

County Consultative Committee - Minutes

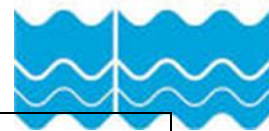
Date: Thursday 11th July 2024 10:00

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

Present: Councillor's Bob Standley, Colin Belsey, Alan Shuttleworth.

ESCC Officers: Clare Cornford, John Murray, Charlotte Johnstone, Rosie O'Brien (Minutes) Members of the ESGF: Jenny Barnard-Langston, Katharine Rabson Stark, Margaret Rooms.

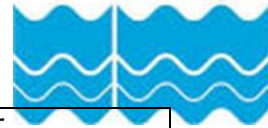
1	<p><u>Minutes of the previous meeting</u></p> <p>Cllr standley welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>No further comments on the previous minutes.</p>
2	<p><u>Apologies for absence</u></p> <p>No apologies received.</p>
3	<p><u>Disclosure of interests</u></p> <p>No interests declared.</p>
4	<p><u>Urgent items</u></p> <p>No items raised.</p>
5	<p><u>Academy Update</u></p> <p>Verbal update from JM.</p> <p>Since the last county consultative committee meeting in March, 4 schools have received academy orders.</p> <p>This included St Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School and St Thomas A Becket Catholic Primary School. They will be joining Bosco Catholic Education Trust. The conversion dates have not yet been confirmed.</p> <p>Robertsbridge received an academy order after an Ofsted inspection.</p> <p>Ringmer Primary School also received an academy order, there is no confirmation of a trust at this time.</p> <p>JM confirmed that the DfE have decided that schools must convert in groups of three or more to claim the academy support grant.</p> <p>The Councillors asked if schools receive the money after they decide to become an academy. JM confirmed this was correct, the grant can be applied for, and then will be received after the conversion.</p> <p>Councillor Belsey asked whether there was an updated on the staff strikes within schools in the Brighton University Academy Trust.</p> <p>JM confirmed that all the LA is aware of is that staff are on strike.</p> <p>Councillors asked if children are being sent home? JM confirmed that no children have been sent home at this time and the action has now ended. There are no definite numbers on children that didn't access education.</p> <p>Cllr Standley confirmed that he will look into this further.</p>



6	<p><u>LA Gov appointments and governor services update</u></p> <p>Verbal update from CJ.</p> <p>Since the last County Consultative meeting, 3 Local Authority Governors were nominated for appointment, all were approved. This included 1 new appointment 2 reappointments. There have also been some additional applications recently.</p> <p>Governor Services have recently been reviewing their training offer to identify gaps and respond to legislative changes. A new exclusion briefing sessions has been introduced and was well received.</p> <p>A Survey was sent to all East Sussex Governors in May. It included a question on which sessions the governors found most useful. The new exclusions briefing was included as most valuable to some governors.</p> <p>Governor Services is aware of the upcoming statutory guidance on attendance and how it is becoming a priority focus. There has been a Local Area Forum on attendance for school governors. 58 governors across 50 East Sussex Schools attended, the session received lots of positive comments. There was an ESGF facilitated networking following this forum. The attendance sessions are going to run again with the new legislation.</p> <p>CJ provided an update on governor recruitment. Since the last County Consultative Committee meeting 58 new governors were appointed. Since September 2023 178 governors were appointed in maintained schools in East Sussex. Gov inductions to be improved to increase retention.</p> <p>CJ provided an update on clerking. The first cohort of the new clerking programme (East Sussex Excellence in Clerking) finished recently. Candidates are currently undertaking the knowledge test to finish the programme. The programme covered essential elements of clerking and governance, and complex procedures. Governor Services feel that it has gone well and was taken positively by the cohort. The second cohort begins in September.</p> <p>Governor Services believe that clerks should be considered across the board. A new session has been created which is aimed at chairs working effectively with clerk. Chairs will have the opportunity to discuss how to improve their working relationship with the clerk. It will also be a reminder of the chair's line management responsibilities.</p> <p>CLlr questions - Councillors noted that approximately 130 schools did not attend the attendance forum. Councillors asked Governor Services if the list of non-attending schools is retained to encourage those schools to attend in the next academic year. CJ confirmed that Governor Services can send targeted communications to these schools to encourage attendance at future sessions.</p> <p>Councillors noted that newly appointed governor figures were excellent. The Councillors then queried the number of governors who have left East Sussex schools. CJ will find data on this and follow up with numbers after the meeting has ended.</p> <p>Councillors asked if Governor Services is continuing with the search for new governors. CC confirmed that the recruitment and expression of interest process is ongoing.</p>
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	<p>KRS asked if 178 new appointments is a good amount and asked how it compares to previous years. CJ confirmed it was slightly less with the number being 199 in the last academic year.</p> <p>Cllr Standley expressed that in future meetings it would be helpful to have past statistics available.</p> <p>KRS asked if exclusion sessions can become mandatory or statutory for governors. JM confirmed that governor services are doing a training analysis over the summer break, this will include checking how many governors per board have attended exclusions briefings. This will result in Governor Services strongly recommending that boards have at least 2 people attending.</p> <p>Councillors asked if the briefings can be made mandatory JBL confirmed that there is no legal obligation so therefore it cannot become mandatory. It can only be encouraged. JBL suggested that in future governors can be recruited with the expectation that they attend exclusions training as a core session. JBL added that the Governor Services training plan document is very useful. The induction training is well attended and not mandatory, so it would be useful to raise expectations on exclusions training to encourage attendance levels.</p>
7	<p><u>ESGF Verbal update for councillors.</u> The Chair of the ESGF sent an update separate to the agenda as they were unable to attend.</p> <p>CJ read this on behalf of the Chair.</p> <p>ESGF members highlighted the importance of the Local Authority supporting the ESGF to allow them to do their work to support East Sussex school governors.</p> <p>Councillor Standley expressed that that the Councillors are extremely thankful for all East Sussex governors giving up their time to support schools.</p> <p>JBL confirmed that governors are appreciative of the support councillors give the Governor and Clerking Service and Governors in East Sussex. Many Local Authority's do not offer the level of support ESCC does. Governors value this which results in high quality governance. The ESGF likes to match the support given to them by all Councillors and Governor Services.</p> <p>MR reiterated that the support from ESCC is positive. There is always support available within governing boards and the Local Authority.</p> <p>ESGF members confirmed that they support the idea of direct communication to governing boards missing training.</p> <p>KRS highlighted that governor volunteers want to give back to the community but do not expect that they will be required for extra support such as complaints and exclusions panels. KRS feels that the community feeling from networking sessions help governors' wellbeing and allows governors to share concerns outside of their board. This allows other governors to provide support. KRS stated that becoming a governor can be positive for CPD reasons for people who wish to develop their career. It can provide career opportunities for people currently working.</p>
8	<p><u>AOI under item 4</u></p> <p>Nothing raised.</p>
9	<p><u>Next meeting:</u></p>



	The date of the next meeting is not in the calendar yet. Approximately November.
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