

ESSEX PRIMARY HEADTEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9 MAY 2019 at 10.00 am – 12.00 noon at Chelmsford City Football Club

Distribution

*Lois Ashforth	Dengie
*George Athanasiou	West Vice-Chair
*Dawn Baker	Chelmsford West/Mid Treasurer
*Sue Bardetti	Tendring South
Nicky Barrand	South Chair/Basildon East & Pitsea
Isobel Barron	West Chair
Liz Benjeddi	Billericay
*Heidi Blakeley	Wickford
*Amanda Buckland-Garnett	South Woodham Ferrers
*John Clements	Uttlesford South
*Anna Conley	Witham
*Dawn Dack	Maldon
*Emma Dawson	Castle Point and Benfleet
*Sarah Donnelly	Halstead
*Fiona Dorey	Mid Chair
Mary Jo Hall	West Treasurer/Uttlesford North
Bridget Harris	North East Treasurer
*Shelagh Harvey	Brentwood
*Nick Hutchings	EPHA Vice-Chair/North East Chair/ Colchester West
*Chris Jarmain	Epping Forest South
*Pam Langmead	EPHA Professional Officer/County Treasurer
Julie Lorkins	Epping Forest Rural
Ian MacDonald	Tendring Mid
*Mark Millbourne	Harwich and Dovercourt
*Kate Mills	Braintree
*Nicola Morgan-Soane	Mid Vice-Chair/ Chelmsford South
*Hayley O'Dea	Rochford
Donna Parker	Tendring North
*Paula Pemberton	Colchester East
Lorna Pigram	Rayleigh
Harriet Phelps-Knights	EPHA Chair
*Amanda Reid	Chelmsford North
Angela Russell	Basildon West
*Suzy Ryan	Colchester South
*Karen Tucker	Canvey Island
*Jonathan Tye	Harlow
vacancy	North East Vice-Chair
vacancy	South Vice-Chair

Also in attendance

Richard Green

Grove Wood Primary

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Action

Harriet Phelps-Knights, the EPHA Chair, was unable to attend the meeting and sent her apologies. In her absence, Nick Hutchings, Vice-Chair of EPHA, chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone, including Richard Green (headteacher at Grove Wood Primary) who has agreed to be nominated as South Vice-Chair at the area AGM in June.

Nick noted that this would be Fiona Dorey's last meeting on the Executive as she retires at the end of the summer term. Nick thanked Fiona for her work in Essex schools over many years, both as a headteacher and as an adviser in the Local Authority, as well as for her contribution and commitment to EPHA for several years as the Mid Chair.

Apologies were received from:

- Nicky Barrand South Chair/Basildon East & Pitsea
- Isobel Barron West Chair
- Liz Benjeddi Billericay
- Julie Lorkins Epping Forest Rural
- Ian MacDonald Tendring Mid
- Donna Parker Tendring North
- Lorna Pigram Rayleigh
- Harriet Phelps-Knights EPHA Chair

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 24 January 2019 were confirmed as an accurate record.

It was noted that the Professional Officer had circulated the Powerpoint presentation from Jan Bloomfield, Essex Police. Nick Hutchings **AGREED** to share the Metropolitan Police CSE guide to abbreviations and Emojis, with the minutes of the meeting.

NH/ PL

3. FINANCE REPORT

The EPHA Treasurer circulated a finance report in advance of the meeting, including information about the current account and conference account.

Current account income and expenditure 22.12.18 – 11.04.19

	Expenditure	Income
Miscellaneous	£353.30	£100.00 (conference income)
DSG		£0.00
Subscriptions		£0.00
Supply	£4,368.00	
Travel & mileage	£1,411.36	
Professional Officer	£18,128.52	
Meetings	£12,652.16	
Colleague Support	£771.60	
Totals	£37,684.94	£100.00

The Professional Officer expenditure for January 2019 – March 2019 is broken down into

• professional fees	£15,460.00
• mileage	£1,209.80
• expenses paid on behalf of EPHA	£1,458.72
	£18,128.52

Bank statements for account 00795978

13.12.18	£189,739.14
11.04.19	£150,156.19

The Conference account Income and Expenditure 20.12.18 – 01.04.19

	Income	Expenditure	
Balance			
Headteacher conference 2019	£22,925.00	£26,185.50	(£3,260.50)
WEPPA conference January 2019	£2,500.00	£2,985.00	(£485.00)

There is still outstanding income due for the headteacher conference.

Bank statements for account 00795978

20.12.18	£55,920.59
01.04.19	£72,265.99

There were no questions raised about the finance report.

3. EPHA REPRESENTATION ON WORKING GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

a) Chairs Report

The Vice-Chair explained that he had been sent a report by the EPHA Chair. It was agreed that he would read this out, and the various sections would be discussed by the Executive.

Firstly, huge apologies for not being present at the Executive meeting this term, I am on my Masters residential and I just didn't register the clash of dates. Thank you to Nick for stepping in to chair the meeting.

Since the last Executive meeting we have attended several meetings and events representing Essex heads and schools.

i) Essex School Teaching Awards

Pam and I attended the Essex School Teaching Awards which was the best one to date with Clare Kershaw's team directly involved in the organisation rather than EES.

Previously EPHA made the decision not to sponsor this event but with Clare's team running it rather than commercially through EES it seems to make sense to reconsider our decision around sponsorship in anticipation of the awards continuing in 2020. My thought is that we should consider sponsoring either certain categories i.e. primary teacher, primary headteacher or we make a one-off payment towards the whole event.

Nick asked the Executive for their views on whether EPHA should sponsor the awards.

Pam noted that she had been on the shortlisting panel this year for the Primary Headteacher Award, and the Primary Teacher Award.

There were a range of views about the Teaching Awards, and whether they should be

2019

run at all, as well as whether EPHA should sponsor the event. There was some concern that nominating individual members of staff singled them out, and that most of the success in a school is the result of a team effort; it was felt that the Teaching Awards could be tokenistic, and even divisive. However, it was noted that one of the awards is for “team of the year” and other groups, including early years and governors are celebrated at the event. An alternative opinion was that the Awards event was not divisive and gave schools a way to publically congratulate and celebrate the achievements of members of staff who “go the extra mile”.

One headteacher felt that, if the event takes place it would make sense for EPHA to sponsor the Primary Headteacher of the Year category, and that the EPHA Chair (or another EPHA officer) should present that award.

An Executive member expressed his concern about the overall cost of the event, and whether it represented good value for money at a time when school's budgets and public funds were under such pressure.

One representative argued that she would want to discuss the issue with the other headteachers in her partnership, and gather their views and opinions. It was agreed that there was no need to make an immediate decision, and so this matter would be raised at the next meeting of the EPHA Executive (possibly on the agenda for the Annual General meeting) on 10 October and in the meantime EPHA representatives would be asked to canvas the opinions of their colleagues.

ii) Sale of EES

We had a meeting with the managers of EES and there is still no real news around the sale, they are in talks with their preferred exclusive buyer, but couldn't or wouldn't tell us who that is. Lots of vague gesturing around what they want to do, what they could do, how they wish to work with school, but all hypothetical depending on the sale going through or not. Clare Kershaw is not party to these negotiations and can't tell us anything more than we already know.

iii) Working collaboratively with ASHE and ESSET

Pam and I have also met with the other associations, ASHE and ESSET. We continue to work very strongly with ASHE which has had a positive impact on all aspects of EPHA's work. ESSET proves to be more of a challenge, with concerns stemming from the Schools Forum decision to vote against the transfer of £4.2 million from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. The ESSET Chair has publically stated his opinion that mainstream schools were not taking the plight of the most vulnerable pupils seriously. We have made the point that many (the majority) of those vulnerable pupils are educated in mainstream schools. We need to try and rebuild the relationship with ESSET and Pam and Simon Thompson from ASHE will attend the next ESSET meeting to try and improve relations.

The Professional Officer noted that not all of the special school headteachers share the opinion of the ESSET Chair around funding, and hopefully positive relationships can be developed and/or cemented. She noted that part of the SEND Redesign is a focus on developing the outreach offered by Special Schools to support mainstream schools.

Sue Bardetti (a member of Schools Forum) noted her disappointment that the next meeting of the SEN Schools Forum sub-group is being held on Monday 13th May, the first day of the primary SATs tests, which means that she will be unable to attend.

iv) Schools Broadband

Broadband still seems to be a slight bone of contention, but we are making in-roads into finding a solution to the broadband situation with DUCL. Emma Toublic, (ECC Systems and Data Manager) has taken the lead to try to find a viable alternative for all schools. It looks like the DUCL school's contract is going to be transferred to another company and schools will have the choice to continue to use the service with the new company or opt out at that point to use a different broadband supplier. The DUCL contract will run until March 2020, but schools will need to give notice by December 2019 if they want to opt out of the existing/ new arrangements.

The proposed new arrangement will be confirmed at the Schools Forum meeting on 22 May. EPHA's key concern is that all primary schools (whatever their size and location) will have the option of buying an affordable, safe and sustainable Broadband service.

v) Special Educational Needs

SEND again is causing a lot of stress for schools. The new pay scales for support staff are having a negative impact on SEND pupils as the increased salaries means that schools are having to reduce the number of hours of support that SEND pupils are getting, particularly in the current economic climate. I have attended a high needs funding review working party where there was a lot of information given out. One of the issues faced is that in 4 years' time the High Needs Block is likely to be around £40 million over spent, if the current system continues. There are several reasons for this including: new housing developments bringing in higher numbers of SEN pupils, the introduction of 0-25 in the SEN Code of Practice means that the High Needs block is funding SEND pupils for longer, the cost of independent placements have risen considerably, and the number of permanent exclusions have risen and therefore there is a cost implication to educate the excluded pupils. The group is going to look at the detail of the issue and it was decided to focus on:

A comprehensive profile of EHCPs/school support across the County by quadrant, district and school;

The same information showing Essex pupils in maintained schools outside of Essex and pupils from other LAs attending Essex maintained schools;

The independent special school population;

Rates of assessment by quadrant, district and school;

FE placements;

Permanent exclusions by phase and location;

Early years provision and SEN;

Other drivers for pressures;

Anonymised case studies.

The group also wants to engage with other stakeholders and came up with the following list

- Enhanced provisions
- Primary, secondary and special schools (not just the 'inclusive' schools)
- PRUs
- Independent schools
- Health
- Social Care and Family Solutions
- FE colleges
- Essex Family Forum

- Families in Focus and other parental representative groups
- Private children's homes in Essex
- Other LAs (both neighbouring and further afield)
- ESGA (governors)
- SENDIASS
- School Admissions/Transport
- MATs
- EWMHS
- Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service
- NAHT/ unions

The Executive suggested that Early Years providers should also be represented.

Currently the EPHA Chair and Professional Officer are members of the High Needs Working Group, but more primary representatives are needed to ensure that primary-phase mainstream schools have a strong input to the discussion. The following headteachers **AGREED** to join the High Needs Working Group:

- Harriet Phelps-Knights, Janet Duke Primary
- Sue Bardetti, Holland Haven Primary
- George Athanasiou, Great Sampford Primary
- Nicola Morgan-Soane, Trinity Road Primary
- Dawn Baker, CEO Hera Academy Trust
- Amanda Buckland-Garnett, Collingwood Primary
- Amanda Reid, Perryfields Infants

The Professional Officer will forward this list to Ralph Holloway. Ralph has suggested that the next meeting will be in July, date to be agreed.

Professional Officer

Still on the SEND theme the redesign of this service is currently out for consultation, please read, respond and talk to colleagues about this as some heads appear to have missed that this is taking place. As we previously mentioned at an early Executive meeting it will be business as usual throughout this process but obviously the personnel involved in the consultation are understandably very sensitive to the situation surrounding their jobs currently.

vi) Termly headteacher meeting evaluations

We have discussed with Clare and the assistant directors the evaluations that were carried out after last terms area EPHA meetings. There was an interesting reflection of the sessions in different areas and we asked Claire and her team to consider;

- Providing the PowerPoints before the meeting to ensure that Heads can read on their own electronic devices or print out as they wish
- 2 case studies presented and how they could be improved, this will be sensitively discussed with the presenters before they are presented this term

We will continue to do the evaluation forms and feed back to the LA as it is important they know what works well and what heads are not so keen on so that they can address the issue in order to improve the sessions for heads.

It was **AGREED** that it would also be helpful to provide evaluation forms for the safeguarding forum meetings, to ensure that these were valuable for headteachers and

other school representatives.

We also agreed that LA staff could attend the LA session of the meeting and be around for coffee break and lunch and the safeguarding forum if they wish, but withdraw from the EPHA session after the morning break to give heads some time to reflect and discuss without the LA present.

vii) ECC traded data package

We have also had discussions around the Data package that this on offer from the LA.

One of the EPHA Executive reiterated his concerns that the package was not particularly useful for small schools. The LA has started a “try it out” period (for 3 weeks) to enable headteachers to have a look at Nova (the data package on the system) but it was reported that heads who had tried to log in to trial the software had been informed that the system was down. It was **AGREED** that this would be raised at the meeting with LA Officers later in the morning.

**Meeting
with LA
Officers**

viii) EPHA annual headteachers’ conference

The headteachers’ conference was fabulous yet again and Pam is now working on making the 2020 conference just as good if not better still, (no pressure!) Very positive evaluations of the day, some areas as always that need to be considered but as we are a victim of our own success it is difficult to change too much if we want to still cater for the numbers that attend; one complaint is about the main conference room chairs, if we change them we can’t get as many heads in so it really isn’t an option to change.

ix) EPHA headteacher briefings

One representative asked whether the termly headteacher briefings should be led/managed by the EPHA representative for a district, or the Lead Headteacher of the partnership. The Professional Officer noted that it is up to each cluster of schools to decide who will circulate information and dates, and who they invite to the briefings. However, they are a free resource offered by EPHA, so it is beneficial to ensure that as many primary heads as possible can access the briefings if they wish to.

x) Schools Forum

There hasn’t been a Schools Forum meeting since the last Executive in January, the next meeting is the 22nd May, so nothing to report until after that meeting.

b) Professional Officer’s report

Pam Langmead referred to her report circulated in advance of the meeting. She noted that in addition to the attendance at meetings (and writing follow up reports), her work for EPHA has included:

- Information, emails and communications with all headteachers;
- Responding to queries and actions from the Executive, ECC, other association officers, interested companies;
- Individual support for headteachers when issues arise;
- Identifying and supporting new headteachers;
- Managing the Colleague Supporter programme;
- Briefings to headteacher groups – 23 partnerships/clusters are now holding termly briefings – researching and writing briefing notes and presentations –and keeping them up to date as new directives, guidance and documents are introduced;
- Writing 7 minute staff meetings – Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment, and

Safeguarding for Volunteers;

- Developing support materials for schools, including statutory policy lists, website lists, and the Support Directory;
- Updating the model Attendance Policy, attendance leaflet, and concerns and complaints leaflet;
- Writing presentations for ASHE heading for headship, and new heads' induction events;
- Supporting the organisation of the SLIS conference;
- Organisation and management of the area meetings in the summer and autumn terms;
- Organisation and management of the WEPHA conferences;
- Managing the EPHA finances: paying claims and invoices (including from Colleague Supporters), supporting area treasurers, producing reports, paying in cheques;
- Managing the bookings, organising and running the Headteacher conference, future planning for Deputy and Heads' conferences;
- Updating EPHA records and website;
- Other tasks as required.

c) **Any other representation on groups**

Nothing to report.

4. LOCAL AUTHORITY PEER REVIEW FOCUSING ON SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS

Essex LA recently took part in a peer review carried out by the East of England Education Network Group, which focused on the rising number of exclusions in the county. The report of the review was recently published (and was circulated to the Executive in advance of the meeting).

There were a number of references in the review to EPHA, which it was agreed should be raised at the meeting with LA Officers later in the day. For example, the report asked a number of questions emerging from the documentary analysis prior to the review, including: How did the consultation and collaboration with ASHE and EPHA lead to an Essex wide approach. It was noted that the LA has started consultation and discussions around the use and impact of exclusions with secondary headteachers, but not yet with EPHA.

The Executive members questioned the data in the report including, for example, the secondary and primary-phase breakdown of exclusion. One headteacher also noted that there are more pupils in Essex schools year on year, and questioned whether the percentage increase of exclusions took this into account. She also asked whether there were any particularly or common characteristics among excluded pupils (in addition to SEND) such as a greater prevalence of children who had recently moved to the county.

It was also suggested that the report did not identify whether the exclusions were more frequent in Multi-Academy Trusts and also whether certain areas were excluding more often. It was agreed that the data in the report needs to be understood in context.

The report also raises the question of what early intervention is in place to help prevent

later exclusions. It was noted (once again) that GROW places are severely limited or unavailable for Key Stage 1, and headteachers asked what plans there are to support early intervention. One headteacher explained that next year at least one third of her Reception intake have additional needs, some already identified, others indicated by pre-schools.

The Executive discussed the Essex Inclusion Statement which is being used to hold schools to account (although headteacher representatives on the SEND Headteacher Roundtable have made it clear that they are not prepared to challenge individual schools who have not signed up).

The Executive wondered how involved EWHMS is in the overall debate around provision of support. It was argued that many pupils with mental health issues need counselling and individual support, which is simply not available because the services are at full capacity. It was felt that if there was earlier intervention and support available (at a much younger age) it might be possible to avoid exclusion at a later date.

One headteacher mentioned that her cluster buys into Kids Inspire as a resource, and this has been a valuable source of support.

Referring back to the review, one questions asked:

The Executive felt very strongly that EPHA's role was not to challenge primary schools, but it was to hold the Local Authority, DfE and other agencies to account around the effectiveness and accessibility of provision and support for children and young people, particularly those at risk of exclusion or with additional needs.

5. QUESTIONS TO RAISE AT THE MEETING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITY OFFICERS

- a) Access to trial period for Nova (minute 3 vii refers)
Data costs
- b) Admissions issues, including fair access protocols
- c) Breakdown of exclusions across areas and key stages (minute 4 refers).
Does the increased number of exclusions take into account the increased number of pupils in Essex?
- d) Discussion about summer term headteacher meetings.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Headteacher wellbeing and support

Headteachers expressed their concerns about support for headteachers in challenging circumstances, and whether the system of school to school support was being utilised by the Local Authority to help prevent issues arising and support vulnerable schools. In one instance an article was published in Essex Live which was critical of a headteacher. Nick suggested that the Excellence in Essex document should be reviewed and updated.

It was noted that a small number of schools have recently been downgraded by Ofsted

for failing to meet certain safeguarding requirements and it was suggested that schools would benefit from hearing any lessons learnt from those inspections.

7. DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2019/20 SCHOOL YEAR

Executive meetings (Chelmsford City Football Club)

Thursday 10 October 2019 (including Annual General Meeting)

Thursday 23 January 2020

Thursday 7 May 2020

Area Heads Meetings

Summer term 2019

N-EAST	Wednesday 12 June	Colchester 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

Autumn term 2019

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

Spring term 2020

N-EAST	Wednesday 4 March	Colchester Community Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 5 March	Holiday Inn, Basildon
WEST	Wednesday 11 March	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 12 March	Chelmsford City Football Club

Summer term 2020

N-EAST	Wednesday 10 June	Colchester Community Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 11 June	Holiday Inn, Basildon
WEST	Wednesday 17 June	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 18 June	Chelmsford City Football Club

Conferences

Headteachers' Conference

Friday 20 March 2020 Stock Brook Country Club, Nr. Billericay

Deputy Headteachers' Conference

Friday 4 October 2019 Weston Community Homes Stadium

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Harriet Phelps-Knights
Chair of EPHA

Pam Langmead
EPHA Professional Officer