



NEWS RELEASE

19 October 2011

Education funding reform is a step closer

Members of f40 – the group that campaigns for fairer funding of education – have heard that school funding reform is on the way...though no date has been set as yet.

This news follows the completion of a three-month consultation on School Funding Reform and was made clear at a special f40 conference held in London this week.

Speaking at the conference, Sarah Healey, Director of Education Funding at the Department for Education said: “The government has made clear that the current funding system is neither fair nor transparent.

“However, these are times of limited resources. The Treasury has set out spending plans for the next four years and we are unlikely to see any additional funds.

“So this change is about getting the system right – not about getting more money into it.”

Cllr Ivan Ould, who chaired the conference and is also lead member for children’s services in Leicestershire, said he thought the conference, which was attended by a range of MPs, senior councillors, head teachers, education finance officers, governors and schools forum representatives, had gone very well and delegates came away reassured that change was on its way.

“The recent consultation had made it clear that the government was serious about the need for change and the message that came across at our conference confirmed this view.

“f40’s complaints about the inequity and unfairness of the present flawed funding allocation system are well-documented and naturally we are pleased that at last we have a clear recognition of the justice of our long campaign for a fairer system.”

“It is fully expected that the new system will introduce a national formula to allocate money more consistently across the country, whilst allowing a degree of local flexibility to meet specific needs where agreed by schools.

“f40 members will continue to push for the changes to be introduced as soon as possible. We know that it won’t be in 2012-13, but we would certainly expect it to come into force the year after that. Delay beyond 2013-14 would be totally unacceptable.”

Robin Walker, MP for Worcester, who is on f40's Executive Committee and was one of the Members of Parliament at the conference, added "It is a great achievement that we are no longer asking the question of whether there will be reform but now we are asking when.

"f40 must be congratulated in bringing together so many experts from head-teachers and local councillors to unions, school business managers and even Members of Parliament.

Everyone in f40 is united by a passion to create a fair and transparent system and these are not just buzzwords but things that matter to the children in the schools that we represent. We must deliver a fairer system and we must deliver it soon. If there is one message I would send to the civil servants who attended the conference it is that the injustice of unfair funding has gone on for too long already and that we must proceed without delay."

END

Issued by Doug Allan, Secretary of the f40 Group. For further comment or information please call 07785 223707 or email doug@dtw.co.uk .

There's more detail about f40 on the Group's website – www.f40.org.uk

F40 is a group of the poorest funded local authorities in England:

Bedford Borough	Oxfordshire
Cambridgeshire	Shropshire
Central Bedfordshire	Solihull
Cheshire East	Somerset
Cheshire West and Chester	South Gloucestershire
Derbyshire	Staffordshire
Devon	Stockport
Dorset	Suffolk
East Riding of Yorkshire	Swindon
Gloucestershire	Trafford
Herefordshire	Wakefield
Kent	Warrington
Leicestershire	Warwickshire
North Lincolnshire	Wigan
North Yorkshire	Worcestershire
Nottinghamshire	York