

## COUNTY FORUM: Spring Term 2017

### SUMMARY REPORT

Meeting: **County Forum Meeting** comprising County Consultative Committee and East Sussex Governors' Representative Group (ESGRG)

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017

Venue: Sussex Coast College, Hastings

Present: Cllr Nick Bennett (Chair) (NB), Karen Marr (KM), Monica Whitehead (MW), Julie Dougill (JD), Matthew Jones (MJ), Geoff Lucas (GL), Jane McCarthy-Penman (JMP), Denise Kong (DK), Cllr Forward, Cllr Galley, Cllr Pursglove, Jessica Stubbings, Cllr Shuttleworth, Fiona Wright (FW)

Apologies: Patricia Grey. Richard Sage,

Item	Decisions and Outcomes	Action																																		
1.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies were received and noted as above.																																			
2.	<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.																																			
3.	<b>Minutes of previous County Forum Meeting – 12<sup>th</sup> October 2016</b> The minutes were noted as a true record.  The Summer and Autumn 2016 Area Meeting attendance figures were noted as below: <table border="1"><thead><tr><th rowspan="2">Area</th><th colspan="2">Total number of governors attending</th><th colspan="2">Total number of schools represented</th></tr><tr><th>Summer 2016</th><th>Autumn 2016</th><th>Summer 2016</th><th>Autumn 2016</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Eastbourne</td><td>13</td><td>18</td><td>11</td><td>15</td></tr><tr><td>Hastings/Bexhill</td><td>24</td><td>20</td><td>16</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>Lewes</td><td>27</td><td>19</td><td>17</td><td>15</td></tr><tr><td>Uckfield</td><td>16</td><td>21</td><td>13</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>TOTALS</td><td>80</td><td>78</td><td>57</td><td>66</td></tr></tbody></table>	Area	Total number of governors attending		Total number of schools represented		Summer 2016	Autumn 2016	Summer 2016	Autumn 2016	Eastbourne	13	18	11	15	Hastings/Bexhill	24	20	16	19	Lewes	27	19	17	15	Uckfield	16	21	13	17	TOTALS	80	78	57	66	
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4.	<p><b>Academies Update – Fiona Wright</b></p> <p>FW stated that there due to be a new Education Bill in a few weeks. It was expected that the bill will see coasting schools on the academy agenda. Interventions will be made by the Regional Schools Commissioner. In East Sussex, no primary schools are coasting. A number of secondary schools are seen as coasting and if they are not already academies, this is something the LA will look at.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) and Education Improvement Partnerships (EIPs) – Jessica Stubbings and Denise Kong.</b></p> <p>This item will focus mainly on MATs as EIPs were covered in detail at the last meeting. ESCC is focussed on supporting schools with the various partnership options that are available. Some schools are already involved in multi party options. Nationally, 27% of state schools are academies. ESCC are in line with this national data.</p> <p>When schools first started to become academies, they could convert on their own. Guidance has now changed and schools need to be in a federation context to consider converting to academy. Currently, 6% of maintained schools are in a federation, with 25-30 schools in an arrangement.</p> <p>When considering becoming part of a MAT, schools need to talk through how they wish to approach it. The school needs to be clear of its own identity and values.</p> <p>MATs can either be home grown or established. Home grown MATs are where a group of schools have set themselves up. It is harder to find examples of these. Established MATs are already set up and have a number of schools. With a home grown MAT there is more structure for leadership and governance, more control over what is delegated and more autonomy to make decisions.</p> <p>All schools have a common purpose and are community centred. Any MAT needs a minimum of 1000 pupils to operate. This equates to 10n small primary schools or one large secondary school.</p> <p>An established MAT already has support and capacity there. Established MATs also have more experienced leaders and resources.</p> <p>The Local Authority (LA) will still be there but the role will be changing, with the LA having a smaller role, the school improvement function will not be there.</p> <p>Established MATs will have a geographical spread. There will be vision and ethos. Having a common ethos is a proven success. It is important to look at their performance of a MAT for value added. Check that the MAT has the capacity and support for a school which joins. There must be clarity of vision of what the school will look like and what the impact will be on the pupils.</p> <p>EIPs need to look at what the EIP priorities are with governor training through the EIP. Governors also need to look at what support is available from the LA and to see what the LA can offer.</p> <p>There is a marketing event on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017 which governors are encouraged to attend.</p> <p>The option of a stand alone academy is still an option, although there is a reluctance to consider this. The RSC are keen for outstanding schools to convert as a sponsor for other local schools. Single schools can still form a MAT if they are ready in structure to enlarge and not be in splendid isolation.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Apprenticeship Levy – Jessica Stubbings</b></p> <p>The Government are introducing an apprenticeship Levy OF 0.5% on anyone with a pay bill of over</p>	

	<p>£3 million. This means that LA maintained schools, including voluntary Controlled schools and community schools will have to make the contribution as the LA is the employer. Voluntary Aided schools and academies will have to meet the costs themselves. This will have an impact on school budgets from this April. The Apprenticeship Levy will go into a central pool and will pay for training vouchers. The vouchers can be used to fund Apprenticeship training at all levels. These can be entry level roles for new staff (e.g. Teaching Assistants at Level 2 or 3) but they can also be used to fund apprenticeships for existing staff up to degree or masters level (including an Executive Head Teachers qualification). Schools can have apprentices. There are already 160 apprentices across schools.</p> <p>There is top up funding available if all vouchers are spent as an incentive to access more training. Training can be for new apprentices in business administration or customer service or for training for existing members of staff in areas such as executive headteacher training or training for TA's. The school budget will pay for the salary while the apprenticeship levy will pay for the training. This is a really good professional opportunity. There will be the opportunity for staff to undertake qualifications up to Masters level.</p> <p>Information about the Apprenticeship Levy has already been communicated to schools and was presented at the Bursar's Conference.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Ofsted update – Julie Dougill</b></p> <p>Members of the Forum received an update as to what is happening in East Sussex.</p> <p>There have been lots of Ofsted inspections over the last few weeks in East Sussex. Currently 89.9% of schools are good. This is a big improvement with 90.8% of schools now above average. The changes that have happened are now making the difference.</p> <p>To support governors, there are model school improvement plans, exemplar Headteacher Reports, governor frameworks, recruiting strategies and external reviews of governance.</p> <p>What can governors do?</p> <p>Several things keep coming up. The compliance of the website is important as Ofsted will be looking at this 3 or 4 weeks in advance. The chair is accountable if the school is not compliant with their website. Governors need to check the strategic planning is current and reviewed. Improve it if things are not working. For safeguarding, it is essential to ensure the Single Central Record is up to date. It is important to review attendance data. Ensure British values and your schools ethos permeates through the school.</p> <p>Schools will receive a checklist of what they need to do.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Governor Area Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) County Forum Members received the Autumn Term Area Meeting 2016 Summary Report.</li> <li>ii) County Forum Members were happy with the topics discussed at the Autumn Area Meetings.</li> </ul> <p>Feedback from the last round of Area Meetings:</p>	
9.	<p><b>Suggested items for the Spring rounds of Area Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Apprenticeship Levy</b></li> <li>• <b>Ofsted Update</b></li> </ul>	

	<p>FW suggested either a Headteacher or Chair of Governors from a school who has recently been inspected should attend each Local Area Forum to talk about their experience of Ofsted.</p> <p><b>Hot Topic question:</b></p>	
10.	<p><b>Any other Business</b></p> <p>Cllr Galley noted the positive things that are happening with schools and queried whether there was scope for press publicity.</p> <p>Cllr Bennett Is writing a letter to Justine Greening and copying in local MPs about school funding. The letter will look for strategic answers and what it means in real terms.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Dates of Future Meetings</b></p> <p>The next meeting will take place on the 25<sup>th</sup> April at St Mary's House, Eastbourne.</p>	