

ESSEX PRIMARY HEADS' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 5 MAY 2016 at 9.00 am – 11.30 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
	*Nigel Hookway	Executive Director
	*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

Ralph Holloway

ECC SEND Transformation Manager

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Action

Harriet Phelps-Knights, the EPHA Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from:

Isobel Barron	West Chair
Rachel Callaghan	Uttlesford North
Brenda Dalley	South Chair/ Castle Point & Benfleet
Julie Lorkins	West Vice-Chair
Jacque Martin	Colchester South
Kate Mills	Chelmsford North
Hayley O’Dea	Rochford
Daren Partridge	Canvey Island
Jonathan Tye	Harlow
Kay Wills	Harwich and Dovercourt

The Chair noted that this was Clive Reynold’s last meeting on the Executive as he retires at the end of the summer term; he was thanked for his contribution and commitment to EPHA. She reminded the Executive members that at the area meetings in June the area representatives will be elected and asked everyone to consider standing for another year. It was also **AGREED** that additional headteachers could attend the Executive meetings as observers, if they wished to be involved with the work of the EPHA Executive.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 28 January 2015 were confirmed as an accurate record. The following matters arising from the minutes was discussed:

- i) Insurance for LLEs and NLEs (Minute 2a refers)**
It was confirmed that the LA has still not yet given an answer to the question of who insures Local and National Leaders of Education and it was **AGREED** that it would be raised once again at the meeting with LA Officer later in the morning.
- ii) Use of Jobscene to advertise vacancies in other Local Authorities (Minute 2b refers)**
It was **AGREED** that this issue would be raised once again at the meeting with LA Officer later in the morning for clarification.
- iii) Free School Meals checking service (Minute 2c refers)**
It was noted that not all junior schools had received information about the requirement to pay an annual subscription to access the service that checks whether families are entitled to free schools meals. It was **AGREED** that this issue would be raised at the meeting with LA Officer later in the morning.
- iv) Annual Section 11 safeguarding audit (Minute 9a refers)**
The Professional Officer noted that, at a recent Essex Safeguarding Children’s Board meeting, she had learnt that the statutory requirement for all sectors to complete a Section 11 audit is once every two years; currently schools are asked to complete the audit every year and, while this can offer a useful checklist of practice, the task is time consuming and can become simply a tick box exercise. Pam explained that she has discussed the issue with Jo Barclay, Schools’ Safeguarding Adviser, who will explore whether schools should be brought in line with other practitioners and be asked to

Meeting
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Officers
05/05/16

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complete the audit every two years. She **AGREED** to follow this up with Jo Barclay.

**Professional
Officer**

v) **Directory of Support for Primary Headteachers**

The Executive was referred to a Directory of Support compiled by the Professional Officer, and circulated in advance of the meeting. It was **AGREED** that this was a useful document that should be sent out to all headteachers.

**Professional
Officer**

3. **LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATE**

a) The Chair noted that she, the Executive Director and the Professional Officer had met with the Chairs and Officers of the secondary and special school associations (ASHE and ESSET) on 29 April 2016. Ralph Holloway attended part of the meeting. The discussion focused on the progress of the SEND capital programme, the proposal from the Local Authority to develop a school improvement partnership with EPHA and ASHE, and the visit to meet Essex MPs on 6 July. It was noted that discussions with the MPs will focus on the following issues:

- Funding
- Recruitment and retention problems in the county/sustainability of school leadership
- Assessment and curriculum changes – impact on schools and pupils
- Academisation
- Pressure on school places
- Access to support services – CAMHS, health, social care etc

b) The EPHA Leadership Team, (the Chair and Vice-Chair of EPHA, the Area Chairs, the Executive Director and the Professional Officer) had the termly meeting with Clare Kershaw (Director of Commissioning for Education and Life-long Learning) and the Area Commissioners on 26 April. The group discussed the LA school improvement proposal, and also the format of the termly headteacher meetings. EPHA has had feedback that some of the LA input is repetitive and unnecessary for headteachers and information could, in some cases, be disseminated in a more efficient way. However, it is recognised that many headteachers do welcome the chance to hear from Local Authority officers and that a slot should be retained at future meetings for LA input. A suggestion is that the future format of the meetings could replicate the termly Executive meeting, with an EPHA meeting at the beginning of the day, followed by LA input (including a chance for them to respond to questions and concerns that might be raised by headteachers in the morning). The afternoon could then be used for training and development/inspirational speakers and so on.

On Executive member stated that, in his opinion, the LA input does not add a lot of value to the termly meeting; he particularly welcomed the inclusion of national speakers such as Russell Hobby (NAHT President). Another head noted that they often repeat what has been discussed at the Executive meeting and, if representatives are reporting back to their local headteachers, this is then information that heads have already heard. However, it was accepted that this does not always happen consistently and it is important for all heads to have a termly link with the LA, whilst ensuring that the agenda is agreed and managed. It was **AGREED** that the minutes of the Executive meetings should be sent out to all headteachers, so that they are aware of discussions and decisions following the meetings, and that the views of heads should be sought about the value and content of the termly meetings.

c) School Effectiveness Plus Project Board

The Chair noted that at the last meeting the EPHA Executive had unanimously agreed that the SE+ tool should not be subsidised by the primary DSG. This decision had been relayed to the Schools Forum, which had then voted against the proposal being put forward by EES. Since then the SE+ pilot has continued and Alison Fiala (Area Commissioner) has asked if EPHA representatives could join the SE+ Project Board to oversee the implementation and development of the product, which is being rolled out nationally. The EPHA Executive agreed that it was helpful that headteachers who are involved in the pilot sit on the Board, but it was unanimously **AGREED** that there should not be a representative from the EPHA Executive.

4. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DfE WHITE PAPER: EDUCATION EXCELLENCE EVERYWHERE, AND LA PROPOSAL FOR FUTURE PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The Chair referred to a paper provided by Clare Kershaw, circulated with the agenda for the meeting, that set out the implications of the DfE White Paper and, in particular, the impact of mass academisation and the loss of the ESG (Education Services Grant) in 2017, which currently funds the school improvement activities provided by the Local Authority. Clare Kershaw has argued that there will be a gap in support for maintained schools until such a time that the MAT and academy system is fully in place and running effectively, in relation to school to school support. She is asking EPHA and ASHE whether the LA should be undertaking further work to design a continuing school improvement support system, endorsed by the Headteacher Associations. ASHE is worried about the continuing support for headteachers and has particular faith in their team of (4) advisers.

Clare is particularly worried about a fragmentation of support and a loss of the knowledge and sharing of data and intelligence. She is proposing reviving the mechanism of the Essex Learning Partnership (ELP) – the initial structure set up by Richard Thomas, when he was the Executive Director of ASHE as a charitable trust, designed to deliver CPD and professional development (potentially in partnership with EPHA). However, at the time the proposal was turned down by the LA, which then set up EES as a traded service to offer school improvement CPD and training.

Clare’s aim is to ensure that the LA continues to have a role in preventative work, rather than just intervention/crisis management. The service would, in effect, offer an insurance scheme for schools – paid for by all and used when needed.

The intention is not for EPHA to actually employ advisers but to endorse – and fund – the service. Clare was asked directly the cost of the school improvement service – she didn’t give an exact figure, but estimated the current staffing bill at around £1.7m – she reckoned £2m would be sufficient to run the service. Lisa Fergus noted that if all schools paid in, this would “only” cost around £4,000 a school.

EPHA representatives asked for a comprehensive list of actual services that schools receive from the LA, paid by the ESG – as set out in the supporting paper, these services include:

- Data and intelligence
- Support for headteachers
- Frequent and timely reviews of schools

- Early alert systems for schools at risk
- Facilitating strategic initiatives (for example, the current recruitment and retention strategy)
- Support for Ofsted, in preparation for and at time of Ofsted
- Support for curriculum reform
- Information and advice
- Communications support
- Core support of governors
- Support for MATs and TSAs
- Headteacher recruitment

It was accepted that there are other, additional services, that schools often “take for granted”, such as the press office/support in a crisis, that would be missed if no longer there. Executive members were less sure whether all schools would be prepared to pay for the support of the LA school improvement advisers, as increasingly schools and academy chains are using independent consultants. It was discussed whether this should simply be established as a traded service, which schools would buy into if they wished. It was argued that, in the current financial climate, some schools would simply not have the available funding to pay for this service.

The Executive also discussed the role of EPHA and its independence from the Local Authority. It was accepted that the collaborative relationship with the LA is important and currently strong, but that EPHA needs to be separate from the LA in order to lobby effectively at a national and local level. Some felt that EPHA would not have the same credibility if it was seen to be aligned so closely with the Local Authority. In addition EPHA does not have the capacity, mechanism or the desire to employ the advisers and one headteacher argued strongly that this would simply not be a good business model for the association.

The Chair noted that this matter would be discussed at the meeting with LA Officers later in the day and asked Executive members to share their opinions and comments about the proposal for the school improvement partnership.

5. REPRESENTATION ON WORKING GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

a) Professional Officer’s report of attendance at meetings

Pam Langmead circulated a report with the agenda for the meeting, detailing the meetings that she has attended and the implications for primary heads. She 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 (as a substitute when necessary)
- Schools Forum Finance Sub-group (as a substitute when necessary)
- Chairs and Professional Officer meetings
- EPHA Leadership Group
- Schools Led Improvement System Project Board and funding group
- CAMHS Stakeholder Partnership
- Children’s Partnership Board
- Essex Safeguarding Children’s Board, and governance sub-group
- Recruitment and Retention task and finish group
- Alternative provision and behaviour support

- Pupil Voice
- SEND IASS (Information Advisory Support Service)
- Identification of provision for vulnerable groups
- SEND provision group
- Strategic Hate Crime Partnership

Pam reminded the Executive to feed their views and opinions to her and Nigel, in order to inform their discussions at meetings

b) Executive Director's report of attendance at meetings

Nigel Hookway circulated a report with the agenda for the meeting, detailing the meetings that he has attended and the implications for primary heads. He is currently representing EPHA on the following groups/attending the following meetings:

- Virtual School Governing Body
- Schools Forum (as an observer and substitute when necessary)
- Chairs and Professional Officer meetings
- EPHA Leadership Group
- Schools Led Improvement System Project Board
- Recruitment and Retention task and finish group
- Alternative provision and behaviour support

c) Recruitment and Retention task and finish group

Both the Executive Director and the Professional Officer represent EPHA on this group. They noted that a number of initiatives have been introduced in relation to recruitment, including the possible appointment of teachers from Australia and Ireland, support and incentives for new teachers to Essex, and the launch of a communications strategy for Essex. They both had some concerns that these initiatives may only offer a limited and short term solution (the average length of time an overseas teacher stays in the country is 1 -3 years) and that there has not yet been sufficient focus on retention of existing staff. The group has discussed the huge problem caused this year by the DfE capping the number of trainee teachers; this has led to serious problems for some of the ITT providers and has exacerbated the recruitment crisis in Essex. It was noted that training places are available for salaried trainees, but not those who access any government funding, including student loans.

d) Schools Forum

Harriet Phelps-Knights reported that an extraordinary Schools Forum meeting was held on 13 April to discuss the implications of the education White Paper and the National Funding Formula consultation.

e) EnPro

Ceri Jones noted that he is the Chair of EnPro – the group looking at the effectiveness of enhanced provision across the county. 20 schools offer enhanced specialist provision and are funded at a rate of around £17,000 per eligible child. The enhanced provisions are being developed further to support SEND and the group has been established to ensure that the units are offering consistent and effective support to children. The group is working closely with ESSET to develop and improve outreach support to schools.

f) School Led SEND

The Professional Officer noted that this group had been established originally to consider

the proposal to devolve SEN statutory assessment funding to groups of schools, who would then determine the allocation of additional funding depending on need. The Professional Officer and two other headteachers on the group argued strongly that clusters did not have the capacity or expertise to undertake this role and that this would lead to an unfair and time consuming system. The group was put on hold in January, and a further meeting is planned for May, which will consider the development of SEND provision across groups of schools. The LA intention is to establish an understanding of best practice, in order to develop school to school support for SEND.

6. FINANCE REPORT

The report covered the period January – April 2016

Current account

04.01.16 Opening balance £25,876.78

Expenditure

Supply	£ 5,296.00
Travel claims	£ 700.60
Professional Officer: fees (January - March)	£ 9,670.00
Professional Officer: mileage	£ 498.60
Professional Officer: expenses for EPHA	£ 715.82
Executive Director	£ 517.45
Meeting/venue costs	£ 5,562.00
Total expenditure	£22,960.47

Income

North East EPHA subscriptions	£ 6,030.00
West EPHA subscriptions	£ 4,200.00
South EPHA subscriptions	£ 7,380.00
Total income	£17,610.00

07.04.16 Closing balance £20,536.31

Income from Mid EPHA subscriptions - £7,140 – not yet cleared

Conference account

17.12.15 Opening balance £29,703.27

Deputy Headteacher conference

	Expenditure	Income
Conference bookings		£ 200.00
Total income		£ 200.00

Headteacher conference

	Expenditure	Income
Resources (photocopying)	£ 204.20	
Speakers	£ 7,675.05	
Miscellaneous (reimbursements)	£ 500.00	
CVS International (ICT)	£ 1,354.80	
Total expenditure	£ 9,734.05	
Conference bookings		£22,100.00
Total income		£22,100.00

31.03.16 Closing balance £42,269.22

Additional expenses not yet cleared: venue cost £6629.15

The Treasurer reminded the Executive that these balances did not include the funds that

is currently held in the four Area bank accounts, which will be transferred to County EPHA in the summer term. It was **AGREED** that the four area accounts should be retained with a nominal sum in them, in case a decision is made at a later date to resurrect the accounts, and that therefore the role of Area Treasurers should be maintained.

The Professional Officer confirmed that she has asked Yannick Stupples-Whyley (ECC Finance Manager) to chase up the payment of the 2016/17 contribution from the primary DSG.

7. PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS, ALTERNATIVE PROVISION AND SUPPORT FOR ESSEX PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Ralph Holloway, SEND Transformation Manager, informed the Executive that last school year there was a total of 19 permanent exclusions in primary schools, but this year (2015/16) there have already been 37 (up from 32 in March). Ralph said that he knows there are more potential permanent exclusions in the pipeline and expects to reach at least 50 – 60 by the end of the school year.

14 of those were children in Reception or Key Stage 1, and this is a worrying trend both in Essex and nationally. The permanent exclusions have all been because the pupils are violent to staff and other pupils, and Ralph noted that these children are seriously disturbed.

There is an increase in every quadrant, though Mid is reasonably stable (for the time being), North East and South are high, and West is acute.

The Mid and NE provision (NEAPS) is full, Basildon is full, and Aspire (the free school APS in Harlow) only has capacity for 20 places and only gives 5 allocated spaces for referral from the LA Alternative Provision service.

We asked if Ralph had undertaken an analysis of the permanent exclusions; he has and explained that this shows two key things: only one school has had more than one permanent exclusion (so, not a focus on one school or MAT) and that those schools with better access to special school outreach or behaviour support are less likely to exclude.

The SEND transformation project includes the establishment of 8 ASC (Autistic Spectrum Condition) hubs, two in each quadrant (one primary, one secondary), which are due to commence in September 2107. £1.5 million (out of the £42 million approved by the Schools Forum) has been earmarked for the ASC hubs. Ralph noted that he is presenting a paper to Schools Forum in May to ask for an additional £1,440,896 revenue funding (from the High Needs Block) to enable these hubs to operate. The Executive agreed that this was necessary and that they would ask the primary representatives on the Schools Forum to vote accordingly.

One headteacher asked if there had been any work undertaken to research the increasing number of children with extraordinarily complex needs. It was noted that these include children with complex medical needs, who previously would not have been educated in mainstream schools. It was agreed that this is impacting on the recruitment of staff, as well as their well-being.

It was argued that there continues to be a lack of joined up thinking and discussion between the health service and schools, and one head wondered if there was any real knowledge of what schools are having to manage. Ralph noted that the transition from CAMHS to NELFT this year has been difficult, although progress has been made and the workforce is gradually being trained to work in a very different way.

One headteacher argued that mental health is grossly under-funded (for both children and adults) and another argued that the CCGs are failing to work with schools; he has asked Clare Kershaw to discuss this with the director of health in Essex.

Ralph explained that there is no longer one cohesive support service across the county, the PRUs are hampered by a lack of capacity and resources and Mid Essex doesn't have PRU provision at all. The Executive discussed the possibility of provision being developed within the free school programme; plans are underway to develop primary PRU provision on the old Chipping Hill infant school site in Witham. There is a good chance of this going ahead, perhaps opening in 2017? Also there is the possibility of a South free school – although it is likely to be 2017 or 18 before that becomes a reality.

The current GROW projects are funded by the remains of the BAP (behaviour and attendance partnership) funding, but this decreases every time a school converts to being an academy.

Ralph noted that the Speciality Teacher team needs a thorough review – he said that this is a sensitive issue but that he feels that they believe that they are schools-led, whilst he argues that they are school-funded, and don't either know or deliver what schools actually want and need. One headteacher argued that, given the complexity of these children emotional and mental health, there is a need for an increased number of Educational Psychiatrists, rather than staff in behaviour support who have not encountered the extremes of behaviour that schools are currently facing.

The Executive discussed the use of managed moves and related funding for pupils. It was noted that the education White Paper infers that schools will remain responsible for a pupil after they have been permanently excluded. This will become a huge problem for schools.

Ralph ended by giving his “wish-list”:

Schools Forum to agree the revenue funding for the ASC hubs;

Growing a relationship between primaries and the PRUs – including primary representation on the management committees;

EPHA to work with Ralph and Julie Keating to develop the support for primary schools.

It was **AGREED** that Ben Smith, the education lead for NELFT, should be asked to attend the Area meetings.

For information, the Alternative Education Commissioning Service team currently consists of:

Julie Keating – Manager

John Hill – Mid and North East – supported by Samia Uddin

Julie Miller-Robinson – South and West – supported by Julie Miller-Robinson

Kerry Ayre – responsible for anxious school refusers, those with medical issues

Jackie Mitchell – responsible for managing alternative provision network, including

wider provision (e.g. alternative training options)
Paul Dale – responsible for behaviour on school transport and anti-bullying

Ralph Holloway was thanked for attending the meeting.

8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AT MEETING WITH LA OFFICERS AND SUMMER TERM AREA MEETINGS

In addition to the matters raised earlier in the meeting, it was **AGREED** that the following issues should be taken forward to the meeting with LA Officers later in the morning:

a) EHCPs and IPRA funding

NB noted that her school is overwhelmed by the number of applications for EHCPs and the time that the process takes. She also noted that access to IPRA (individual pupil resourcing agreement) funding can be difficult, and it does not solve the long term requirement to support and provide resources for children with complex needs.

b) LADO response to safeguarding cases

One headteacher expressed her concerns about the lack of communication from the LADO when a case is underway.

c) JDATT Communications Officer

It was noted that schools are still not being trusted with information around domestic violence cases that involve children, despite the appointment of a communications officer for JDATT (Joint Domestic Abuse Triage Team).

d) Fair Access Protocols

The Executive Director noted his concerns around Fair Access protocols.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

10. DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2015/16 SCHOOL YEAR AND THE 2016/17 SCHOOL YEAR

Executive meetings (Chelmsford City Football Club)

Thursday 6 October 2016

Thursday 26 January 2017

Thursday 4 May 2017

Area Heads Meetings

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

Autumn term 2016

N-EAST Wednesday 9 November

Weston Homes Community Stadium

SOUTH Thursday 10 November

Holiday Inn, Basildon

Meeting
with LA
Officers
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WEST	Wednesday 16 November	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 17 November	Chelmsford City Football Club

Spring term 2017

SOUTH	Wednesday 22 February	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Thursday 23 February	Weston Homes Community Stadium
WEST	Wednesday 1 March	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 2 March	Chelmsford City Football Club

Summer term 2017

SOUTH	Wednesday 14 June	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Thursday 15 June	Weston Homes Community Stadium
WEST	Wednesday 21 June	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 22 June	Chelmsford City Football Club

Conferences

Deputy Headteachers' Conference

Friday 14 October 2016 Weston Community Homes Stadium

Headteachers' Conference

Friday 17 March 2017 Stock Brook Country Club, Nr. Billericay

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Harriet Phelps-Knights
Chair of EPHA

Pam Langmead
EPHA Professional Officer