

**MINUTES OF THE LA AND EPHA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY 10 MAY 2018 starting at 1.00 pm**

In attendance	Representing	email address
Clare Kershaw CK	Director of Education	clare.kershaw@essex.gov.uk
Alison Fiala	Education and EY Lead Mid	Alison.fiala@essex.gov.uk
Caroline Adlem	Head of Traded and Commercial Development	Caroline.adlem@essex.gov.uk
Ruth Sturdy	SEND School Effectiveness Lead	Ruth.Sturdy@essex.gov.uk
Lehla Abbott	EPHA North East Vice-Chair	head@st-georges-inf.essex.sch.uk
Lois Ashforth	EPHA Dengie	Head@coldnorton.essex.sch.uk
Dawn Baker	EPHA Chelmsford West	headteacher@lawfordmead.essex.sch.uk
Sue Bardetti	EPHA Tendring South	admin@hollandhaven.essex.sch.uk
Nicky Barrand	EPHA South Chair	htpa@cherrytree-pri.essex.sch.uk
Amanda Buckland Garnett	EPHA South Woodham Ferrers	abg@collingwood.essex.sch.uk
John Clements	EPHA Uttlesford South	jhclm@hotmail.com
Anna Conley	EPHA Witham	head@howbridge-inf.essex.sch.uk
Lyn Corderoy	EPHA South Treasurer/Wickford	admin@grange.essex.sch.uk
Emma Dawson	EPHA Castle Point & Benfleet	Head@thundersley.essex.sch.uk
Sarah Donnelly	EPHA Halstead	sdonnelly@richarddeclare.essex.sch.uk
Fiona Dorey	EPHA Braintree	Head@greatbradfords-jun.essex.sch.uk
Andy Douglas	EPHA South Vice-Chair	andy.douglas@riverside.essex.sch.uk
Shelagh Harvey	EPHA Brentwood	headteacher@ingatestone.essex.sch.uk
Nick Hutchings	EPHA Vice-Chair/NE Chair	head@hamiltonprimary.com
Pam Langmead	EPHA Professional Officer	pam@langmead.me.uk
Ian MacDonald	EPHA Tendring Mid	headteacher@elmstead.essex.sch.uk
Jacq Martin	EPHA Colchester South	Head@langenhoe.essex.sch.uk
Mark Millbourne	EPHA Harwich and Dovercourt	headteacher@allsaints-harwich.essex.sch.uk
Nicola Morgan-Soane	EPHA Mid Chair	head@trinityroad.essex.sch.uk
Hayley O'Dea	EPHA Rochford	head@greatwaking.essex.sch.uk
Paula Pemberton	EPHA Colchester East	paula.pemberton@hazelmere-jun.essex.sch.uk
Harriet Phelps-Knights	EPHA Chair	Head@janetduke.essex.sch.uk
Karen Tucker	EPHA Canvey Island	head@canvey-jun.essex.sch.uk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| • Isobel Barron | West Chair |
| • Dawn Dack | Maldon |
| • Melissa Eades | Billericay |
| • Mary Jo Hall | Uttlesford North |
| • Julie Lorkins | West Vice-Chair |
| • Kate Mills | Braintree |
| • Donna Parker | Tendring North |
| • Amanda Reid | Chelmsford North |
| • Angela Russell | Basildon West |
| • Jonathan Tye | Harlow |
| • Matt Woolard | Epping Forest South |
| • Mark Adams-Wright | ECC |

Action

2. SCHOOLS BROADBAND CONTRACT

Caroline Adlem, Head of Traded Development and Commercial Development, was welcome to the meeting. Clare noted that there is recognition that the service needs investment and as schools have bought into Schools Broadband for the next two years through de-delegation of funding, it is essential that the best offer and service is provided.

Caroline explained that she has been asked to review Schools Broadband as a commercial provision and was frank about her conclusions; there is a clear lack of communications, a complicated pricing structure and customers were not accessing add-ons. Despite the conclusion of the review two years ago that suggested the service was good value for money, she argued that if customers don't believe or perceive this to be the case then that poses problems.

She noted the principles of the Broadband Service in Essex, essentially to be affordable to small and rural schools, but argued that the pricing is clear or understandable. Her job is to decide what the service would look like as a commercial provision, and argued that if it provided a better offer it would attract more customers; it is important to ECC that it is a good product. In addition, the account management and customer service needs to be reviewed.

Caroline asked headteachers to contact her with comments and suggestions at caroline.adlem@essex.gov.uk

It has already been suggested that an audit of a school's IT infrastructure will help determine whether any deficiencies are as a result of the Broadband provision or internal hardware.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE EPHA EXECUTIVE MEETING

a) SCHOOL MEALS ADVISORY SERVICE

Clare reminded the Executive that Schools Forum made the decision to establish the School Meals Advisory Service as a traded service from September 2018. An amount of £1.72 per pupil was de-delegated from the maintained primary schools block to fund the service from April to September (reduced from £4.12 per pupil in 2017/18). However, Clare Kershaw explained that it will not be possible to establish a traded service by September and the service will continue until the end of March 2019, and become a traded service from April 2019.

This leaves the Authority with a gap in funding. Clare explained that she has considered the basic cost of the service and what the impact will be on the Local Authority. She has decided that schools who use the service will be asked to make a notional contribution of around £200 for the period from September to March. Any shortfall will be made up by the LA. This delay gives the Local Authority a chance to plan for an effective traded service.

It was accepted that it is important that Schools Forum decisions are communicated effectively and that there must be better pre-planning when changes are made. The EPHA Chair reminded Clare that EPHA had established

a School Meals Strategy group which met twice in 2017 to consider future trading models, and she agreed that this information would be taken into account.

Clare explained that the redesign of the service will be led by Anita Kemp.

SUPPORT FOR NEW HEADTEACHERS

- b) Alison Fiala referred to the draft paper setting out the current support and provision (some core, some traded) for new headteachers. However, this had been circulated late and the EPHA Chair explained that the Executive needed more time to consider the paper. They had discussed this at the meeting earlier in the day and made some decisions around the support that EPHA was able to offer.

At that meeting It was agreed that it would be helpful to develop a checklist for a new headteacher which could be completed by an out-going headteacher and/or Chair of Governors, to be ready and waiting for a new headteacher on day one. The Professional Officer **AGREED** to develop this checklist and to circulate it to the Executive for comment.

The Executive also discussed the provision of mentors for new headteachers. This is currently organised by the Local Authority, but does not appear to be consistent, and may not capture all acting headteachers who, it was agreed, need particular support. In addition, the school is required to pay for a mentor (and to broker an agreement with the headteacher who offers the service) and it was felt that this can sometime prevent the establishment of the arrangement. The Vice-Chair suggested that this role was something which could be brokered and, possibly subsidised by EPHA, and it was **AGREED** that this should be considered further.

Alison noted that, in the new heads' training programme (delivered by EES) advice and information about SEND, mental health and social care has been added following a discussion with the EPHA Executive. She also mentioned that the LA, in conjunction with Prue Barnes, Education Consultant and Executive Headteacher, has developed three specialised new to headship programmes that will be available for the academic year 2018/2019. Each bespoke programme will consist of bespoke support, training and guidance in key aspects of the role/s.

4. EDUCATION TEAM RESTRUCTURE

Clare noted that the restructure of the LA Education teams was implemented at the beginning of the summer term and is now in the implementation phase. The four Assistant Directors have been appointed:

Nicola Woolf – West

Lisa Fergus – South

Liz Cornish – Mid

Philippa Holliday – North East

Philippa is currently headteacher at Castledon Special School in Wickford, and she will take up her post as Assistant Director in September. Clare agreed to

invite her to the North East termly headteacher meeting on 14 June, so that she can be introduced to primary headteachers.

In addition, Julie Keating has been appointed as the Education Access Manager; many heads know Julie from her current role overseeing the Alternative Education Commissioning Service. Simon Carpenter is covering this position for this term and will provide a seamless hand over to Julie. Finally the LA has appointed Natalie Stephenson as the Virtual School Head for Essex. Natalie will join ECC later this month from Enfield where she is currently the Deputy Headteacher of the Virtual School for Looked after Children.

This leaves two vacancies within the new structure, the Head of Education and Early Years for both West Essex and South Essex. These roles will be advertised in the next few weeks.

Clare noted that she has met with the staff from the four quadrant teams over the last couple of weeks and the meetings have been productive and positive. She explained that the Assistant Director overarching role is to be accountable for the outcomes of children in the quadrant, and to manage and account for the performance of the teams. They will meet regularly with Clare, ensuring consistency of approach across the county.

The restructure of the Children Missing Education/attendance team is in process. The plan is to separate out:

- attendance support for schools
- CME and elective home education
- Child employment and licensing

The service has been involved in a consultation which closed on Tuesday; the aim is to recruit and establish a new service by the first of August. It has been necessary to reduce the numbers in the service (by about 10 staff members) as this was previously funded by the ESG, but this restructure has provided the opportunity to consider the effectiveness and efficiency of the service and redesign it for the future.

Clare explained that the structure will include two dedicated attendance roles in each quadrant, who will work with schools to improve and develop effective practice around school attendance.

The LA will also create a dedicated Attendance Compliance Service and families may be referred directly into this service. The aim is to improve the referral service and, on the whole, if the paperwork is correct, a referral for prosecution will automatically be accepted. However, Clare noted that, in a number of cases, some prosecutions have been inappropriate and the non-attendance of pupils has been down to social issues, such as that child/young person having caring responsibilities. If referrals uncover such issues, the Local Authority will work with the school to support the family. She confirmed that other attendance companies will be able to refer into the Attendance Compliance Service.

Clare was asked if the guidance relating to the criteria for prosecution will change

as a result. She said that the guidance won't change, but there will be follow up conversations on a case by case basis if the reasons for absence are not clear.

The CME/Elective home education service will be in place to monitor and support those children and young people who come off role. Section1 referrals will go directly to this team.

The final part of the Education Team restructure is the creation of an Advice line. Clare noted that she will give an update on this later on in the term and will establish a headteacher consultation group to help design the service.

Over the summer and into the autumn term there will be a comprehensive review of the SEND services, including the Education Psychology team, the Statutory Assessment Service and the Specialist Teacher team. Clare explained that service members are aware of the review; there are around 400 people in the service. The review needs to respond to the consultation that took place last year and the aim is to have a new SEND service in place by April 2019.

5. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Clare reminded the Executive that the Recruitment and Retention Strategy Group has been meeting regularly to consider the challenge of recruitment and retention in Essex. At the last meeting there was a discussion with Union members about the possible introduction of a Workload Charter for Essex.

The EPHA Chair noted that this had been discussed at the EPHA Executive meeting earlier in the day, and that the following comments had been made:

- To a great extent workload in schools arises from accountability and requirements from the DfE, Ofsted, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Local Authority;
- A Workload Agreement (determined by the Unions) is already in place, although with the reduction of support staff in many schools, this is becoming more of a challenge to implement;
- Headteachers and school leaders are not mentioned in the Nottingham Workload Charter – would introducing a Charter in Essex be supportive, or would this be held against headteachers?
- The Local Authority's current Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy includes just one sentence about workload.

It was agreed that everyone is committed to the principle of staff wellbeing. Lehla mentioned The Happiness Manifesto, by Henry Stewart, which refers to a similar model to that of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs – in order to reach trust and freedom in the workplace, basics need to be in place.

The Professional Officer noted that, at the Recruitment and Retention Strategy group meeting, she had suggested that whenever a new initiative is introduced it would be helpful for schools to be told the minimum requirements to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities, and for it to be clear if any additional guidance is given as good practice. It was suggested that the revival of the

Gatekeeping Reference Group, which managed what information went to schools, would be helpful.

6 EXCLUSIONS AND SEND

a) Review of exclusions in Essex

Clare noted that she had attended an ASHE Council early in the spring term and had discussed with secondary headteachers the ongoing challenge of an increasing number of exclusions and pupils at risk of exclusion. ASHE has agreed to open the debate about inclusion v exclusion, accepting that the existing structure of education and the needs of these children are not matching.

She stressed that there has been a decrease in permanent exclusions in the primary sector this academic year (down by about 30% to date) but an increase in secondary exclusions. There continues to be an inconsistent approach to exclusion, some schools are more ready to exclude than others. Reasons for exclusion will include persistent disruptive behaviour, verbal and physical assault, criminal behaviour and gang related activity. However, the incidence of exclusion varies across the county and is not always obvious – for example the highest number of permanent exclusions (from secondary schools) is in Chelmsford and the lowest in Basildon. Primary exclusions are higher in North East and Mid, and lower in South and West.

Clare met recently with the Executive Director and Chair of ASHE to discuss whether the right protocols are in place in relation to managed moves and re-integration. It is clear, for example, that Basildon schools work collaboratively on this issue.

The Local Authority wants to understand why permanent exclusions are happening, what is working to prevent them and what additional support needs to be in place to assist schools.

John Clements asked if the Local Authority is using the existing information and intelligence it has around permanent exclusions. For example, members of the Alternative Provision team attend (nearly) every permanent exclusion review meeting in primary schools, and receive the headteacher reports relating to those exclusions. These give detailed information about the reasons for exclusion and the steps the school has taken to avoid that exclusion, and the reasons that it has ultimately made the decision to permanently exclude.

It was agreed that the decision to permanently exclude is sometimes obvious and unavoidable, such as the result of violent assault. What needs to be understood is where a permanent exclusion has been decided as a last resort as a result of a school exhausting all of its options and resources.

One headteacher argued that provision in the primary sector is much more protective and nurturing and it is disheartening when a child is almost immediately excluded when s/he reaches year 7. It was agreed that it would be interesting to know the year group data in relation to exclusions, to see how frequently this happens. One headteacher said that she has been told that a year 6 child, who

needs wrap around care, will not have a key worker when he goes to secondary school. She felt that he will be excluded without such support.

Executive members expressed their concern about the lack of PRU provision for primary pupils, and the problem of children who cannot be managed by GROW provision and who are then returned to mainstream primaries.

One headteacher said that the support from Theraplay has been excellent and Essex Steps are helpful, but expensive. Schools would like to access support from such providers but are restricted by financial constraints and the limited availability of such provision.

One headteacher explained that he has recently excluded a five year hold, and asked the Local Authority to meet with him to discuss how the school might have avoided the exclusion; so far no one has been in touch.

Another headteacher commented that the engagement and acceptance of parents is a key factor in how well the school can manage challenging behaviour.

Executive members also noted their concerns around the lack of support in early years' provision and the ensuing problems of transition into Reception.

It was agreed that the review needed to include consideration of:

- i Data
- ii Early years support
- iii Reviews/debrief following permanent exclusion
- iv Transition – particularly into Year 7

b) SEND Inclusion Statement

Ruth Sturdy mentioned the development of the Inclusion Statement for Essex, which has been a focus for the SEND Headteacher Roundtable. This statement is around holding schools to account, and appeals to headteachers' moral codes and obligations to all children and young people.

Ruth explained that she is also leading on the update of the provision guidance – she has established a leading edge group including headteachers, SENCOs and LA practitioners to develop this guidance.

c) Local Authority Peer Review

This review resulted in a recommendation to develop an outcomes framework, which helps articulate ways in which progress can be measures. Pathways include:

- Independence
- Health
- Working towards life beyond school
- Being part of the community.

The framework and related training is being developed.

d) SEND Peer review

David Bartram is leading training with SENCOs and ESSET leaders to trial the SEND Peer Review in each other's schools. It was agreed that Harriet Phelps-Knights would attend the training to compare it to the wider SLISS partnership peer review and consider whether there is overlap between the two processes.

Five key aspects considered:

- Expectations;
- Embedded
- Effective
- Engagement
- Experience

7. SUMMER TERM AREA HEADTEACHER MEETINGS

The following items were agreed for the LA part of the termly meetings:

- School Meals Advisory Service
- SEND – inclusion statement, exclusions, update
- Assistant Director – introduction and their role
- Schools Broadband – update from Caroline Adlem
- Restructure of CME and attendance service

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Moderation

Alison noted that a letter about the moderation process would be sent out schools on 18 May, and reminded the Executive that STA has the right to moderate at short notice.

b) FFT training

The plan is to provide training in each quadrant in the autumn term.

9. DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS FOR THE 2017/18/19 SCHOOL YEAR

Executive meetings (Chelmsford City Football Club)

Thursday 11 October 2018

Thursday 24 January 2019

Thursday 9 May 2019

Area Heads Meetings

Summer term 2018

SOUTH	Wednesday 13 June	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Thursday 14 June	Weston Homes Community Stadium
WEST	Wednesday 20	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 21 June	Chelmsford City Football Club

Autumn term 2018

N-EAST	Wednesday 7 November	Weston Homes Community Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 8 November	Holiday Inn, Basildon
MID	Wednesday 14 November	Chelmsford City Football Club

WEST Thursday 15 November Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley

Spring term 2019

N-EAST Wednesday 6 March Weston Homes Community Stadium

SOUTH Thursday 7 March Holiday Inn, Basildon

WEST Wednesday 13 March Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley

MID Thursday 14 March Chelmsford City Football Club

Summer term 2019

N-EAST Wednesday 12 June Weston Homes Community Stadium

SOUTH Thursday 13 June Holiday Inn, Basildon

WEST Wednesday 19 June Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley

MID Thursday 20 June Chelmsford City Football Club

The meeting ended at 3.20 pm

Pam Langmead, EPHA Professional Officer