

COUNTY FORUM Draft Minutes: Spring Term 2018

SUMMARY REPORT

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

Date: 1st February 2018

Venue: St Mary's House, Eastbourne

Present: Cllr Sylvia Tidy, Cllr Field, Cllr Galley, Jessica Stubbings, James Roberts, Denise Kong, Karen Marr, Matthew Jones, Richard Sage, Catherine Dooley.

Apologies: Cllr Standley, Cllr Shuttleworth, Fiona Wright, Stuart Ford, Geoff Lucas, Jane McCarthy-Penman, Ray Donelan, Monica Whitehead, Danielle Cassell

Item	Decisions and Outcomes	Action
1.	Minutes of previous County Forum Meeting – 19th October 2017 The minutes were noted as a true record.	
2.	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received and noted as above. Cllr Tidy stood as chair in place of Cllr Standley. Cllr Field was in attendance in place of Cllr Shuttleworth.	
3.	Declaration of Interest 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.	Urgent Items No urgent items were raised	
5.	Academies Update – Jessica Stubbings in place of Fiona Wright There has only been one conversion since the last meeting. Ocklynge Junior School was required to convert to a sponsored academy under the South Downs Learning Trust by the Regional Schools Commissioner. Hazel Court will be converting in April.,this is a voluntary decision to convert.	
6.	Safeguarding – Catherine Dooley This presentation will be an opportunity to present to governors the detailed feedback of the 175 audits and toolkits completed by schools. 93% of schools have completed and returned this in East Sussex. This helps provide a full and comprehensive dataset about safeguarding in schools. It is important to remind governors that this is a self evaluation by schools. Governors need to be aware of their role and have sight of the key findings from the audit from their school. It is important that governors discuss the audit and the findings at a full governing board meeting and provide robust challenge to the school and that this challenge is minuted in the minutes of Governing Board meetings. The presentation will give an overview of the key areas. It is interesting to note that schools are reporting strengths in areas where the Local Authority's own safeguarding audits have reported weaknesses – this includes the Single Central Record (SCR) and recruitment.	

	<p>The Single Central Record (SCR) and recruitment are the one aspect where schools are often not compliant. Schools can be put straight into special measures if the SCR is not right. The other area in which schools judged themselves high is reporting and responding to concerns in terms of the schools' record keeping and reporting. This is an area for further training and development for school staff and governors.</p> <p>Complaints are another area that comes up as an issue. . This could be concerns raised by the school or concerns raised by other services. There were 115 concerns raised to the local authority last year about how schools tackle various aspects. Some are multiple concerns about the same school, but most are individual. Some come through Ofsted when the Local Authority is made aware that complaints have been made. Any concerns that come through Ofsted about safeguarding are automatically directed to the Local Authority. There have been some serious complaints made. The Local Authority has a duty to undertake a safeguarding view if it concerns safeguarding. There is no longer a delay with safeguarding complaints coming through from Ofsted.</p> <p>The presentation will look at how to deal with complaints of this nature. Schools can't stop complaints coming in however, the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Board can be pro-active in managing this, such as building a good relationship with parents. It is important to have a robust and up to date complaints policy in place. This should be visible to parents. Parents should be encouraged to use the complaints process if they are unhappy. Often the headteacher will know who has made the complaint – the smaller the school, the more likely this is. The child often has SEN or is a low achiever. Sometimes the child is removed from the school before a complaint is made to it is also important for governors to ask about the reasons for pupils leaving the school..</p> <p>The discussion will look at why there is a difference of opinion on the SCR. Governors can't monitor what they don't know.</p> <p>It was agreed that safeguarding will be taken to the Local Area Forums. It is important to ensure governors have enough time to discuss the issues and raise any questions they may have. The session should emphasise an embedded a culture of safeguarding.</p>	
7.	<p>Teaching schools</p> <p>Members of the forum received a briefing on Teaching Schools in East Sussex. Teaching Schools are the future of school to school support. The presentation will need to provide an overview of what a Teaching School is and what the benefits are to being involved with a Teaching School. It is proposed to invite the appropriate Teaching School to the relevant Local Area Forum in order to provide more detail.</p> <p>Teaching schools are monitored by the Regional Schools Commissioner. They are required to provide a return on funding and impact. Information on Teaching Schools is already shared with headteachers; governors need to be aware of what they can access from local teaching schools.</p> <p>It is proposed that the Teaching Schools that are invited will showcase the activity of their teaching school.</p> <p>The ESGF advised that they would like the presentation to have the following format: Slide 1 – What are teaching schools within the current educational landscape Slide 2 – Teaching Schools in East Sussex, outline of who/where they are. Following slides – Information from the invited teaching school to provide an overview of their work and offer</p>	

	<p>Final Slide – Considerations for governors – including key questions that governors need to ask.</p> <p>For the Eastbourne area, it was agreed to invite Cuckmere House and also the school currently applying to be a Teaching School.</p> <p>Cllr Galley stated that the Scrutiny Committee are going to have a review on how schools are managing in the current educational landscape and would be interested in the views of governors. JS is involved in this review.</p>	JS
8.	<p>Local Authority Governor Update for Councillors</p> <p>The Local Authority Governor Panel was disbanded in October 2017 and the approval process delegated to the Director of Children’s Services. It was agreed that an update on local authority governor approvals would be given to Councillors at the County Consultative Committee.</p> <p>Councillors received a list of the nominations that have been made and also a breakdown of the current number of governor vacancies across East Sussex. Councillors were made aware of the Governor Recruitment Campaign to encourage people to become governors.</p> <p>If there is an area where governors are needed, Councillors may be aware of people who would be interested although they are aware of the need to recruit governors on a skills basis.</p> <p>Cllr Field raised an issue about examining a governors’ training record and also about governors who had not been allocated a school. Governor Services confirmed that training records are still examined as part of the application process and that Councillors are also still contacted for their opinion of applicants from their local area. The number of Local Authority governors has reduced to 1 per maintained school due to constitution regulation changes, which came into effect in 2015. This has reduced the number of application to become or re-apply as a Local Authority Governor.</p> <p>In terms of the vacancy data, clerks maintain the database with information about their governing body. The Governor and Clerking Service make every effort to ensure that the data is correct but do rely on clerks to input the information so it may not always be completely accurate.</p>	
9.	<p>Governor Local Area Forums</p> <p>i) County Forum Members received the Autumn Term Local Area Forum 2017 Summary Report.</p> <p>ii) County Forum Members were happy with the topics discussed at the Autumn Local Area Forums.</p> <p>Agreed items for the Spring rounds of Local Area Forums</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding • Teaching Schools <p>Hot Topic Question: “Do you engage with your EIP? Are you aware of the work that the EIP do?”</p>	
10.	Any other Business	
11.	<p>Dates of Future Meetings</p> <p>2nd May 2018 at County Hall, Lewes at 18.30.</p>	