

ESSEX PRIMARY HEADS' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13 OCTOBER 2015 at 11.00 am at Chelmsford City Football Club

Distribution	*Lehla Abbott	North East Vice-Chair
	*Cheryl Allard	Mid Chair/Chelmsford South
	*Lois Ashforth	Dengie
	*Dawn Baker	Mid Treasurer
	*Sue Bardetti	Tendring South
	*Nicky Barrand	South Vice-Chair/Basildon East & Pitsea
	Isobel Barron	West Vice-Chair
	*Amanda Buckland-Garnett	South Woodham Ferrers
	*Rachel Callaghan	Uttlesford North
	*Claire Claydon	Tendring Mid
	*John Clements	Uttlesford South
	*Anna Conley	Witham
	*Lyn Corderoy	South Treasurer/Wickford
	*Brenda Dalley	South Chair/ Castle Point & Benfleet
	Sue Dodd	Maldon
	*Sarah Donnelly	Halstead
	*Fiona Dorey	Braintree
	*Helen Dudley-Smith	Colchester East
	*Melissa Eades	Billericay
	*Andy Gillett	Chelmsford West
	*Mary Jo Hall	West Treasurer
	Bridget Harris	North East Treasurer
	*Shelagh Harvey	Brentwood
	*Nick Hutchings	EPHA Vice-Chair/North East Chair
	*Ceri Jones	Mid Vice-Chair
	*Pam Langmead	EPHA Professional Officer/County Treasurer
	*Lesley Lewis	Epping Forest Rural
	Julie Lorkins	West Chair
	*Jacque Martin	Colchester South
	*Kate Mills	Chelmsford North
	*Hayley O'Dea	Rochford
	*Donna Parker	Tendring North
	*Daren Partridge	Canvey Island
	*Lorna Pigram	Rayleigh
	*Harriet Phelps-Knights	EPHA Chair
	*Clive Reynolds	Colchester West
	*Angela Russell	Basildon West
	*Janice Tunney	Epping Forest South
	Jonathan Tye	Harlow
	*Kay Wills	Harwich and Dovercourt

* indicates attendance

Also in attendance

Edwin Parsons

Schools' HR service

1.	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Action						
	<p>Harriet Phelps-Knights, the EPHA Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received from:</p> <table><tr><td>Isobel Barron</td><td>West Vice-Chair</td></tr><tr><td>Julie Lorkins</td><td>West Chair</td></tr><tr><td>Jonathan Tye</td><td>Harlow</td></tr></table>	Isobel Barron	West Vice-Chair	Julie Lorkins	West Chair	Jonathan Tye	Harlow	
Isobel Barron	West Vice-Chair							
Julie Lorkins	West Chair							
Jonathan Tye	Harlow							
2.	BUSINESS INTERESTS REGISTER	Any Executive members who have not yet completed a business interests form						
	<p>Completed business interest forms (including nil returns) were returned to the EPHA Professional Officer, who will hold them on file for inspection when required; those members of the Executive who have not completed a form were asked to do so and forward it to the EPHA Manager.</p>							
3.	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING							
	<p>The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 7 May 2015 were confirmed as an accurate record. The following matter arising from the minutes was discussed:</p> <p>i) INFORMATION ABOUT PUPIL PLACEMENTS (minute 7 refers)</p> <p>It was noted that Alison Stannard, who had attended the May meeting, had been asked to attend the Executive meeting, but that this had not been followed up. It was AGREED that she should be invited to attend the next meeting of the Executive on 28 January to discuss the information that is shared with schools when determining the placement of children with complex special educational needs.</p>	Executive meeting 28 January 2016						
4.	PROGRESS OF THE EPHA RESTRUCTURE AND APPOINTMENT OF AN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR							
	<p>The EPHA Chair noted that the restructure of the Association is underway, following agreement from primary headteachers at the meetings in June to appoint an Executive Director and to extend the EPHA Manager’s role to that of Professional Officer. Headteachers also agreed the principle of top-slicing funding from the primary DSG to provide additional income for these roles, replacing annual subscriptions. The closing date for applications for the Executive Director role is 23 October, with interviews planned for 5 November (<i>following the meeting, the interview date was postponed to 19 November</i>). In the meantime, the Professional Officer and EPHA Executive members are attending meetings on behalf of primary headteachers (minute 8 refers).</p>							
5.	FINANCE REPORT							
	<p>It was noted that a finance report was presented at the Annual General Meeting earlier in the day.</p>							
6.	HEADTEACHER SUPPORT AND WELL-BEING							
	<p>It was noted that the matter of headteacher support and well-being had been discussed during the Annual General Meeting, earlier in the day. The EPHA Chair noted that she had a brief discussion with Edwin Parsons, HR Adviser, about the approach of Essex</p>							

Schools' HR in relation to this matter.

7. INFORMATION FROM AND LINKS WITH THE NAHT (National Association of Head Teachers)

Whilst it was recognised that not all headteachers are members of the NAHT, it was suggested that it might be useful for the Executive to strengthen links with the Union. Recently the NAHT representative in Essex, Peter Malcolm, had forwarded notes of NAHT meetings he attended, and these notes were circulated to the Executive members. It was argued that these should not be sent out to all schools by EPHA, as they were the personal views of Mr Malcolm, but the principle of forging links with headteacher unions was accepted. Donna Parker noted that she is on the Deputy and Advisory Heads' Board for the NUT.

It was agreed that Russell Hobby (NAHT) and Christine Blower (NUT) should be invited to a future EPHA Executive meeting to discuss local and national issues and feed back the views of Essex primary headteachers.

Executive meetings

Edwin Parsons (Schools HR Adviser) sounded a note of caution, reminding headteachers to remember that Unions will have a different view when supporting employer or employed, and each Union has a specific policy in relation to employment issues.

8. HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

Edwin Parsons, Essex Schools' HR Adviser was welcomed to the meeting. He raised the following matters:

a) Teachers' Pay Award

The recent notification of the teachers' pay award within the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document has caused some confusion and uncertainty for schools and governing bodies. The HR advice, issued in August 2015 stated:

The statutory position

- Any teacher on the minimum of the Main, Upper and Unqualified Teacher Pay Ranges on 1 September must have their salary increased by at least 1%.
- Any member on the minimum of the Leadership Pay Range and any headteacher on the minimum point of the relevant group pay range on 1 September must have their salary increased by at least 1%.
- Any teacher in receipt of the minimum TLR1, TLR2, TLR3 or SEN Allowance on 1 September, must have that payment increased by at least 1%
- Any and all other increases (to individual teachers and to pay scales operated by schools) are entirely discretionary and the Government expects that any decision to increase the salaries or allowances of those above the minimum will be linked to performance. NB increases above the minimum of any Range can be any percentage from 0% upwards (but see next bullet)
- Any increases to those on the maximum of any pay range must not increase pay above the new maximum for that pay range (proposed 1% for Upper and Unqualified Pay Ranges, 2% for Main Pay Range, 0% for Leadership Pay Range and Group Ranges and 1% for TLR and SEN allowances.)

One headteacher noted that his School Business Manager had been advised at a recent

Financial Surgery that if the 1% pay award was automatically given to all teachers then future deficit budgets will not be supported by the Local Authority. This had caused some confusion as the understanding was that schools cannot set deficit budgets; EP explained that incorrect advice had been given at these meetings.

EP noted that DfE approach aims to remove the historic pay scales, but most schools are retaining some sort of staged approach for the sake of fairness and transparency. One headteacher noted that the award has taken up a huge amount of time and has caused real problems for governors.

b) Trade Union Bill

EP noted that the Trade Union Bill is currently going through parliament. It proposes an increase to the percentage of membership required to vote on strike action and the amount of detail that must be given on a ballot paper about the intention to strike. In addition, each ballot decision will only last for 4 months.

EP stated that there has been no discernible increase of industrial action this term, but the Unions are increasingly challenging academies on their employment decisions.

c) Settlement agreements decided by academies

The EFA is investigating settlement agreements as part of their audit process. Essex HR and Legal Services have created a document that can be used to record the reasons for entering into a settlement agreement with a member staff, which academies should be using to explain and evidence their decision. There is a similar template that can be used by maintained schools, although use of this is not a requirement.

d) Support for senior leadership recruitment

EP explained that HR is keen to support schools and academies with the recruitment of senior staff. They are working with ASHE and the Workforce Development team to develop useful support. EP was asked if HR have liaised with Graham Lancaster and Prue Barnes about the content of the Heads in Waiting course, as it was suggested that a considerable percentage of headteacher time is spent on personnel issues, and the Executive wasn't sure if the course touched on HR matters at all.

It was suggested that there is a clear need for training for middle and senior leaders about the roles and responsibilities of Deputy Headship.

e) Insurance for LLEs and NLEs

EP was asked who provides the insurance cover for LLEs and NLEs. It was **AGREED** that this should be raised at the EPHA Executive meeting with LA Officers later in the day.

f) Use of Jobscene to advertise vacancies in other Local Authorities

It was noted that schools in other Local Authorities can use Essex Jobscene to advertise vacancies, but Essex schools are unable to advertise their own vacancies in other LAs. This was felt to be unfair and detrimental to Essex schools (and a way for Jobscene to earn extra revenue, but at potential cost to Essex schools). EP **AGREED** to research this further and it was **AGREED** that this should be raised at the EPHA Executive meeting with LA Officers later in the day.

EPHA
Executive
meeting with
LA Officers
13 October
2015

EPHA
Executive
meeting with
LA Officers
13 October
2015

8. REPRESENTATION ON WORKING GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

a) Professional Officer's report of attendance at meetings

The Professional Officer circulated a report with the agenda for the meeting, detailing the meetings that she has attended and the implications for primary heads. Pam is currently representing EPHA on the following groups/attending the following meetings:

- Schools Forum (as an observer and substitute when necessary)
- Schools Forum SEN Sub-group
- Schools Forum Finance Sub-group
- Schools Forum SEND Capital Project Management Board
- DSG Project board
- Chairs and Professional Officer meetings
- EPHA Leadership Group
- Schools Led Improvement System Project Board
- CAMHS Stakeholder Partnership
- Essex Safeguarding Children's Board, and governance sub-group
- Strategic Partnership Task and Finish Group – resources impact
- Pupil Wellbeing and vulnerable groups
- Pupil Voice
- EWS discussion
- Identification of provision for vulnerable groups
- New Headteachers' introductory meeting
- SEND funding group

b) Asset Management Group

Donna Parker reminded the Executive that she is the primary representative on the Asset Management Group. She noted that she had been receiving concerns about WS Atkins and Mitie (the LA property management consultants) and asked for feedback from headteachers in advance of the next meeting in November.

Another headteacher expressed concern about an apparently random check of asbestos levels which has closed down parts of her school.

c) Raising attainment of disadvantaged children

Helen Dudley-Smith reported that this group is yet to be properly established, although a meeting has been arranged for this term. It was noted that a real challenge for schools is the identification of disadvantaged children, particularly those who are infants and so automatically entitled to free school meals, which has made it much less of an incentive for families to register their entitlement for FSM. One headteacher noted that the LA will only check eligibility on one day a year (after the autumn annual census) which means that schools are missing out on crucial funding.

d) Schools Forum

It was noted that primary headteachers are now well represented at the Schools Forum, with five primary headteacher representatives (Harriet Phelps-Knights, Dawn Baker, Debbie Rogan, Richard Green and Stephen Hales) who all attend the meetings regularly. The EPHA Professional Officer also attends Schools Forum meetings, and represents primary heads on sub-groups; in addition, if a primary headteacher representative is unable to attend a Forum meeting, then the EPHA Professional Officer can substitute for them and vote in their place. Regular pre- Forum meetings are now scheduled, enabling

the representatives to discuss agenda items in advance of meetings.

Key agenda items at the Schools Forum meeting on 14 October include the proposed funding of Schools Effectiveness Plus (discussed at the EPHA AGM earlier in the day), the progress of the SEND capital programme and the establishment of a project management board, and the future funding of EPHA through the primary DSG.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Annual Section 11 safeguarding audit

The Executive questioned the cost and effectiveness of the annual Section 11 safeguarding audit, particularly following letters sent out by Clare Kershaw to schools that had not completed the process by 31 July 2015, threatening them with a possible warning notice if they did not comply with the requirement to complete the audit.

Headteachers argued that this punitive approach was not helpful or supportive, and questioned the overall value of the mandatory exercise.

b) Free School Meals entitlement

On Junior school headteacher raised the problem of lack on information about Free School Meals entitlement when a pupil moves from infant to junior school. It was **AGREED** that the issues surrounding UIFSM, entitlement to the Pupil Premium Grant and communication between infant and junior schools should be raised at the next meeting of the EPHA Leadership Group in January 2016.

**EPHA
leadership
Group
January
2016**

c) Education, Health and Care Plans – lack of transferability

It was noted that the management of EHC Plans, including the transfer from statements, was contributing to a huge additional workload for SENCOs. One headteacher outlined a situation where a child has arrived in Reception; this child already had an EHCP at pre-school, but the school has been told that the Plan is not transferable and so they must re-apply, a huge and (in the headteacher's view) unnecessary, piece of work for the SENCO. This headteacher argued that the SENCO's role is becoming impossible. It was **AGREED** that this should be raised at the EPHA Executive meeting with LA Officers later in the day.

**EPHA
Executive
meeting with
LA Officers
13 October
2015**

D Charges for ECC phone lines

It has recently become clear that schools (and the public) are being charged 5p a minute for many Essex County Council support services, including the Family Help Hub (IRT), the Finance Support team and others. Headteachers felt strongly that schools should not be charged for crucial services, particularly when they were having to wait a considerable length of time for the calls to be answered (a typical response time for the Family Help Hub is 45 minutes plus). It was **AGREED** that this should be raised as a matter of urgency at the EPHA Executive meeting with LA Officers later in the day.

**EPHA
Executive
meeting with
LA Officers
13 October
2015**

e) Lack of one to one support for autism from specialist teachers

This was raised as an issue, and it was **AGREED** that this should be raised as a matter of urgency at the EPHA Executive meeting with LA Officers later in the day.

**EPHA
Executive
meeting with
LA Officers
13 October
2015**

10. DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2015/16 SCHOOL YEAR

Executive meetings (Chelmsford City Football Club)

Thursday 28 January 2016

Thursday 5 May 2016

Area Heads Meetings

Autumn term 2015

SOUTH	Tuesday 3 November	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Wednesday 4 November	Weston Homes Community Stadium
MID	Tuesday 10 November	Chelmsford City Football Club
WEST	Wednesday 11 November	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley

Spring term 2016

SOUTH	Wednesday 24 February	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Thursday 25 February	Weston Homes Community Stadium
WEST	Wednesday 2 March	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 3 March	Chelmsford City Football Club

Summer term 2016

N-EAST	Wednesday 8 June	Weston Homes Community Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 9 June	Holiday Inn, Basildon
WEST	Wednesday 15 June	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 16 June	Chelmsford City Football Club

Conferences

Headteachers' Conference

Friday 18 March 2016 Stock Brook Country Club, Nr. Billericay

Deputy Headteachers' Conference

Friday 14 October 2016 Weston Community Homes Stadium

.....
Harriet Phelps-Knights
Chair of EPHA

Pam Langmead
EPHA Manager