

## **ESSEX PRIMARY HEADTEACHERS' ASSOCIATION**

### **MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 26 JANUARY 2017 at 9.00 am – 11.30 am at Chelmsford City Football Club**

<b>Distribution</b>	*Lehla Abbott *Ceryl Allard *Lois Ashforth *Dawn Baker *Sue Bardetti *Nicky Barrand *Isobel Barron *Amanda Buckland-Garnett Rachel Callaghan *Claire Claydon *John Clements *Anna Conley Lyn Corderoy *Brenda Dalley Sue Dodd *Sarah Donnelly *Fiona Dorey *Helen Dudley-Smith *Melissa Eades *Mary Jo Hall Bridget Harris *Shelagh Harvey *Nigel Hookway Nick Hutchings Ceri Jones *Pam Langmead *Lesley Lewis Julie Lorkins Jacqu Martin *Kate Mills Hayley O'Dea *Donna Parker *Lorna Pigram *Harriet Phelps-Knights *Amanda Reid *Angela Russell *Karen Tucker Jonathan Tye	North East Vice-Chair Mid Chair/Chelmsford South Dengie Chelmsford West/Mid Treasurer Tendring South South Vice-Chair/Basildon East & Pitsea West Chair South Woodham Ferrers Uttlesford North Tendring Mid Uttlesford South Witham South Treasurer/Wickford South Chair/ Castle Point & Benfleet Maldon Halstead Braintree Colchester East Billericay West Treasurer North East Treasurer Brentwood EPHA Executive Director EPHA Vice-Chair/North East Chair/ Colchester West Mid Vice-Chair EPHA Professional Officer/County Treasurer Epping Forest Rural Vice-Chair Colchester South Braintree Rochford Tendring North Rayleigh EPHA Chair Chelmsford North Basildon West Canvey Island Harlow
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\* indicates attendance

## Also in attendance

Ben Smith	NELFT (item 3)
Karin Hogsander	Airsupply (item 5)

## 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

Apologies were received from:

Rachel Callaghan	Uttlesford North
Lyn Corderoy	South Treasurer/Wickford
Nick Hutchings	EPHA Vice-Chair/North East Chair/ Colchester West
Ceri Jones	Mid Vice-Chair
Julie Lorkins	West Vice-Chair
Jacqu Martin	Colchester South
Hayley O'Dea	Rochford
Jonathan Tye	Harlow

## 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 6 October 2016 were confirmed as an accurate record. There were no matters arising that were not addressed on the agenda.

## 3. EWMHS (Emotional Wellbeing Mental Health Service) AND SCHOOLS' COLLABORATION

Dr Ben Smith, Consultant Clinical Psychologist for NELFT-EWMHS, was welcomed to the meeting. He reminded the Executive that NELFT had taken over the delivery of CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) – now called EWMHS (Emotional Wellbeing Mental Health Service) – in November 2015. The introduction of the service has been complex, including the need to restructure and reorganise the service, as well as changing the approach and mind-set of the professionals working within EWMHS. The service is under increasing pressure. Ben explained that when NELFT took over there were 3,000 open cases – within six months, partly due to an increase in self-referrals (and publicity about what the new service would offer), this rose to 6,000 open cases. Ben noted that this figure is currently down to 5,000. He stressed that EWMHS needs to provide support for those children with mild or moderate emotional and mental health needs, and not only those with severe or complex needs. The service is planning to offer low intensive activities, for example working with pastoral staff in schools, and offering interventions and activities for children and young people. For example, an app has been developed for young people, which offers direct communication, links to website, information and support.

However, Ben argued that EWMHS is best placed to meet children and young people's need through schools.

Action

A detailed discussion paper was circulated in advance of the meeting and Executive members were referred to the proposals for developing effective collaboration with schools. (The following are extracts from the paper)

### 5.0 EWMHS and schools collaboration – overview

Our hope is that a EWMHS and schools collaboration will support the drive for early-intervention in schools and foster cultural change in the way schools tackle mental health problems and mental wellbeing. This new collaboration will support school staff to develop their knowledge of mental wellbeing and the problems affecting young people, the symptoms to look for and strategies for supporting children with early signs of mental and emotional stress before a referral to specialist services is needed. The EWMHS and schools collaboration will also develop and promote clear referral pathways for school staff so that where more specialised support is needed, it can be accessed effectively and efficiently. Together, this will enable schools to better support the children in their care while promoting good mental wellbeing and awareness of mental health issues more generally.

EWMHS will provide additional Mental Health Workers to deliver support, consultation and training for educational staff across schools in Southend, Essex and Thurrock. As part of the collaboration, each school will be asked to appoint a Mental Wellbeing Champion who will be responsible for liaising with the EWMHS school support team for consultation and access to training. Every eligible school in Southend, Essex and Thurrock will be contacted by the EWMHS school support team for an initial consultation. This will be an opportunity to share thoughts about the level of need in the school, the existing support processes already in place, and the areas for further development and improvement.

The EWMHS school support team will seek to build resilience and develop coping strategies in young people. We already know that for those under age 11 support is most meaningful when children can have frequent contact and already have a relationship with a known adult (e.g. pastoral worker at school). For those aged 11-18 support is most meaningful when young people can have guaranteed confidentiality, easy access to support and a supportive adult is focused on their story of how things are for them.

### 6.0 Proposed delivery model

We propose four levels of support in the EWMHS and schools collaboration:

1. Training whole staff teams or smaller groups of pastoral and leadership staff - confidence building for live situations and increasing an awareness of the impact (good and bad) of adult behaviours. Bespoke training covering self-harm, suicidality, anxiety, depression, bereavement and on request in depth, whole day training for groups of schools and staff, off-site
2. Regular and specialist consultations on complex cases with groups of pastoral and leadership staff
3. Regular clinical and reflective supervision with groups of pastoral staff and school leaders
4. Mindfulness in schools. The Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP) has created .b (pronounced ‘dot-b’, which stands for stop and be) for 11-18 year olds, Paws b for 7-11 year olds and .b Foundations for school staff. The aim is to improve the resilience and wellbeing of all young people to enhance their school career and to support them

Each school will be asked to appoint a Mental Wellbeing Champion who will be responsible for liaising with the EWMHS school support team. This collaborative service offers advice, guidance, training, direction and support but does not take direct clinical responsibility.

There are a large and expanding range of external training organisations with whom we might consider partnering to deliver Level 1, above. These are summarised in Appendix 2. We might consider using multiple partner organisations as the model is piloted and refined.

### 8.0 Summary, progress to date and next steps

This discussion paper is offered as a catalyst for debate between schools, commissioners and EWMHS about how best to work in collaboration around mental wellbeing. Context, guiding principles, proposed aims, objectives, outcomes and delivery models are described but this paper is not exhaustive. Our hope is that it leads quickly to pilots in each of Southend, Essex and Thurrock and then onto the expansion of a wider, consistent delivery model.

The ideas proposed here are therefore offered in the spirit of an honest debate about how best to maximise the success of collaboration around mental wellbeing between EWMHS and schools. Pilots in each of Southend, Essex and Thurrock should now follow a debate with schools and commissioners and lead to a model that we can be confident in expanding more widely.

Ben noted that he is hoping to work initially with schools that have a reasonably positive view of the current service, to pilot and trial potential programmes. Some examples of existing programmes, being rolled out nationally, were given in the discussion paper, but Ben noted that none of these are perfect, so NELFT want to design specific programmes working with Essex schools.

In response to the introduction and discussion paper, the following comments were made:

One headteacher stated that all schools will be interested in the development of such a programme, because everyone shares a need for support and improved services. The system has been under pressure for many years, and continues to cause concern and frustration to headteachers. He noted that NELFT made a lot of promises when it took over the service and not all of the promised changes came to fruition. He warned Ben not to make promises that the service is unable to deliver.

Another head noted that the key will be to work through the established School Led Improvement Partnerships.

Mrs Barratt noted that she had attended a meeting at the DfE the previous week discussing mental health and well-being, and was concerned to hear representatives from the health service saying that this was the first time they had listened to the needs of schools. Ben noted that the approach by health professionals tends to focus on treating individual cases ("limited resources = limited numbers"), rather than working with larger groups, for example focusing on early intervention.

Headteachers argued strongly that EWMHS is not currently offering support for children with mild or moderate needs; schools are often unable to refer even complex cases, and are regularly told that these children do not meet the criteria for referral.

Ben noted that the funding for EWMHS is very scarce. There is a small pot of money dedicated to working specifically with schools; £300k across Southend, Essex and Thurrock. However, he did state that it was not unreasonable to contribute some of the core funding to develop the work with schools. NELFT has started to work on some training materials for school staff, but is yet to focus on the development of consultation and professional supervision.

One headteacher argued forcibly that these interventions are very well-intentioned, but the key challenge for schools are the more complex, severe children. Most schools are able to support children with mild/moderate needs, but not if all the resources and staff capacity are deployed to manage their more complex cases.

Another headteacher noted that the experience is different in each area and group of schools, and there needs to be a “menu” and range of support, rather than developing a “one size fits all” approach. She also stressed the need to educate parents about how they can support their own children, from an early age.

One headteacher asked if there is a joined up approach to linking speech and language problems and the issues that they create for children. Ben conceded that the support for physical and mental health is not particularly joined up; for example, speech and language support is seen as a physical health matter, and there are no S&L consultants employed by NELFT.

He explained that there are seven locality teams across Essex, Southend and Thurrock, and he wants to connect local leads with headteachers and schools in their area, to ensure that local needs are being met. A headteacher noted that it was important that current research was used to help formulate appropriate responses to local needs.

It was noted that, whilst funding is extremely limited to develop programmes, there may be money available from clusters.

It was **AGREED** that if headteachers had specific, individual concerns they should feed these back to Ben. His email address is [Ben.Smith@nelft.nhs.uk](mailto:Ben.Smith@nelft.nhs.uk)

Individual heads

It was stressed that the development of programmes must be primary focused as well as secondary based. At the moment, the pilots (e.g. in Coast 2 Coast) are largely secondary focused, and primary schools must benefit from the available support and funding. To that end it was **AGREED** that a Strategy Group would be established to steer the development of EWMHS programmes and, in particular, the introduction of professional supervision.

The following Executive members agreed to join the Strategy Group:

Harriet Phelps-Knights – EPHA Chair, Head at Janet Duke Primary (South)  
Nicky Barrand – South Vice-Chair, Head at Cherry Tree Primary (South)  
Dawn Baker – Head at Lawford Mead Primary (Mid)  
Amanda Buckland-Garnett – Head at Collingwood Primary (Mid)  
Lehla Abbott – North Vice-Chair – Head at Broomgrove Infants (North East)  
Sacha Brackenbury – representative for 20 North East heads  
Sue Bardetti – Head at Holland Haven Primary (North East)  
Nigel Hookway – Executive Director  
Pam Langmead – Professional Officer

Professional Officer

The Professional Officer will organise a date/venue for the first meeting, and will ask for

participation from the West area.

Ben was asked who he reports to in the Local Authority, and he explained that he works closely with and is accountable to Ralph Holloway, who is responsible for delivering the SEND transformation in Essex.

Ben was thanked for attending the meeting, and it was **AGREED** that he should be invited to the next EPHA Executive meeting on Thursday 5 May to report on progress and developments.

**EPHA  
Executive  
5 May 2017**

#### **4. EPHA EXECUTIVE PRIORITIES FOR THE 2016/17 YEAR**

The Executive Director referred the group to the paper circulated in advance of the meeting, which summarised the priorities for EPHA. Headteachers' views were sought at the meetings in November and these resulted in a long list of concerns and comments.

Nigel noted that he had chosen three main priorities to focus on, the first being headteacher well-being which he argued must surely be the most important focus for a Heads' Association.

##### **Priority 1 - Headteacher well-being**

The paper noted the following **challenges** for heads:

- Some Heads at breaking point.
- Lack of PPA/Dedicated leadership time.
- Supervision for Heads.
- Work/life balance.
- Executive Headteacher roles.
- Unreasonable demands on Heads.
- Social media attacks.
- Lack of parental support.
- HR processes unfair to Heads.

##### **Possible solutions**

- Making sure local Heads are aware of other local Heads not coping. Experienced Heads to support. Cluster meetings crucial.
- Heads to use life coaching approach.
- Governors must support Heads when HR issues impact.

##### **Future actions**

- Give Heads opportunity to be part of coaching sessions with Viv Grant.
- Heads to get support from NLE's.
- Consultants with good credibility could add to the mix?

##### **Additional notes/suggestions**

New Heads in post start with support and dedicated release/PPA time. EPHA to support this process.

EPHA to offer 'away days' for Heads to support work/life balance.

Possible EPHA future residential conference to focus on supporting Headteacher well-being?

One Executive member noted that it was important that heads were supported to refuse unreasonable demands.

### **Priority 2 - SEND**

The paper noted the following **challenges** for heads:

- NEAAPS full.
- Funding for EHCPs.
- Budget implications for ALL schools.
- Behaviour issues growing.
- Pre-school checks not happening.
- Special school places like 'gold dust'.
- Lack of support for pupils just below EHCPs.

### **Possible solutions**

- Support for mainstream schools must be improved.
- More complex children than ever before entering mainstream.
- EHCPs must be streamlined and less paper led.

### **Future actions**

- Nigel to work with Lesley Cheshire/Ralph Holloway in getting clear messages about SEND children out to schools.
- SEND Governors in school need to understand EHCP issues.

### **Additional notes/suggestions**

- Massive 'hidden' issue with MLD children at Early Years and KS1 at present.
- Pre-school screening must be improved to support schools.
- Cross phase issues need greater clarity.

### **Priority 3 – Future of primary services**

The paper noted the following **challenges** for heads:

- Future of Essex School Improvement service unclear. 80% funded 20% traded for 17/18?
- HR Essential (can differ depending on HR Manager).
- Payroll snags.
- Safeguarding – yes
- Admissions – yes
- HT recruitment – yes
- Press support – yes
- Crisis support – yes
- Educational visits – mixed
- Broadband – mixed

### **Possible solutions**

- EPHA to work with CK and her team. Plans still to be finalised.

- More work required with HR.
- Schools CAN opt out of payroll and use other providers.
- HT recruitment still vital support for Governors.

#### Future actions

- Commissioners working through Clusters.
- Safeguarding continues to be hot topic so all support necessary.
- Educational Visits team play key role in keeping schools up to date with regulations, terrorism and paperwork.

#### Additional notes/suggestions

- 'Green' schools left with little SEC time. Possible buy back and traded services. Collaboration in Clusters essential.
- In the future will press support and crisis support be available or will schools 'buy in' when necessary?
- Broadband picture very unclear at present and may not be in the future?

The Executive discussed the issues around Schools Broadband in more detail. Currently, maintained schools are locked into a contract with Essex Schools Broadband until April 2018 (so if maintained schools leave at this point they will be double-funding their Broadband provision). EPHA must be cautious of making radical changes or recommendations that could leave some schools worse off, but the Executive Director is researching possible alternative providers.

The Executive questioned the outcome of the review of the **Specialist Teacher Team and Statutory Assessment Service**, conducted by Simon Carpenter last term. The report was given to Clare Kershaw in December, but this has not yet been shared with the EPHA Executive. It was **AGREED** that this matter would be raised at the meeting with Local Authority officers later in the day.

Meeting  
with LA  
Officers  
**26/01/17**

## 5. AIRSUPPLY

Karin Hogsander, CEO and founder of Airsupply, was welcome to the meeting. She gave a presentation about the proposed pilot (in Essex and Croydon) to introduce an online platform whereby schools could arrange and book supply teachers electronically, via an app and website.

The website <https://www.airsupply.org.uk/> states:

*Airsupply is not an agency. We are a service matching supply teachers with schools that need them, at a much lower cost than the teacher recruitment agencies currently charge. In addition, the available jobs and candidates are completely transparent, leading to better matches between teachers and jobs offered. We are developing a service for supply teachers and schools that is free to sign up to and that manages all the documentation applicants require, and then provide access to the portal for schools looking for positions. Supply teachers pay nothing, and schools pay a much lower fee than they would to an agency - and only if they find a teacher who they actually offer a*

*supply role.*

Karin stressed the following:

Schools get instant and direct access to pre-vetted and safer recruitment compliant supply teachers

Schools pay only if they hire someone through Airsupply, and as they are not an agency they do not charge high agency fees.

A schools pays no finder's fee charge if a supply teacher is offered a permanent role

Schools can take control of their recruiting by instantly seeing how many and which types of supply teachers are available for a certain period of time in their area

In response to questions Karin confirmed that Airsupply will carry out all safeguarding and employment checks, and information will be accessible online; however, supply teachers will be expected to provide ID as usual.

She explained that quality assurance will be carried out by completing all safer recruitment processes;

providing references and giving information about where else a teacher has worked: an initial interview process before teachers are taken on by Airsupply.

Teachers set their own day rate - although there was some confusion about this, as the rates seemed to be very high, and not clear whether the school paid a fee on top of the day rate. Karin noted that the rates were high and would be more competitive, and the fee that a school sees online will be the total charge.

A number of concerns were raised, including whether Airsupply would be able to recruit sufficient teachers to cover the whole of Essex, including rural and coastal areas. Karin agreed that this would be a crucial part of their strategy to ensure success in Essex.

Airsupply is asking for feedback from headteachers and schools to ensure that the system works effectively. They are running a simulation after half term (which should take about an hour of someone's time) to test the system and gather feedback about its use. Executive members were asked to let Pam Langmead know if they were prepared to take part in the simulation.

## **6. HEADTEACHER SUPPORT AND WELL-BEING**

The EPHA Chair reported that she, the Executive Director and the Professional Officer met with Viv Grant, Integrity Coaching, to discuss partnership working with around coaching, headteacher support and well-being.

A number of options were explored, including the individual coaching programmes run by Integrity Coaching, possible "retreats" and the Coaching for the Soul sessions that Viv leads. EPHA has arranged four sessions in the summer term. These will be free for primary-phase headteachers, but will be limited to around 30 heads, so will be offered on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The dates and venues of the sessions will be:  
 Friday 12 May – Ivy Hill Hotel, Margaretting  
 Friday 9 June – Manor of Groves Golf and Country Club  
 Friday 16 June – Rivenhall Hotel  
 Friday 30 June – Weston Homes Community Stadium  
 All at 1.00 pm – 4.00pm

Pam also noted that they discussed with Viv the potential for a “crisis support line” for Essex primary heads.

<http://www.integritycoaching.co.uk/>

EPHA is also extending its support for headteachers through the termly briefings for clusters (delivered by the Professional Officer). Nine partnerships so far are taking advantage of this free service and the briefings are well-received.

EPHA also responded quickly to a need for RAISEonline training, and will continue to offer occasional training to headteachers on a variety of subjects, either at the termly meetings or as separate training sessions.

## 7. FINANCE REPORT

### Current account

<b>09.08.16</b>	<b>Opening balance</b>	<b>£138,341.42</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Supply	£ 5,346.00	
Travel claims	£ 768.60	
Professional Officer: fees (August- December)	£16,005.70	
Professional Officer: mileage	£ 1,024.20	
Professional Officer: expenses for EPHA	£ 1,063.77	
Executive Director	£ 8,403.23	
Meeting/venue costs	£25,777.19	
Miscellaneous expenses (inc. website)	£ 5,313.23	
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£63,701.92</b>	
<b>Income</b>		
North East account balance	£ 19,350.00	
West EPHA account balance	£ 20,900.00	
Mid EPHA account balance	£ 19,600.00	
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£ 59,850.00</b>	
<b>20.12.16</b>	<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>£134,489.50</b>

*Income from South bank account not yet received (likely to be around £19k)*

### Conference account

12.02.16	Balance	£39.781.07
26.08.16	Balance	£53,461.21
<b>09.12.16</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>£38,423.67</b>

	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Income</b>
<b>Deputy Headteacher conference</b>		
Conference bookings (all income)		£27,410.00
Resources	£ 168.94	
Venue	£11,437.32	
Speakers	£11,215.48	
Other (refunds etc)	£ 993.52	
	<b>£23,815.26</b>	<b>£27,410.00</b>
<b>WEPHA conference</b>		
Conference bookings		£ 805.00
Speaker and venue	£2,030.80	

## 8. EPHA REPRESENTATION ON WORKING GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

### a) SEND transformation

Nigel Hookway noted that he had met with Ralph Holloway and was waiting for him to contact him to discuss the SEND changes further.

### b) Early Years funding group (sub group of the Schools Forum)

Dawn Baker attended a meeting of the sub-group, when a response to the Early Years funding consultation was discussed. She noted that the funding for the two maintained nursery schools in Essex is only protected until the end of this Parliament, and the proposed funding formula will have a negative impact on their budgets. It was noted that the Schools Forum agreed with the proposed consultation option.

### c) Chartered College of Teaching

Lehla Abbot reported that she is attending a meeting about the introduction and development of the newly established Chartered College of Teaching, which will be led by Dame Alison Peacock. She will report back to the Executive.

### d) Leadership Team meeting

The EPHA Chair reported that the termly EPHA leadership team meeting had taken place on 17 March, attended by all of the EPHA Area Chairs, the Executive Director, Professional Officer, Clare Kershaw (Director for Education), the four area lead commissioners and Graham Lancaster. Agenda items included: national and local update, safeguarding concerns, schools broadband, primary school improvement, writing moderation and an update on assessment and moderation.

The main focus of the meeting was on safeguarding concerns, and the process for managing complaints made to Ofsted about schools (generally by parents). Harriet noted that Clare Kershaw and Jo Barclay (ECC Safeguarding Adviser) had written an editorial in this week's Education Essex, and this was followed up by an email from the EPHA Professional Officer giving information and guidance about safeguarding requirements.

**e) Professional Officer report**

The report gave details of the meetings attended by Pam Langmead on behalf of EPHA. 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;
- Contact with new headteachers;
- Briefings to headteacher groups – 9 partnerships/clusters are now holding termly briefings;
- Organisation and management of the area meetings in the autumn term and spring term;
- Organisation and management of the WEPHA conference;
- Organising RAISE online training for headteachers, managing bookings etc;
- Managing the EPHA finances: paying claims and invoices, supporting area treasurers, producing reports, paying in cheques;
- Managing the bookings and organising the Deputy Headteacher conference, future planning for Deputy and Heads' conferences;
- Development of the new website, badges, conference folders etc.;
- Updating EPHA records and website;
- Other tasks as required.

**f) Executive Director report**

*"It has been a very busy time since my previous report. I have joined new committees and attend a large number of meetings across Essex and beyond Essex as far as Carlisle. I have been to London three times on behalf of EPHA including meeting Dame Estelle Morris and linking up with Russell Hobby at the annual NAHT conference.*

*I currently sit on the following committees or groups;*

- a) Governor for Essex Virtual School
- b) Essex Employment and Skills Board
- c) System Leadership Task & Finish Group
- d) WEISF – Data GROUP
- e) Essex SLIS Board
- f) Broadband Sub group of Schools Forum
- g) Recruitment and Retention Task and finish group
- h) SEN Budgets Group
- i) Essex Professional Officer's Group
- j) Schools Forum (observer/substitute)
- k) Small Schools Task and Finish Group
- l) Life Beyond MATs Group led by Estelle Morris
- m) Mat2Mat CEOs Group led by Andrew Smith
- n) Eastern Region Professional Officer's Group

- o) Raising Attainment for the Disadvantaged Group*
- p) Essex Futures Group led by Councillor Kevin Bentley*
- q) North East Essex Children's Board*
- r) South Essex Children's Board*
- s) MACE (Children missing and absent from education board)"*

It was noted that both reports were of interest, but it would be helpful if there could be more focus on the outcomes of attendance at meetings, follow up actions and the implications for primary headteachers. The Professional Officer and Executive Director both agreed to include this in future reports.

**g) Support for recently Qualified Teachers**

Helen Dudley-Smith shared information about an initiative designed to support teachers who are in their 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year of teaching, which has been developed by the North Essex School partnership. She noted that she and her colleagues were aware of the fact that recently qualified teachers may decide to leave teaching after a couple of years, at a time when their initial support (as NQTs) comes to an end. The cluster decided that it should strengthen networks of RQTs across the group, and established the 2-4 Group for these teachers.

Each school gives RQTs half a day's release time every half term, to attend a meeting with colleagues in the same situation. When the group started the teachers set the agenda themselves, but after the first few meetings it became less positive and productive. Nonetheless, it was clear that the teachers valued the time that they were given, and the cluster developed a programme for training and development, working with Craig Duncan (former headteacher at Queen Boudica). As a result the meetings are now more structured and include a programme of development areas for these teachers, including:

- Meeting the needs of all abilities
- Working with LSAs
- Teaching to mastery and depth
- Becoming a subject leader.

This structured and supportive approach is paying dividends across the partnership and is helping build a community of young teachers.

Craig Duncan offers a cost effective model for schools, charging £350 a day for up to 20 delegates. He can be contacted at [cdeducation03@gmail.com](mailto:cdeducation03@gmail.com)

It was **AGREED** that this sort of retention initiative should be taken up by the Recruitment and Retention task group, and any funding available might usefully be spent on this sort of initiative.

**h) Schools Forum report**

The EPHA Chair noted that a key decision by the Schools Forum was to continue to de-delegate funding for Schools Broadband for maintained schools, at the same per pupil

rate as in 2015/16. However, this has resulted in a shortfall because of the contract entered into by ECC in January 2013, which committed to paying for the initial upgrade (funded by DUCL) but failed to account for the cost impact of schools that might leave the contract over ten years. ECC has agreed to work with EPHA to improve the service and support offered by DUCL. In the meantime, EPHA is exploring other options with alternative providers. Harriet stressed that headteachers should continue to feedback any concerns that they have with the service to Sian Shordan.

## 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ MATTERS TO BE RAISED WITH LA OFFICER

The following matters were raised and discussed:

### a) School improvement issues – Excellence in Essex

The EPHA Chair confirmed that the process outlined in the 'Excellence in Essex Primary Schools' had been discussed at the EPHA Executive meetings in the summer and autumn terms, and headteachers had been given a chance to comment and make amendments before the document was approved and published. However, it was noted that the Local Authority have the right to intervene in schools causing them concern and are not actually required to agree the process with headteachers.

A group of heads have asked how a green RAG rating change to Amber or red during the summer in good schools and Warning Notices served when SATs results in 2016 cannot be used as indicators for such intervention.

They also asked if we need to question the quality of some Standards and Excellence Commissioners if they are RAGing schools incorrectly and is the number of schools currently being issued Warning Notices an indication that schools are not receiving adequate SEC support in the first place.

This group also asked whether there is a pattern across Essex for the LA to target, in particular, small rural schools, with a suggestion that VC schools are at even more risk, to issues Warning Notices to enforce the academy agenda. And if so, would there be a commonality that these schools did not perform well in the 2016 SATs?

Is the LA considering using the School Led Improvement partnerships more proactively to support schools before issuing Warning Notices?

It was **AGREED** that these questions would be raised at the meeting with Local Authority officers later in the day.

### b) Social Care referrals

Headteachers continue to have concerns about the numbers of referrals that are turned down by Social Care. Concerns were also expressed by a headteacher who was criticised for making a complaint about Social Care. It was **AGREED** that this matter would be raised at the meeting with Local Authority officers later in the day.

**Meeting  
with LA  
Officers  
26/01/17**

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with LA  
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**c) Education Health and Care Plans**

Headteachers continue to have concerns about the time it takes to process EHCPs. It was **AGREED** that this matter would be raised at the meeting with Local Authority officers later in the day.

**d) EPHA Executive membership**

The EPHA Chair noted that a number of representatives had left, or were about to leave, the EPHA Executive. They include:

Brenda Dalley, who has been South Chair since 2010. She retires at Easter, and was thanked for her commitment and contribution to EPHA and education in Essex for many years.

Lesley Lewis, representative for Epping Forest Rural and previously the West Treasurer. She is leaving education altogether and is moving to Yorkshire.

Ceri Jones, Vice-Chair of Mid, who is standing down from the Executive due to other commitments.

Lesley and Ceri were thanked for their contribution to the Executive.

In addition, there are vacancies for Epping Forest South due to Jan Tunney's retirement last term, and in Harwich and Dovercourt, as Kay Wills has left. These will be addressed at the Area meetings.

**10. DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS FOR THE 2016/17 AND THE 2017/18 SCHOOL YEAR**

**Executive meetings** (Chelmsford City Football Club)

Thursday 4 May 2017

Thursday 12 October 2017

Wednesday 24 January 2018

Thursday 10 May 2018

**Annual General Meeting** (Chelmsford City Football Club)

Thursday 12 October 2017

**Area Heads Meetings**

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
<b>Autumn term 2017</b>		
N-EAST	Wednesday 8 November	Weston Homes Community Stadium
SOUTH	Thursday 9 November	Holiday Inn, Basildon
WEST	Wednesday 15 November	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 16 November	Chelmsford City Football Club
<b>Spring term 2018</b>		
SOUTH	Wednesday 21 February	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Thursday 22 February	Weston Homes Community Stadium
WEST	Wednesday 28 February	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 1 March	Chelmsford City Football Club
<b>Summer term 2018</b>		
SOUTH	Wednesday 13 June	Holiday Inn, Basildon
N-EAST	Thursday 14 June	Weston Homes Community Stadium
WEST	Wednesday 20 June	Weston Homes Business Centre, Takeley
MID	Thursday 21 June	Chelmsford City Football Club

### **Conferences**

Headteachers' Conference

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

Deputy Headteachers' Conference

Friday 6 October 2017 Weston Community Homes Stadium

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Harriet Phelps-Knights  
Chair of EPHA

Pam Langmead  
EPHA Professional Officer