 Teaching Assistants took redundancy because of the constraints.
- Currently running a school that has been growing into a primary school as part of the changes to age of transfer with insufficient staff and unable to employ a learning mentor.
- Approximately 130 hours of teacher training has been lost per year.
- Unable to send teachers on all the training they would have liked due to the cost of providing supply cover. Head and the Deputy have provided cover when possible but this has an impact on their effectiveness.
- Have had to withdraw from the Index for Inclusion Project due to the impact of having to cover teachers and not having enough time to complete the project effectively.
- Music provision for pupils had to be cut as this was something they paid a peripatetic teacher to provide for all children. Previously they have had lessons and performed to parents.
- The school went into deficit budget due to lack of funding and impact of age of transfer. This has meant cutting back on learning opportunities used to support the learning, such as outside speakers, theatre groups and workshop events as well as cutting back on the quality of resources that children are able to use to support their learning.

As I have said, the above is a small sample of the detailed information given to me by schools. In my discussions with governors I was at pains not to raise false expectations of an early solution to the funding situation and this is of course largely in the hands of the Treasury however sympathetic I know you to be personally. However, I outlined three scenarios through which the funding situation could be addressed.

- I made a case for a specific 'Coastal communities challenge fund' based on the London Challenge fund launched in 2003 which recognised special funding requirements for London schools in deprived areas and this has obviously contributed to the sizeable gap between the way London schools and West Sussex schools are funded. West Sussex is not alone in having affluent rural areas sitting alongside much 'pockets of deprivation' along the coastal strip where the challenges are effectively masked by the overall county picture. A threshold or defined group is the most realistic way to source special consideration funding for a limited group of institutions. This proposal is based on the precedent of the London Challenge and I would be grateful for a meeting to discuss the possibilities further with you.
- The Comprehensive Spending Review scheduled for 2019 is obviously the most likely vehicle to secure additional funding for schools across the board though funding will not start filtering through until 2020. I am only too aware that considerable additional funds already announced for the NHS have limited manoeuvre for other departments and adult social care remains one of our top challenges. Please use this submission in any way that you might see fit in convincing the Treasury of the case for more sympathetic funding of schools. Clearly this has been given a boost by recent figures showing Government spending is back in day to day spending surplus for the first time in many years.

- I also discussed the other possibility which would be very helpful, namely for the Government to fund the teachers' pay increase separately from school budgets. This is effectively what happened for NHS workers and is also being considered for the police and armed forces so it would be incongruous not to treat teachers in the same way. The School Teachers' Review Body announcement in July has obviously superseded this ask and whilst schools still have to find 1% they are now not faced with an open-ended pay rise commitment. However, as I have stated above, this still represents a very large proportion of school budgets and additional funding they will have to find from mainstream resources.

Therefore, I hope to have conveyed a strong message that West Sussex schools are facing very severe challenges that I believe are unprecedented on this scale in most parts of the country. School funding remains the most important issue of concern in my constituency and I would very much like to discuss these issues with you in more detail so I can give some hope to my constituents that their children are not being treated as 'second class citizens' in the education system.

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Loughton', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Tim Loughton MP

Enc.