



**COUNTY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (GOVERNORS)**

**THURSDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 3:30PM**

**VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**MEMBERS -** Councillor Bob Standley (Chair)  
Councilors Colin Belsey, Roy Galley, Philip Scott, Alan Shuttleworth.

**ALSO INVITED -** Jessica Stubbings, Clare Cornford, Samuel Leonard - ESCC Officers  
Karen Marr, Denise Kong, Monica Whitehead, Stuart Ford – Members of the  
East Sussex Governor Forum (ESGF).

**A G E N D A**

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2021 (*Pages 3 - 8*)

2. Apologies for absence

3. Disclosure of Interests

Disclosure by all Members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Members regard the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.

4. Urgent items

Notification of any items which the Chair considers urgent and proposes to take at the appropriate part of the agenda. Any members who wish to raise urgent items are asked, wherever possible, to notify the Chair before the start of the meeting. In so doing, they must state the special circumstances which they consider justify the matter being considered urgent.

5. Academies Update (standing item) - verbal report

6. Local Authority Governor Appointments and Governor Vacancy Update (*Pages 9 - 12*)

7. Round up from Governors about Covid and Post Covid - Verbal report

8. School attendance - Verbal report

9. ESGF Update - Verbal report

10. Governor Local Area Forums - feedback, attendance and future forums (*Pages 13 - 16*)

11. Any other items previously notified under agenda item 4

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2 February 2022

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# Agenda Item 1

## County Consultative Committee (Governors): Autumn Term 2021

### Minutes

Meeting: **County Consultative Committee (Governors)** comprising of the County Consultative Committee and East Sussex Governors' Forum (ESGF)

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Venue: Microsoft Teams

Present: Cllrs Standley, Belsey, Galley and Scott

Also invited ESGF members - Karen Marr (KM), Denise Kong (DK), Monica Whitehead (MW), Richard Sage (RS), Peter Colbourn (PC). ESCC Officers - Jessica Stubbings (JS) and Clare Cornford (CC).

Apologies: Cllr Shuttleworth

Item	Decisions and Outcomes	Action
1.	<b>Minutes of previous County Forum Meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019</b> The minutes were noted as a true record.	
2.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies were received and noted as above.	
3.	<b>Declaration of Interest</b> Disclosures by all members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.  No interests were declared.	
4.	<b>Urgent Items</b> Cllr Scott asked if governors are recruited on a skills base to governing boards. KM responded that boards undertake a skills audit to identify what skills are needed. DK stated that governing boards reach out via a number of means to look new members with these skills. Cllr Scott asked how governing boards can better reflect the communities they represent. JS responded that governors are also recruited from various teams across the LA and if boards are struggling to recruit, the Governor and Clerking Service can offer support with governor recruitment and placing governors where boards are finding it difficult to recruit. Social media is also a good tool to support recruitment that the Council uses r. RS aid he had found 5 governors through the Governor and Clerking Service's Recruitment Campaign. For Hastings, the situation is different as all but one of the schools are academies and they have their own methods of recruitment. Cllr Belsey said that there are usually parents in the new intake of pupils that are interested in becoming governors. KM responded that it is important to get a balance of stakeholders on the board, so not too many parents and to include members of the local community.	
5.	<b>Any Items previously notified under agenda item 4</b> None	
6.	<b>Local Authority Governor update for Councillors March 2021</b> The County Consultative Committee noted the report they received in March 2021 from Governor Services and the East Sussex Governors Forum (ESGF).	

7.	<p><b>Academies Update</b></p> <p>JS gave the Committee an update on academy conversion since the last meeting in October 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• February 2020 – St Johns Meads CofE Primary School converted to the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust (DCAT).</li> <li>• September 2020 - The Causeway School converted to the Swale Academy Trust. Now called The Turing School.</li> <li>• December 2020 – Sedlescombe CofE Primary School converted to DCAT.</li> <li>• September 2021 Roselands Infant School and Stafford Junior School converted to the Cavendish Education Trust.</li> </ul> <p>Upcoming proposed conversions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Northiam and Hurst Green CofE Primary Schools to convert to DCAT.</li> <li>• Uplands Community College to join the Beacon Academy Trust</li> <li>• Peacehaven Heights and Telscombe Cliffs Primary schools are consulting about converting to STEP Academy Trust.</li> </ul> <p>PC asked for clarity about the County Council's view on academisation. Cllr Standley responded that there is no for or against policy. It is up to the governing board of the school. JS stated that the Local Authority will support schools to explore all their options including academisation and federation.</p> <p>Cllr Scott responded by saying Sir Dexter Hut had proactively encourage the academisation of all schools, with promises of money. Teachers were concerned about their contracts. Parents are often not concerned either way. It would be interesting to see how these schools are faring. JS responded that the performance of schools varies.</p> <p>Cllr Galley reinforced that it is the quality of education that matters. Cllr Scott said he would like some comparative information. Cllr Galley referenced a scrutiny report about schools which found that many small schools need a form of partnership to survive. Federations share resources, which can be a saving for small schools.</p> <p>PC raised the issue that if more schools are converting to academy status, the resources available to the local authority goes down and schools get less support.</p> <p>Cllr Standley stated that whether schools are academies or not, the local authority retains a strategic role in performance management. JS reinforced this by reassuring colleagues that school improvement is the responsibility of all schools. As more schools become academies, the role of the local authority has changed to one that helps facilitate more school-to-school support.</p> <p>RS stated that if fewer schools buy into the services on offer, then this will have an impact. Academies can buy their services from where they want.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Local authority governor appointments and governor vacancies.</b></p> <p>Members of the Committee received a report detailing the nomination for appointment of local authority governors for information.</p> <p>Members were made aware of the current governor vacancy rate in East Sussex, it was noted that September is the peak time of the year for vacancies as boards are in the process of making appointments for the new academic year.</p>	

9.	<p><b>Discussion around COVID, how schools coped and how governors saw their role.</b></p> <p>KM reported to Councillors that the schools had done well in how they coped. It was made difficult because of lots of last-minute instructions and changes from Central Government. This is one aspect that made it hard to cope with. There has been a mixed picture of remote provision. Some schools thrived with this, others not so much.</p> <p>Remote governor monitoring took place in schools. Headteachers needed support rather than challenge. Governors became sounding boards for senior leadership teams.</p> <p>Governing boards had different approaches to remote meetings. Some boards were not meeting at the start, but all boards did meet remotely eventually. There is a blended approach now to online and in person meetings.</p> <p>There has been great uptake of governor training and an increased number of training, briefing and networking sessions offered by the Governor and Clerking Service. From a training perspective, governors are in a good place. Induction has been hard for new governors as they have not been able to visit the school or meet in person with other members of the board.</p> <p>RS said he was surprised at the impact of Covid and how it has particularly affected the Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) children. There is a lack of social skills and care needs which is a result of 18 months of disrupted education. EYFS and phonics are a real concern. Children are used to screens at home and have reduced concentration. The word gap is incredible.</p> <p>MW said that a positive of covid was being able to reflect on what is better than expected. There have been a lot of suggestions around what works better. It is good to meet on Teams and governor attendance at meetings has been better.</p> <p>There is a real concern about some of the most disadvantaged children and the fear that some will never recover.</p> <p>School senior leadership teams have been under enormous pressure from Central Government and because of this the situation has been harder to manage.</p> <p>Cllr Standley reflected that Central Government also made the situation difficult for Councillors as well because of all the last-minute changes. The changes were worse than no information at all. Information would change from Monday to Friday or over the weekend which made it hard to make cohesive decisions.</p> <p>JS commented that the local authority gave a range of support to schools. There was the daily Covid Message Board, which now goes out on a regular basis by email to get information to schools. There is a team in place to manage this who work closely with Public Health colleagues. It has been a difficult time and the local authority want to offer as much help as possible.</p> <p>DK recognised that the situation has been difficult for the local authority as they were receiving the information from central government at the same time as schools and governors.</p> <p>DK said it would be useful to look at the most effective ways of using the recovery premium in practice. JS responded that this is something the Primary and Secondary Boards are looking at.  <b>Action:</b> JS to see what can be shared from the Primary and Secondary Boards around this.</p> <p>It was agreed that the impact of Covid will be seen for years to come.</p>	
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	<p>KM stated that on the other end of the spectrum, some of the older students in years 10 and 11 have behavioural issues and don't understand why they need to be in school.</p> <p>Cllr Scott said there would be a commentary on the impact of Covid for a few years and suggested that Scrutiny resources could be used to look at the impact of Covid through the scrutiny process. A range of people could be asked about their response over a period of time.</p> <p>JS said that the well-being support being provided is having a real impact. The Mental Health Support Team (MHST) are rolling out support to schools. There is also an ISEND and whole school approach to mental health.</p> <p>There has been a lot of focus on attendance and the culture of the importance of schools as children have spent so much time out of school.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Excellence for All</b></p> <p>JS provided an update on the refreshed version of the Excellence for All strategy which was approved at the recent Lead Member for Education Meeting. This strategy will run from 2021 – 2023. The first version of this strategy was in 2013, so it will have run for 10 years by 2023. The strategy looks forward to the next 2 years and reflects on the pandemic. There was huge disruption to learning and it is important to look at the lessons about learning, including new technology and different ways of doing things. The strategy recognises the impact of the pandemic on staff and school leaders. The strategy is shorter and more focussed.</p> <p>There is a shared ambition which will focus on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening leadership</li> <li>• Improved literacy and oracy</li> <li>• Taking forward the innovations in approaches to learning and participation forward to support the inclusion and wellbeing of pupils.</li> </ul>	
11.	<p><b>ESGF Update to the County Consultative Committee</b></p> <p>KM talked about the way the ESGF have supported governors with the challenges that have been faced around the County, including the challenges around the return to school. Safeguarding has always been on the agenda. There have been some thorough updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education around sexual behaviour. There is a huge focus on making sure schools don't bury their heads in the sand around sexual abuse. Schools need to address these issues.</p> <p>Finance continues to be a constant worry and it is of particular concern to small schools. Federation does help to address some concerns; however, distance means it is not often an easy answer.</p> <p>The long-term vision for the ESGF is for it to evolve as governance changes and to model good governance practice. The ESGF are going to adopt a code of conduct. The group are also moving to a model of co-opted and elected model to mirror the structure of governing boards.</p> <p>The ESGF have had an enhanced networking role and hope to move this forward.</p> <p>Engagement by academy trust governance depends largely on the trust. Some academies have their own governor training and support whilst others access local governance support. Local Governing Boards often have a scheme of delegation which makes conversations difficult in terms of school-to-school support as accountability rests with the Trustees JS stated that provision for school-to-school support is inclusive to all schools regardless of their status.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Local Area Forums</b></p>	

	<p>The data for the last rounds of Local Area Forums was shared and the increased attendance was noted. CC shared that the topic for the next round of Local Area Forums will be <i>Ofsted Inspections are back – what governors need to know.</i></p> <p>Cllr Standley stated that this meeting of the Committee has been more focussed and covered a lot of ground and works better as a stand-alone meeting rather than following directly on from an ESGF meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Scott stated that it is a lot easier to attend a meeting on Teams.</p> <p>KM noted that she had worked with a consultant for the Standards Learning Effectiveness Service to look at the format. The separate meeting and less governors means that there is a good focus.</p> <p>It was agreed that this format will work better going forward. The agenda also covered a good range of topics.</p>	
13.	<p><b>Dates of Future Meetings</b>            10<sup>th</sup> February 2022 15.30 – 17.00 by Teams</p>	

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# Agenda Item 6

**Report to:** County Consultative Committee

**Date of meeting:** 10 February 2022

**By:** Clare Cornford

**Title:** Local Authority Governor Update for Councillors

**Purpose:** To update Councillors on the nomination for appointment of local authority governors and governor vacancies

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1) For information**

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#### **11 Background**

1.1 The local authority has a statutory duty to approve nominations for local authority governors. Once nominated, schools then appoint local authority governors onto their governing board.

1.2 This report provides a summary of local authority governor applications approved for nomination, and information about the level of governor vacancies across the county.

#### **2 Supporting information**

2.1 Since the report sent to Councillors on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021, 14 local authority governors were nominated for appointment, all were approved for a 4 year term of office. Of the 14, 6 were reappointments and 8 were new appointments.

Stephen Bowles	Reapplication	Stone Cross Primary School
Ann Marie Murphy	Reapplication	The Genesis Federation
Susan Halliwell	Reapplication	Wivelsfield Primary School
Andrew Barnard	Reapplication	Southover Primary School
Shannon Marchesani	New Application	Willingdon Community School
Hollie Norman	New Application	St Mary's Primary School Crowborough
Ian Stewart	Reapplication	Ashdown Primary School
Louise Peers	New Application	Rotherfield Primary School
Sarah Hungerford	New Application	Rocks Park Primary School
Rosemary Williams	New Application	The Bridge Federation
Kevin Millington	Reapplication	Stonigate Primary School
Paul Page-Mitchell	Reapplication	Manor Primary School
George Bishop	Reapplication	Denton Primary School
Russell Kemp	New Application	Harlands Primary School

2.2 Of the 96 local authority governor places in East Sussex maintained schools, there are currently 9 vacancies, we are working with the relevant boards to recruit governors for these vacancies. This is a vacancy rate of 9.3%. The overall vacancy rate for all types of governors in East Sussex is currently 15.9%. We would expect for vacancies to be slightly lower in January than in September and October as boards have made new appointments. 159 new governors, including Associate Members, have been appointed since 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021.

2.3 Further information on the governor vacancies across East Sussex, by type of governor is shown in Appendix 1.

2.4 Information on governing boards and governors is accessed through the governors online database. This is a database maintained by the local authority; clerks to governing bodies for local authority maintained schools are responsible for updating the information on their governors and governing boards. The governor and clerking service conduct regular checks of the data to highlight inaccuracies and missing data. Clerks have dedicated training through the clerk network meetings and training sessions on using and updating the database. The local authority does not hold governor information for academy schools.

2.5 The Governor and Clerking Service (GCS) supports governing boards in a number of ways to recruit governors. The launch in January 2020 of the new, more localised recruitment campaign where the GCS match potential governors directly with schools has been a success. Since the launch of the campaign, 101 people have expressed an interest to become a governor. All applicants are matched with a school and very few have not resulted in an appointment.

### **Governor Training**

2.7 Since September 2020, GCS moved their training programme online and have also developed a comprehensive networking and briefing programme for governors. Between 1<sup>st</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021, 2675 governor and clerking training places have been accessed in over 147 training, briefing and networking sessions. Since 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021, 1390 training places have been accessed in over 78 training, networking and briefing sessions.

#### **Clare Cornford**

#### **Project Officer: Governor and Clerking Service**

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### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

## Appendix 1

### Governor Places and Vacancies in East Sussex local authority maintained schools Monitoring Report 2021-2022

	2017/8 February	2017/8 April	2018/19 September	2018/19 January	2018/19 April	2019/20 September	2019/20 March	2020/21 March	2021/22 October	2021/22 January
Governor Places at LA Maintained schools	1395	1395	1340	1340	1291	1252	1240	1256	1216	1202
Vacancies (not including non gov HT)	226 (16.2%)	221(15.4 %)	251 (18.7%)	234 (17.46%)	214 (16.57%)	235 (18.7%)	188 (15.1%)	188	214 (17.59%)	192 (15.9%)
Schools with 25%+ vacancies	1	1	6 – start of term	4	6	8 (start of term)				4
Head teachers who are not governors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Head teachers who are governors	116	116	111	111	111	108	107	109	105	104
LA governor places	114	114	109	109	105	102	101	101	97	96
LA governor vacancies	13 (10.8%)	12 (10.5%)	10 (9.2%)	13 (11.9%)	13 (12.3%)	23 (22.5%)	12 (11.8%)	13 (12.9%)	12 (12.3%)	9 (9.34%)
Parent governor places	274	274	266	266	251	243	241	243	230	227
Parent governor vacancies	35 (12.7%)	45 (16.4%)	43 (16.2%)	48 (18%)	43 (17.1%)	32 (13%)	24 (9.9%)	31 (12.76%)	30 (13%)	35 (15.4%)
Staff governor places	114	114	109	109	105	102	101	102	97	96
Staff governor vacancies	17 (14.9%)	12 (10.5%)	18 (16.51)	14 (12.8%)	12 (11.4%)	11 (10.8%)	8 (7.9%)	13 (12.75)	12 (12.3%)	11 (11.3%)
Co-opted governor places	502	502	490	490	473	456	456	452	447	441
Co-opted governor vacancies	109 (21.7%)	98 (19.5%)	108 (22%)	98 (20%)	88 (18.6%)	110 (24%)	93 (20.3%)	70 (15.49)	101 (22.5%)	85 (19.2%)
Foundation governor places	269	269	255	255	246	241	234	249	240	238
Foundation governors vacancies	52 (19.3%)	52 (19.3%)	62 (24.31%)	61 (23.9%)	58 (23.5%)	59 (20.4%)	51 (21.7%)	61 (24.49%)	59 (24.5%)	52 (21.8%)
New governors	183 (since 01/09/17)	204 (Since 01/09/17)	288 (1/09/17 – 31/08/18)	124 since 1/9/18	210 since 1/9/18	288 since 1/10/18.	135 since 1/9/19	183 new governor since 1/9/20	58 since 1/9/2021	116 since 1/9/2021

			20 since 01/09/18			37 since 1/9/19					

# Agenda Item 10

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>County Consultative Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>10 February 2022</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Clare Cornford</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Governor local area forums</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>For members of the Committee to review the attendance and feedback from the last round of local area forums. For members of the committee to hear about the proposed agenda items for the next round of local area forums.</b>

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) To note, attendance and feedback from the last round of meetings**
  - 2) To be notified of the agenda for the next round of local area forums.**
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## **1 Background**

1.1 For members of the Committee to review the attendance and feedback from the ESGF from the last round of local area forums. For members of the committee to hear about the agenda items for the next round of local area forums.

## **2 Supporting information**

2.1 Attendance at the Local Area Forums for the Academic Year 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.

The Local Area Forums moved online due to COVID. The number of sessions were reduced from 4 to 3 and the times changed to accommodate governor need.

<b>Autumn 2020 Local Area Forum – Therapeutic Thinking</b>	<b>Number of attendees</b>
Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> October 2020 from 10:00 – 12:00	25
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> October 2020 from 14:00 – 16:00	13
Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2020	47
	<b>85</b>
<b>Spring 2021 Local Area Forum - Governor Wellbeing and Virtual Governance</b>	
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2021 from 14:00 – 16:00	27
Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2021 from 18:00 – 20:00	24
Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 from 10:00 – 12:00	31

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<b>Summer 2021 Local Area Forum – Communication with Stakeholders</b>	
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> June 2021 from 18:00 – 20:00	30
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> June 2021 from 10:00 – 12:00	13
Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> June 2021 from 14:00 – 16:00	9
	<b>52</b>
<b>Autumn 2021 Local Area Forum – Ofsted Inspections are back – what Governors need to know.</b>	
Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2021 from 14:00 – 16:00	49
Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> October 2021 from 18:00 – 20:00	37
Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2021 from 10:00 – 12:00	41
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The Spring 2022 session will focus on School to School Improvement and System Leadership. These sessions will be delivered in Education Improvement Partnership Areas and will be facilitated by Claire Rivers, Chair of the East Sussex Learning Collaborative Network and Danielle Cassell, Senior Manager – System Leadership and they will be joined by the ESGF EIP Governors Representatives for each session.

<b>Spring 2022 Local Area Forum – System Leadership and School Improvement. Bookings already made</b>	<b>Numbers to date</b>
Local Area Forum: System Leadership – Hastings, Rother and Rye EIP	11
Local Area Forum: System Leadership - Ashdown and Lewes EIP	16
Local Area Forum: System Leadership - Eastbourne, Hailsham and Seaford EIP	4
Local Area Forum: System Leadership - Wealden EIP	16
Total to Date	47

### **3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

- 3.1 To note any feedback from the ESGF from the last round of local area forums.

**Alison Jeffery  
Director of Children's Services**

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**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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