



# APPG for Further Education and Lifelong Learning

Summary – Sir David Collins CBE, FE Commissioner oral evidence session

Wednesday 16 March 2016, Committee Room 6, 10:30-11:30

---

## Present

### Witnesses

**Sir David Collins CBE**, Further Education (FE) Commissioner

### MPs

**Peter Aldous**, Conservative, Waveney – Vice Chair

**Flick Drummond**, Conservative, Portsmouth South

**Kelvin Hopkins**, Labour, Luton North

**Peter Kyle**, Labour, Hove – Chair

**Rob Marris**, Labour, Wolverhampton South West

**Melanie Onn**, Labour, Great Grimsby

**Karin Smyth**, Labour, Bristol South

### Peers

**Lord Aberdare**, Crossbencher

**Baroness Burt of Solihull**, Liberal Democrat

**Baroness Prosser**, Labour

**Lord Storey**, Liberal Democrat

**Lord Watson**, Labour

---

## Background

The APPG for Further Education and Lifelong Learning's purpose is to represent, promote and develop the interests of further education and adult learning. The Officers of the Group are:

[Peter Kyle MP](#), Labour, Hove – Chair

[Peter Aldous MP](#), Conservative, Waveney – Vice Chair

[Michelle Donelan MP](#), Conservative, Chippenham - Vice Chair

[Ian Mearns MP](#), Labour, Gateshead – Vice Chair

## Overview

Sir David Collins CBE the FE Commissioner was invited to address the Group in a one off oral evidence session on the area reviews of FE and sixth form colleges. The Commissioner was questioned on a range of topics, most notably:

- The expense to colleges of carrying out area reviews and whether support can be made available.
- Whether colleges in Wave 1 of the process can collaborate with colleges who may be in Wave 2, 3 or 4.

- Whether colleges can refuse to take forward the recommendations from a review.
- Whether students travel patterns will be taken into account.
- Whether the area review process will result in colleges closing.
- Ensuring new institutions have the right skills set amongst senior management teams and Governors.
- Aligning college delivery alongside local labour market intelligence.
- Provision in rural areas and how the review process may impact on the number of colleges in an area.
- Viability of small school sixth forms and why they haven't been included in the area review process.
- Who is accountable in an ever independent education system where all schools will be academies and colleges are independent autonomous institutions.

Under the new Chairmanship of Peter Kyle MP, the Group will reconvene after Easter recess to consider its next line of enquiry and will meet again in due course. For further information, please contact [Piran Dhillon](#), Public Affairs Manager, Association of Colleges.