



# APPG for Further Education and Lifelong Learning

Summary – Richard Atkins CBE, FE Commissioner

All Party Parliamentary Group on FE and Lifelong Learning held Tuesday 21 November 2017

Portcullis House - Room U

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## Present

### MPs

**Peter Kyle**, Labour, Hove – Chair

**Nic Dakin**, Labour, Scunthorpe

**Barry Sheerman**, Labour, Huddersfield

**Karin Smyth**, Labour, Bristol South

### Peers

**Lord Watson**, Labour

**Baroness Garden of Frognal**, Liberal Democrat

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## 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

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

[Baroness Garden of Frognal](#), Liberal Democrat – Vice-Chair

## Overview

Richard Atkins CBE, the FE Commissioner was invited to provide an update following the completion of the Area Based Review (ABR) process for colleges and sixth forms, and address the next steps for institutions going forward in light of recent policy developments and following the election. There were 33 area reviews, split into five waves resulting in 33 college mergers and four sixth form college academy conversions since the first one began in September 2015.

The FE Commissioner was questioned on a range of topics, most notably:

- Whether there's quantitative evidence that demonstrates larger providers are more resilient and efficient.
- Whether area reviews achieved their aims and at what specific point does the Government foresee the FE Commissioner being involved again.
- Whether the FE Commissioner is expected to take the lead on interventions around the quality of provision.

- Whether the current Ofsted inspection framework remains relevant for large institutions especially when compared to small school sixth- forms.
- Whether not including sixth-forms and other post 16 education providers for practical reasons was a sensible approach.

The APPG for Further Education and Lifelong Learning will reconvene after Christmas recess to consider its next line of enquiry and will meet again in due course. For further information, please contact Guram Korkoti, Public Affairs Officer, Association of Colleges.