

Report to: **Scrutiny Committee for Children's Services**

Date: **14 March 2008**

By: **Chairman of the Tabletop Review**

Title of report: **Tabletop Scrutiny Review of the Recruitment and Retention of Teachers in East Sussex**

Purpose of report: **To present the outcomes of the review and propose recommendations relating to Recruitment and Retention of Teachers in East Sussex**

RECOMMENDATION – that the Committee:

- 1. considers the findings of the report; and**
 - 2. supports the recommendations.**
-

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations in the Tabletop Review report.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 The attached report contains the findings and recommendations of the Tabletop Review.

2.2 This was a short review, carried out by Councillor Chris Dowling, to assess the current situation regarding the Recruitment and Retention of Teachers in East Sussex. The aim being to decide whether or not the Scrutiny Committee for Children's Services should consider carrying out a full review in this area.

2.2 The Review Board took evidence from County Council officers and the Centre for British Teachers (the School Improvement Service for East Sussex County Council).

3. Recommendation

3.1 The Committee is recommended to consider the findings of the report and agree the recommendations.

Councillor Chris Dowling
Chairman of the Tabletop Review

Contact Officer: Gillian Mauger (01273) 481796

Local Members: all
Background docs: none

Tabletop Scrutiny Review of the Recruitment & Retention of Teachers in East Sussex

Report by Councillor Chris
Dowling

March 2008

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – 14 March 2008

The report of the tabletop scrutiny review of the recruitment & retention of teachers in East Sussex

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Recommendations

	Recommendation	Page
1	<p>A full scrutiny review of the recruitment and retention of teachers in East Sussex is not carried out at present.</p> <p>Councillor Dowling to revisit and review this matter again in Autumn 2008 and present an update report to the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee in November 2008. This review to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess the impact that the work of the Schools Workforce Recruitment Team and CfBT has had on the recruitment and retention of teachers during the 2007/08 academic year; • consider how the expanded remit of the Team and the take up of the PT04 recruitment package purchased by schools has impacted on the work of the Schools Workforce Recruitment Team; and • consider if work to address future vacancies for head teachers will sufficiently meet the expected demand. 	10
2	<p>The Schools Workforce Recruitment Team to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage schools to provide information on a regular basis regarding the number of teacher vacancies that they are actively recruiting to; and • to improve questionnaires sent to teachers leaving the profession to ensure that they are capturing the right information <p>This will enable the Team to maintain a correct picture as to the levels of teacher vacancies across the county and better understand why teachers are leaving the profession so that it can adapt future recruitment and retention support as necessary.</p>	10

Recruitment and retention of teachers

The teaching population in England

1. There has been a steady rise in the teaching population in maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools in England since 1997. By January 2007 there were approximately 435,000 full time equivalent teachers in maintained schools, an overall rise of 9% since 1997 (although a reduction of 400 on 2006 figures). This rise has been boosted by an increase in the numbers of new teachers being recruited, from just under 30,000 in 1997/98 to 35,600 in 2004/05.

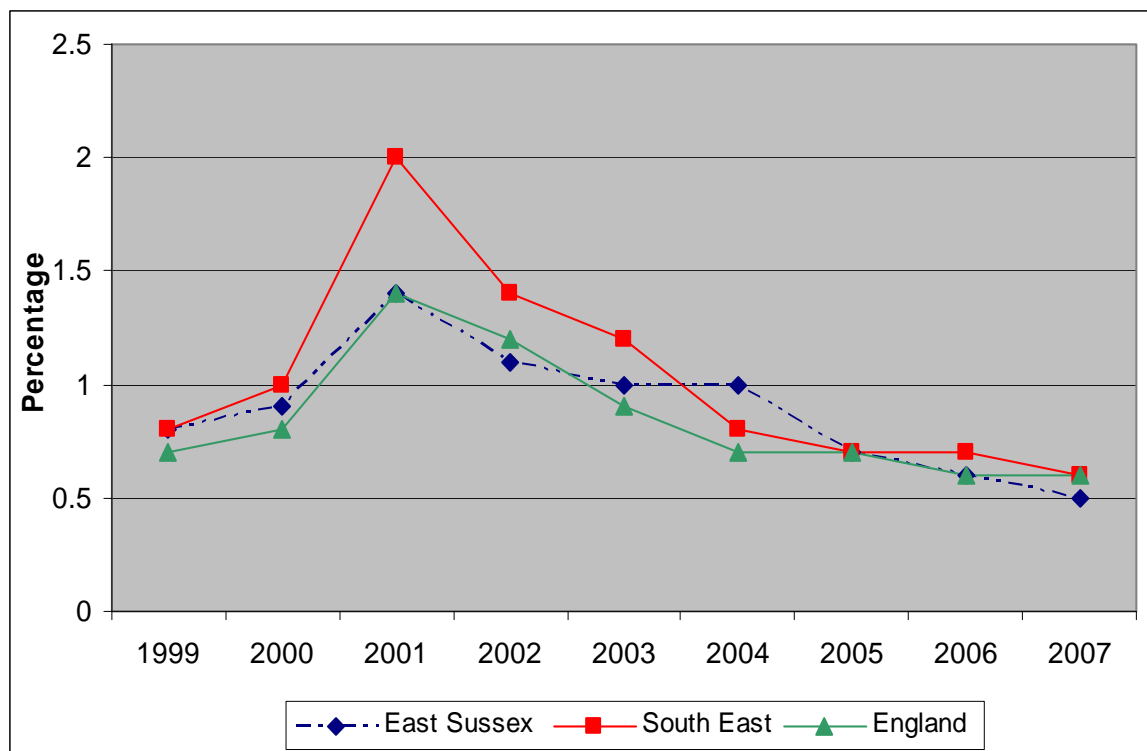
Teaching vacancies

Teaching vacancies in England

2. As figure 1 shows, vacancies in the teaching profession hit a high, both nationally and locally, in 2001. In that year East Sussex was in line with national average of 1.4%, although the overall South East figure stood slightly higher at 2%.

3. Teaching vacancies have continued to drop in recent years. By 2007 the figure stood at 0.6% at both a national and local level, with East Sussex slightly below this at 0.5% (equates to X vacancies in East Sussex)

Figure 1: Percentage of teacher vacancies in England, South East England and East Sussex from 1999 to 2007



Teaching vacancies in East Sussex

4. In January 2007 there were a total of 52 full time vacancies and 20 part time vacancies in schools across East Sussex. The majority of these were being temporarily filled by teachers on a contract of one term or more, leaving a total of 14 full time and 3 part time vacant posts that were being actively advertising by schools.

Figure 2: Vacancies actively being advertised in East Sussex in January 2007¹

	Secondary	Primary	Special
Full time vacancies:			
Head teacher		2	1
Classroom teacher (primary & special)		5	1
Classroom teacher (secondary):			
- Information technology	1		
- Science	2		
- French	1		
- Drama	1		
Part time vacancies:			
Classroom teacher (primary & special)		2	
Classroom teacher (secondary):			
- Design and technology	1		

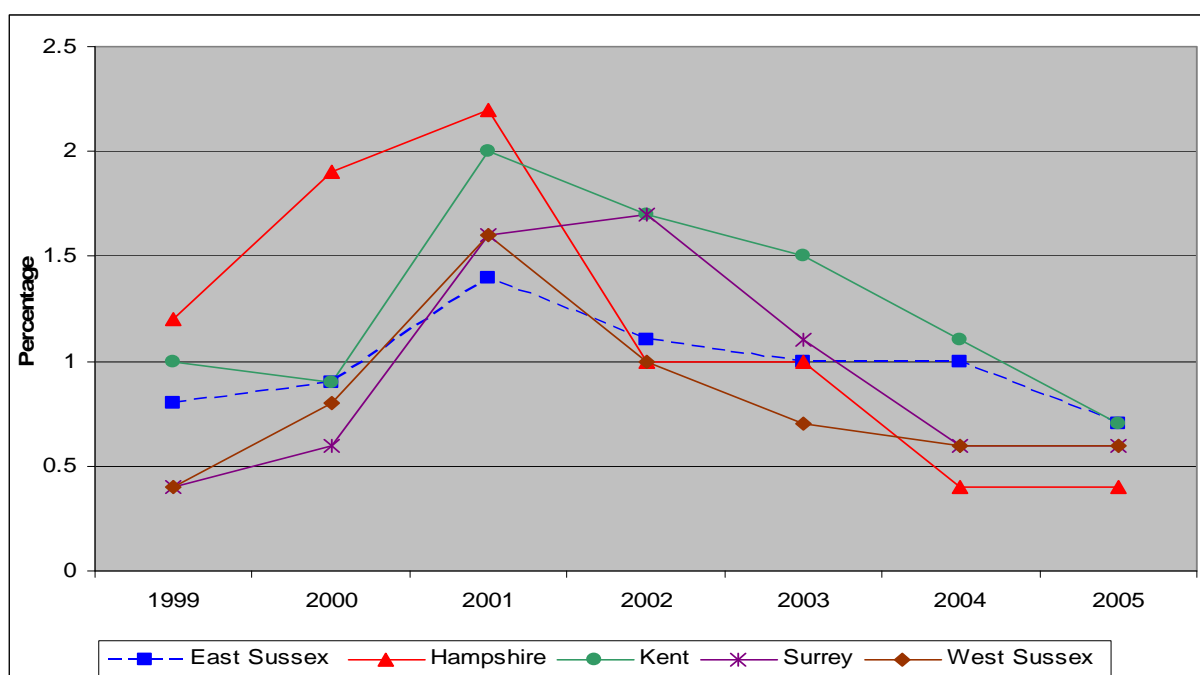
5. Head teacher and senior leader vacancies occur across all three school phases, eg: primary, secondary and special schools. At a secondary school level, vacancies can often be harder to fill in such subjects areas as maths, science and languages. Whilst at a primary school level, vacancies are usually for upper Key Stage 2 (ages 9 and 10) positions. Vacancies also vary across the county, with teaching positions in some areas being easier to fill than others. For example, it is not usually the case that schools in Lewes experience problems recruiting, however other areas such as Hastings and St Leonards, can struggle to fill some positions. Some small rural primary schools can also have problems attracting teachers, particularly senior positions where salaries can be less than equivalent posts in secondary schools.

Comparison of teacher vacancies against neighbouring authorities

6. As figure 3 shows, East Sussex compared favourably against other neighbouring authorities in terms of vacant teacher posts between 1999 and 2005, being either below or in line with vacancy numbers in other authorities. By 2005 East Sussex and Kent had the highest number of vacancies (at 0.7%), although this was only 0.3% higher than Hampshire, which had the lowest figure (at 0.4%).

¹ Data provided by the Department of Education and Skills from annual surveys completed by all schools

Figure 3: Percentage of teacher vacancies in East Sussex and neighbouring authorities from 1999 – 2005



7. During the course of the review the neighbouring authorities of Kent and West Sussex provided information on their current situation regarding teacher vacancies. Both County Councils stated that recruitment and retention was not an issue in primary schools, but still remained a problem in some secondary schools, particularly in such subjects as science, technology and maths. West Sussex also stated that applications for headships and middle leader posts were down.

Retention of teachers

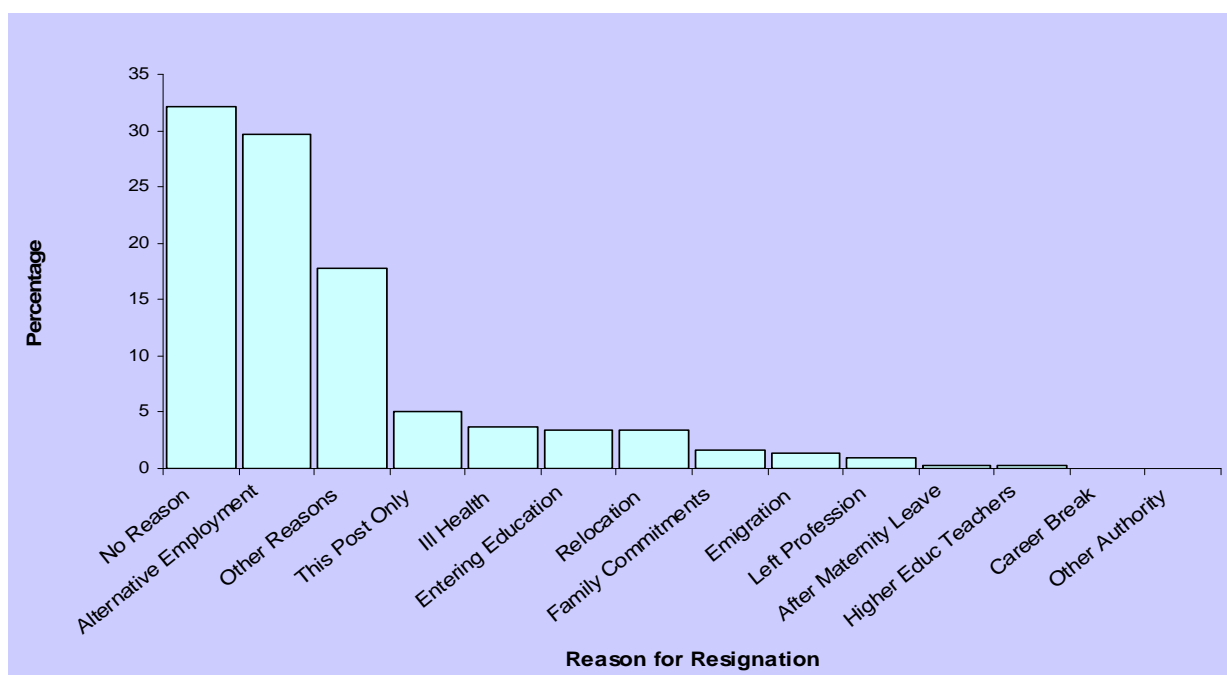
8. In 2004-05 a total of 38,400 teachers left full time teaching posts in England. The reasons for leaving were given as:

- Left the profession completely – 19,200 (50%)
- Retirement – 7,680 (20%)
- Switched to part time teaching – 11,520 (30%)

9. Although teachers in East Sussex provide feedback regarding why they are leaving the profession the information that these questionnaires provide is of limited use. As figure 4 shows, of the 293 teachers that resigned between April and September 2007, 146 of them (50%) listed 'no reason' or 'other reasons' as to why they were resigning. It is also not clear as to whether alternative employment means within the profession or whether they have left the profession completely.

10. This lack of information makes it difficult to build up a clear picture as to why teachers are leaving the profession and this in turn can impact upon the ability to effectively plan future support for schools around the retention of teachers.

Figure 4: Reasons given by teachers leaving the profession in East Sussex between April – September 2007



Planning for future need

11. More than half the country's head teachers are over 50 years of age and will be reaching retirement at broadly the same time. Projections indicate that the critical year will be 2009 when the number of head teachers retiring is likely to rise to nearly 3,500 (from a previous level of 2,250 in 2004).² This is clearly going to be an area of concern for all local authorities and it is important that they start to look at ways of minimising this impact as soon as possible.

12. During the course of the review concerns were raised about the low number of quality head teacher applications that have recently been received by some schools in East Sussex. It was believed that this was due to the fact that the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) was not producing enough high quality applicants who were able to take on the challenging role of a head teacher. The review was informed by the Centre for British Teachers (the provider of the School Improvement Service at East Sussex County Council) that the NPQH has recently been revised though and it is hoped these changes will successfully address this issue.

² East Sussex Leadership Effectiveness and Succession Strategy 2007-2010

Managing the recruitment and retention of teachers in East Sussex schools

Schools Workforce Recruitment Team

13. The Schools Workforce Recruitment Team has nine officers and is situated within the Professional Service Team of Personnel and Training. The Team is managed by Janet Bowen, Recruitment and Strategy Manager. The function of the team is to provide a range of recruitment and retention support to schools in East Sussex. These include:

Recruitment

- Developing publicity material and attending recruitment fairs to promote teaching positions in East Sussex
- Appointment of newly qualified teachers to a selection pool which primary schools use to appoint teachers from (72 appointments were made from the pool in September 2007)
- Management of the recruitment process for schools which buy this service from the team
- Management of the Graduate Teacher Programme (a one year employment based teacher training programme leading to qualified teacher status)
- Providing Return to Teach courses for people wishing to return to primary and secondary teaching

Retention

- Management of the administration for the newly qualified teachers during their statutory induction process

14. Funding for Recruitment and Strategy Manager posts at local authorities had been provided by the Training and Development Agency for Schools. However, this ceased in March 2007 when the agency changed its funding strategy. This reduction in funding has impacted on the work of the team, leading to a reduction in the number of recruitment fairs attended and the delivery of recruitment workshop sessions, as well as a postponement of the Return to Teach programme. The team has also broadened its remit to take on additional recruitment work outside of the area of schools, such as senior management staff at East Sussex County Council and Sussex Police, which has generated income for the Team.

15. The Team offer a recruitment package to schools to help them manage all their recruitment needs, known as Personnel and Training 4 (PT04). This includes access to the primary school pool of newly recruited teachers, access to information received at recruitment fairs, advertisement of vacancies in the national press and Council website and administrative assistance to help manage applications. A separate package can also be purchased to specifically help with head teacher recruitment.

16. Schools are not obliged to buy the recruitment packages and this year saw the highest number of schools choosing not to buy the main PT04 recruitment package (eleven schools, 6% of the total number). The review contacted those schools who had not purchased the service to ascertain their reasons. Only four responses were received, all from primary schools and none had issues with the quality of the service provided. Two cited budget constraints as the reason for not purchasing it, one had carried out its own recruitment and the other school did not require the services this year but would be purchasing it again in future.

17. The Team does not have a clear up-to-date picture of the number of teacher vacancies across East Sussex at any given time. This is due to the fact that the national data collated by the Department of Education and Skills from all East Sussex schools (see paragraph X) is only provided nine months after it has been collected and is therefore only provides a dated picture. Also schools themselves will only inform the Team of a vacancy if the Team is managing the recruitment of that post.

School Improvement Service (Centre for British Teachers)

18. The Centre for British Teachers (CfBT) provides the School Improvement Service for East Sussex County Council. The Service provides advice and guidance to schools on a range of issues focusing on raising standards of achievement for all pupils, improving the quality of education and improving leadership and management in schools.

19. In 2007 CfBT produced The Leadership Effectiveness and Succession Strategy 2007-10. This Strategy was in part a response to the need to recruit a larger number of head teachers over the next few years to manage the increase in retirements that is expected (see paragraph X). The Strategy aims to develop effective leadership and succession planning for the future and ensure that:

- East Sussex professional leadership pathways produce effective senior leaders and head teachers
- leaders are confident to fulfil highly effective roles at all levels and can demonstrate leadership characteristics
- those with aspirations for leadership are identified, nurtured and supported
- leaders are supported in sustaining excellence

20. East Sussex is one of 50 authorities nationwide that has been provided with funding from the National College of School Leadership to deliver a pilot project called Targeted Support for Leadership Succession. This project is aimed at those teachers who have recently achieved their National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). Running from January to July 2008 it aims to prepare these teachers for their first head teacher position through a range of activities including individual coaching and mentoring and possible short-term placements to work alongside experienced head teachers. It is hoped that this project will be successful in meeting the future increase in head teacher vacancies in East Sussex. However, given the recent start of this project, it will not be possible to begin to assess the success of it until later on in the year.

21. Whether there will be funding from the National College of School Leadership to run this project in future years has not yet been agreed. If funding is not available the project may not continue, or schools may have to provide the funding for their staff to attend it.

Conclusions

22. Given the evidence available at present, there is not a major issue around the recruitment and retention of teachers in East Sussex and a full scrutiny review on this issue is not necessary at this time.

23. The Review did however highlight some areas of concern:

- a) As the Schools Workforce Recruitment Team has broadened its remit to provide services outside of the schools arena, it is important that the Team remains vigilant to recruitment and retention trends in order that it does not compromise any future support that schools may require.
- b) If more schools choose not to purchase the PT04 recruitment package from the Schools Workforce Recruitment Team that service may no longer be viable. This could have a serious impact on the recruitment and retention of teachers in schools across East Sussex.
- c) The increase in the number of head teacher retiring over the next few years could lead to a shortage of good leaders in our schools, particularly those schools that are challenging. Work is under way to ensure that those teachers in East Sussex who wish to take up head teacher positions in the near future are sufficiently prepared to do so. However, whether this work will be adequate enough to meet the future demand is not yet clear.

24. There was also concern that, given the way in which information is provided to the Schools Workforce Recruitment Team about teacher vacancies and retention (see paragraph X), any dramatic change to the current recruitment and retention picture may not be picked up quickly enough for the Team to react to it.

Recommendation 1.

A full scrutiny review of the recruitment and retention of teachers in East Sussex is not carried out at present.

Councillor Dowling to revisit and review this matter again in Autumn 2008 and present an update report to the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee in November 2008. This review to:

- **assess the impact that the work of the Schools Workforce Recruitment Team and CfBT has had on the recruitment and retention of teachers during the 2007/08 academic year;**
- **consider how the expanded remit of the Team and the take up of the PT04 recruitment package purchased by schools has impacted on the work of the Schools Workforce Recruitment Team; and**
- **consider if work to address future vacancies for head teachers will sufficiently meet the expected demand.**

Recommendation 2.

The Schools Workforce Recruitment Team to:

- **encourage schools to provide information on a regular basis regarding the number of teacher vacancies that they are actively recruiting to; and**
- **to improve questionnaires sent to teachers leaving the profession to ensure that they are capturing the right information**

This will enable the Team to maintain a correct picture as to the levels of teacher vacancies across the county and better understand why teachers are leaving the profession so that it can adapt future recruitment and retention support as necessary.

Appendix: Terms of reference, membership and evidence

Scope and terms of reference of the review

The Education Standards Panel raised concerns about the recruitment and retention of teachers along the coastal strip in East Sussex and recommended that the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee be requested to consider this issue further.

The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee agreed to carry out a desktop review on the recruitment and retention of teachers across the whole of East Sussex to assess the situation. This review would then feed back its findings to the main committee, with a recommendation as to whether further scrutiny investigation in this area was needed.

Scope of the Review:

- a) To assess the current national situation in relation to the recruitment and retention of teachers
- b) To assess the local situation in relation to the recruitment and retention of teachers and consider how this compares to the national trend
- c) Consider current work being carried out by the department in relation to the recruitment and retention of teachers across East Sussex schools
- d) Consider if a further scrutiny work in this area is necessary

Board Membership and project support

Review Board Member: Councillor Chris Dowling

The Project Manager was Gillian Mauger (Scrutiny Lead Officer) with logistics and support being provided by Sam White (Scrutiny Support Officer).

Janet Bowen, Recruitment Strategy Manager provided ongoing support throughout the review.

Project Board meeting dates

24 October 2007 and 10 January 2008

Witnesses providing evidence

The Board would like to thank all the witnesses who provided evidence in person:

William Carter, Senior School Development Adviser (Secondary), CfBT

Deb Emery, Head of Personnel Services, ESCC

Connie Hughes, Senior School Development Adviser (Primary), CfBT

Michelle Punter, Strategy Manager - Remodelling the Workforce, CfBT

Evidence papers

Item	Date
East Sussex Leadership Effectiveness and Succession Strategy 2007-2010	

Contact officer: Gillian Mauger (Scrutiny Lead Officer) Telephone: 01273 481796
E-mail: gillian.mauger@eastsussex.gov.uk