

ESSEX PRIMARY HEADS' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22 MAY 2013 at 9.00 am at Chelmsford City Football Club

Distribution	*Cheryl Allard	Chelmsford South
	*Isobel Barron	West Vice-Chair
	Simon Billings	North East Chair
	*Alison Blant	South Treasurer
	Mike Blant	EPHA Liaison Officer/County Treasurer
	*Elspeth Bonds	Epping Forest Rural/West Treasurer
	Gail Burns	Colchester South
	*Rachel Callaghan	Uttlesford North
	*John Clements	Uttlesford South
	*Anna Conley	Witham
	*Doretta Cowie	Central Chair
	*Brenda Dalley	South Chair/ Castle Point & Benfleet
	Geraldine Denham-Hale	Dengie
	*Sue Dodd	Maldon
	*Helen Dudley-Smith	Colchester East
	*Melissa Eades	Billericay
	Chris Eshmade	Rochford
	Ronnie Farrelly	Tendring South
	Joe Figg	Central Treasurer
	*Sue Foster	Central Vice-Chair/Chelmsford North
	*Sue Grocock	South Woodham Ferrers
	Lorna Handscomb	Harlow
	*Shelagh Harvey	Brentwood
	*Helen Hutchings	Chelmsford West
	Nick Hutchings	North East Vice-Chair
	*Megan Jenkins	Rayleigh
	Annette Keeney	Canvey Island
	*Pam Langmead	EPHA Manager
	Pauline MacMillan	Wickford
	Neil Matthews	Colchester West
	Val Metcalf	Harwich and Dovercourt
	Jenny McCutcheon	Basildon East
	*Donna Parker	Tendring North
	Lorna Pigram	Rayleigh
	*Harriet Phelps-Knights	EPHA Vice-Chair
	*Debbie Rogan	Schools Forum
	*Angela Russell	Basildon West
	*Penny Smith	Braintree
	*Marion Still	South Vice-Chair /Rochford
	*Heather Tetchner	West Treasurer
	*Janice Tunney	Epping Forest South

* indicates attendance

Also in attendance Edwin Parsons, HR

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Harriet Phelps-Knights, the EPHA Vice-Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and particularly Sue Dodd, the new representative for Maldon. She thanked Elspeth Bonds, Chris Eshmade, Sue Grocock and Megan Jenkins who all retire at the end of term and who are therefore leaving the Executive. They were thanked for their commitment and contribution to EPHA and for representing their colleagues so well.

Apologies were received from:

Simon Billings	North East Chair
Mike Blant	EPHA Liaison Officer/County Treasurer
Geraldine Denham-Hale	Dengie
Chris Eshmade	Rochford
Ronnie Farrelly	Tendring South
Nick Hutchings	North East Vice-Chair
Neil Matthews	Colchester West
Jenny McCutcheon	Basildon East
Pauline MacMillan	Wickford
Neil Matthews	Colchester West
Val Metcalf	Harwich and Dovercourt

2. MEMBERSHIP

a) Election of Chair

The group was reminded that Karen Springett, the previous Chair of EPHA, resigned at the end of the spring term and that Harriet Phelps-Knights, the Vice-Chair, has been acting as Chair since then. The Executive unanimously **AGREED** to elect Harriet as Chair of EPHA, at least until the Annual General Meeting on 15 October 2013, and she was thanked for agreeing to continue in this role. It was **AGREED** that the role of Vice-Chair would remain vacant until the AGM.

b) Membership of the Executive

Headteachers were reminded that the Area AGMs will be held, as usual, at the area headteacher meetings in June. It was noted that four Executive members are leaving: however, each reported that their current role will be covered by a colleague or new headteacher representatives.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 31 January 2013 were confirmed as an accurate record. There were no matters arising.

4. FINANCE REPORT

Mike Blant, the County Treasurer, was unable to be at the meeting, but he sent a report in advance of the meeting, which included a finance summary and the current account income and expenditure statement for 01/07/12 to 31/05/13.

The closing balance of the Current Account is £57,124.26 and the Conference Account is £13,383.84 giving total assets of **£70,508.10**. Mike's report confirmed that the accounts for April 2011 – June 2012 have only recently been audited and noted that the accounts for the period July 2012 – July 2013 will be audited in August bringing the process in line with the agreed annual auditing timetable.

The following matters were highlighted:

- Area treasurers have done a great job in collecting subscriptions from 421 schools, although there was some confusion about how much money was transferred to the County account and how much was retained for the Area bank accounts. It was noted that the Area bank accounts need the funding that they have retained and that there should be no adjustment if any is “owing” to County EPHA. It was **AGREED** that the annual subscription will remain at £120 for the 2013/14 financial year and, of this, £20 will be retained by the Area.
- The Business Account has now been closed, as agreed at the last Executive meeting. Funds have been transferred:
£10,000 into the Conference Account and the remainder
£11,996.23 into the current account.
- The Association has received the annual grant of £10,000 from the LA for 2012/13.
- The Association is still expecting to receive a donation of £2,547 from 4MySchools, who agreed to sponsor costs for the Headteachers’ conference in March.

It was confirmed that both of the annual conferences tend to make a profit, although the cost to schools (currently £80 per place) is kept to an absolute minimum. It was agreed that the conferences represented excellent value for headteachers and are a good way of increasing the Association’s funds.

Members of the Executive were urged to claim for expenses when incurred; they were reminded that most claims should be from the County treasurer (including attendance at ADGs), and only specific claims relating to area business, such as attendance at steering group meetings should be claimed from the Area bank accounts.

5. EPHA LIAISON OFFICER’S REPORT

Mike Blant had circulated a report in advance of the meeting. The Executive discussed a paper, produced by ASHE (the secondary schools’ association) entitled “**What Essex Schools Believe In**”, which they are asking primary and special schools to endorse.

John Clements suggested an amendment to one of the bullet points, to read: “work closely with parents, carers, local community and extended agencies”, to widen the approach of collaborative working.

The Executive discussed the paper in some detail but there was a lack of understanding about the purpose of the document and whether it aligned with the Local Authority’s vision for Essex schools or was intended as a stand alone document. It was argued that all of the objectives were worthwhile but non-specific, and there seemed to be some key omissions such as a reference to good teaching. There was also some confusion about the sense of some of the phrases, such as *Cooperative learning, allowing children, their peers and teachers to make meaning together.*

It was **AGREED** that the Executive would seek clarification from Mike about the purpose and rationale behind the document and ask that the reference to EPHA should be removed from the paper for the time being.

The primary academy conversion statistics in Essex were noted. The EPHA Manager recommended a website to headteachers, The Governor, which produces a monthly update of national academy conversion statistics.
<http://www.thegovernor.org.uk/academies.shtml>

6. REPRESENTATION ON WORKING GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

a) Junior schools' group

Alison Blant (Headteacher at Pitsea Juniors) reminded the Executive that a Junior schools' group has been convened to discuss the concerns of Junior headteachers who feel they are particularly vulnerable in terms of their progress data and therefore in an Ofsted inspection. The group had written to Tim Coulson (Director of Education and Learning) and he had prepared a paper which reflected a similar position nationally. Alison, Nick Taylor (Head at Writtle Juniors) and Dawn Baker (Head at Lawford Mead Juniors) met Tim Coulson, Graham Lancaster and Graham Ranby on Monday 13 May to discuss the issue further. There was general agreement about the assertions made and sympathy for the Junior school position.

Following that meeting Alison wrote to Ofsted and the Unions. Ofsted has acknowledged her letter but has not yet responded to the issues raised. Jerry Glazier (NUT) has replied, but Alison has not yet heard from the other union representatives.

John Clements argued that the Local Authority should be taking more of a lead about this matter, passing on the concerns of headteachers to Ofsted and the Government. It was noted that other LAs have acknowledged this as a problem and have offered support to schools, including offering external moderation of Year 3 baseline assessments.

The group is meeting at Moulsham Juniors on 7 June and the EPHA Manager **AGREED** to send an email out from Alison, to all Junior school headteachers explaining the progress of the group so far and an invitation to the meeting on 7 June. It was also agreed that a wider meeting should be scheduled for September, including Junior, Infants and Primary headteachers (and particularly those who have recently amalgamated and have faced the challenge of ensuring consistent assessment across key stages). A number of headteachers on the Executive, including Helen Dudley-Smith, Harriet Phelps-Knights, Angela Russell and Melissa Eades, **AGREED** to attend this meeting. Helen shared her experience of the challenge of recent amalgamation of infant and junior schools, and the need to focus on ensuring consistent assessment and smooth progress throughout the primary phase. It was agreed that it would be helpful to share models of primaries that are doing well in terms of progress at both key stages.

Alison noted that the data in the Dashboard may also count against Junior schools as the comparison with "similar" schools is based on prior attainment of pupils. Therefore Junior schools may be at a disadvantage when compared with primary schools. There was a discussion about the need to interpret statistics and data within a context that is known and understood; a number of statements were made on the LA data that did not set performance in context and made sweeping statements about schools.

b) Schools' Forum

Debbie Rogan noted that the last Schools Forum meeting was held on 15 May. A new Councillor for Education has been appointed by ECC, Councillor Ray Gooding, and he attended the meeting.

She reported that the following matters were discussed:

**EPHA
Manager**

- The Constitution & Membership of Schools Forum, including re-aligning representation to ensure that academies are properly represented;
- An update about SEN funding and top up funding for SEN provision;
- Tree inspections on school sites (a three year requirement – and all trees should now have been inspected in the first round);
- SEN Invest to Save Update – presentation by Jo Twine;
- Review of the funding arrangements for 2012/13 and how this should inform future funding.

Debbie noted that she would welcome a view from the EPHA executive on future funding arrangements, for example with reference to the funding of the Early Years and Foundation stage. Her personal view is that the EYFS is essential and probably more costly than provision in Key Stages 1 and 2, but that increasing funding in the Foundation Stage will inevitably impact on other key stages, possibly to the detriment of other schools.

c) **EYFS funding**

Shelagh Harvey (Headteacher at Ingatestone Infants) reminded the Executive of her concerns at the imminent changes to infant funding. She and other Infant Headteachers met with Tim Coulson on 7 February and she reported that he had been in broad agreement with her concerns.

After discussions with Tim Coulson, Cllr Stephen Castle wrote to Michael Gove making the same points as the EYFS Funding Forum paper. He received a reply from David Laws (Minister of State for Schools) who stated that he could see an argument for EYFS weighted funding and stating that the LA (guided by the Schools' Forum) has the power to adjust funding within the local funding formula as they see fit. Headteachers were asked to consider a number of documents (sent out by SH the previous night), including a draft letter from the EPHA Executive and a paper setting out the rationale for changing the funding formula to fund the higher cost of provision in the EYFS.

Shelagh asked the Executive to endorse the letter and supporting paper, which she suggested should be sent to all schools and used to lobby a change in local and national policy.

The Executive members decided that they needed more time to consider the paper before circulating it more widely. It was agreed that if and when the letter is sent out it must have a clear explanatory cover note explaining the rationale behind the document, which must also make clear that there will be no additional or new funding for EYFS, so that any adjustment to funding allocations will impact other key stages, positively or negatively. The EPHA Executive members **AGREED** to feed back their comments and views about the draft letter and paper, via Pam.

7. **HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE**

Edwin Parsons, Senior HR Consultant was welcomed to the meeting. He gave an update on the proposed changes to the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD), due to come into effect from September 2013. The Pay Review Body published a report on 15 December and held a consultation until 4 January 2013. On 15 January a number of recommendations, due to be in place from September 2013, were

announced by the DfE, including the decision that all pay increments will be based on performance and will no longer be automatic, as is currently the case on the Mainscale.

Edwin noted that the Pay Review Body is considering a global 1% increase in pay, and will report on this on 31 May 2013.

It has been agreed that HR will deliver training on the new pay and conditions at the summer term headteacher meetings and that this will take place during the afternoon on each of the four days. Nicki Harris will be presenting at all of the meetings, in order to ensure that a consistent message is given across the county. The Executive discussed who should (or shouldn't) be invited to the meetings. After discussion, it was **AGREED** that the training was first and foremost for headteachers. If they are, for example, leaving their school at the end of the term, it was agreed that it would be sensible for the Deputy Head to also attend, or s/he could attend in the Head's place. However, it was **AGREED** that the training should not be open to any member of staff (or governors) other than heads or deputies.

There will be a number of key issues to cover at the meeting including:

- Development of the pay policy - HR model and guidance available on the ECC website and sent to schools.
- Reminder and advice on the need to hold a consultation with staff (at least 2 weeks).
- Pay Policy to be adopted by governors by the end of term, to be in place for September 2013. This may be delegated to a Committee (e.g Pay or Personnel) with the delegated power to agree the policy.

Edwin noted that there are alternative model policies available for schools, including the DfE model, and models from a number of Unions including AtL, NUT and NASUWT. Inevitably, the Unions are not 100% happy with the ECC policy (and even less so with the DfE policy) because they are arguing to retain the status quo and retain automatic progression on the main pay range. However, Doretta Cowie noted that the HR policy is broadly in line with the NUT/NASUWT checklist that has been circulated to schools and should not cause too many issues for teaching staff. Edwin reminded headteachers that, whilst schools should take account of responses to a consultation, the governors are able to adopt any Pay Policy they wish that is in line with the new pay and conditions. He suggested that teachers are asked to put their responses to the draft Pay Policy in writing to the governors, and that these concerns and responses should be minuted carefully to demonstrate that governors have consulted properly with staff.

Key issues that will need to be addressed by schools in the policy include defining criteria for pay decisions and progressions; when, for example, teachers are eligible for progression to the Upper Pay Range (i.e. as soon as they achieve QTS, as allowed by the new STPCD, or after a number of years, defined by the school) and when schools will accept applications for progress on the UPR. Schools will need to decide their policy on how they determine starting salaries, and also make pay progression choices such as how to apply and differentiate between increments and cost of living rises.

8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE MEETING WITH LA OFFICERS

It was noted that the following items should be discussed with LA Officers at the meeting later in the morning:

- Changes to the admissions criteria – in particular siblings now given priority over distance (raised by John Clements)
- Early Years funding issues
- Interpretation of data
- Decision about the future of the Area Development Group meetings

9. DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 2013/2014

Executive meetings (Chelmsford City Football Club)

Tuesday 15 October 2013 – including the AGM

Thursday 30 January 2014

Wednesday 21 May 2014

Area Heads Meetings

Autumn term 2014

SOUTH	Tuesday 5 November	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Wednesday 6 November	Weston Homes Community Stadium
WEST	Tuesday 12 November	The Churchgate Hotel
CENTRAL	Thursday 14 November	Chelmsford City Football Club

Spring term 2014

SOUTH	Wednesday 26 February	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Thursday 27 February	Weston Homes Community Stadium
WEST	Tuesday 4 March	The Churchgate Hotel
CENTRAL	Wednesday 5 March	Chelmsford City Football Club

Summer term 2014

SOUTH	Tuesday 10 June	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Wednesday 11 June	Weston Homes Community Stadium
WEST	Tuesday 17 June	The Churchgate Hotel
CENTRAL	Wednesday 18 June	Chelmsford City Football Club

Conferences

Deputy/Assistant Headteachers' Conference

Friday 11 October 2013 Weston Homes Community Stadium

Headteachers' Conference

Friday 14 March 2014 Stock Brook Country Club, Nr. Billericay

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 Harriet Phelps-Knights
 Chair of EPHA

Pam Langmead
 EPHA Manager