

Essex Clerks' Association
Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting, 14 July 2011,
10 am, Chelmsford City Football Club, Chelmsford

Present: Peter Bates; Julia Harvey; Steve Islip; Sue Julian-Ottie (Secretary); Chris Kitchin; Pam Langmead (Chair); Sue Leek; Sandra Mullane; Chris Orme; Paul Orton (*arrived 10.20am*); Rosemary Waddell; Tina Weavers

Also in attendance: Rosemarie Lunn (Governor Services Manager, Essex Governor Services); Iwona Bainbridge (Governor Services Officer, Essex Governor Services)

1. Welcome and apologies

Pam welcomed Tina Weavers (Communication Officer) to her first Executive Committee meeting. Members introduced themselves. Apologies were accepted from Tina Wing.

2. Declaration of any new Business Interests or conflicts of interest

There was none.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting (31 March 2011) were agreed as a true record.

4. Actions Points from previous meeting & Matters arising not on the agenda

4.1. The Committee agreed that the Hillingdon Policy Schedule should be issued on the ECA website (**ACTION: Pam Langmead**).

4.2. Sue J-O reported that the database had been rolled out to Pam and Rosemary. Rosemary had concerns about the Invoice Section. A Working Party would be reviewing this section after the meeting. Graeme would be asked to implement the agreed revisions. Once the database had been amended, Sue would roll out to the whole Executive Committee (**ACTION: Sue Julian-Ottie; Rosemary Waddell; Steve Islip; Peter Bates**).

4.3. Pam to investigate the insurance used by National Governors' Association (NGA) and Essex School Governors' Association (ESGA) (**ACTION: Pam Langmead**). Rosemarie reported that she was reviewing Essex's insurance policy to cover Academies for public liability and professional indemnity and would, therefore, incorporate the ECA where possible. Rosemarie confirmed that the ECA was covered by Essex's insurance for Clerks' Briefings.

4.4. The Committee agreed that the Briefing Paper on Admissions should be deferred until after the new Admissions Code had become legislation.

4.5. Pam reported that Baddow Hall Junior School had confirmed that it would continue to provide the venue for ECA Executive Committee meetings on an on-going basis.

Pam confirmed that the Annual General Meeting for 2012 would be held at Chelmsford Football Club.

All other action points had either been discharged or were on the agenda.

5. Communication and Information

5.1. To receive feedback from the summer term Clerks' Briefings & to discuss items to be included at the autumn term Clerks' Briefings

5.1.1. Pam reported that attendance figures had been good for Clerks' Briefings that term. Iwona reported the following figures for Agency clerks who had attended briefings:

5.1.1.1. Autumn Term - 48%

5.1.1.2. Spring Term - 40%

5.1.1.3. Summer term - 52%

5.1.2. Pam reported that some clerks had complained that the Briefings were always held very early in the term during the day at Great Baddow which made it difficult for those clerks who worked in schools to attend. This was discussed. It was noted that there were evening sessions at Great Baddow. The Committee agreed that since the dates for the Clerks' Briefings for the next academic year had already been published, the dates and times should not be changed. It was agreed that this would be taken into consideration when setting the dates and times for Briefings for 2012/2013.

(Paul Orton arrived, 10.25am).

5.1.3. The Committee agreed the following agenda items for the autumn term Clerks' Briefings:

5.1.3.1. Standing items.

5.1.3.2. Clerking Academies (45 minutes)

5.1.3.3. Information Update

5.1.3.3.1. What to do in event of industrial action.

5.1.3.3.2. Update on safeguarding if necessary.

It was noted that the E-CRB check would be available to use from September 2011. The charges would be the same as the paper copy service.

5.1.3.4. Briefing Notes: an initial point of information on how to incorporate Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) in the year's plan. This would include an Update on what requirements had been removed and what had been retained.

It was noted that the Internal Controls Evaluation (ICE) and the Statement of Internal Control (SIC) were continuing. Benchmarking was not statutory but was recommended because of the requirements of SFVS. Attendance targets were no longer statutory but were still important because of OFSTED. Similarly, the Self Evaluation Form (SEF) had never been statutory but was important because of OFSTED.

5.1.3.5. School and Education Strategy in Essex (5 minutes – Rosemarie)

5.1.3.6. Update on situation at County Hall and update on personnel in Schools, Learning and Development and Governor Services.

5.1.4. It was agreed that Pam would circulate the draft agenda mid August. Committee members to send Pam any further suggestions before this **(ACTION: Pam Langmead; All)**.

5.1.5. It was agreed that the new OFSTED framework would be discussed at the spring 2012 term Clerks' Briefings. An external speaker would be sought.

5.2. To receive feedback from the Clerks' Conference (*agenda item 5.3*)

5.2.1. Rosemarie reported that she had received positive feedback from clerks.

5.2.2. Rosemarie confirmed that it was her intention to hold a Clerks' Conference in 2012 but this was dependent on having sufficient funding. Rosemarie cautioned that the number of schools that had subscribed to Governors Services had fallen.

5.2.3. The Committee discussed and agreed that the Conference should be held at the same venue (Stock Brook Manor). The Committee agreed a provisional date of 28 June 2011 [**Secretary's post meeting note: 28 June unavailable, therefore, 27 June 2011 booked**]. Pam to provisionally book venue **(ACTION: Pam Langmead)**

5.2.4. Committee agreed that Rosemarie and Pam would ask presenters at the Conference to use microphones **(ACTION: Rosemarie Lunn; Pam Langmead)**.

6. Finance Matters. To receive an update on the receipt of subscriptions and the current financial situation of the ECA

6.1. Rosemary reported that the ECA had not received its termly income for £1,500 from Essex yet. Rosemarie confirmed that this would be received in due course.

6.2. Rosemarie reported that Essex Governor Services had appointed some new Agency Clerks. Pam had arranged additional induction training for them. Essex Governor Services had paid for the venue and Pam would claim her tutor time from the ECA (£500). This would not be a regular occurrence but was a more cost effective solution to the training need than organising it through Schools, Learning and Development (which would have cost £2,000). This was accepted by the Committee.

- 6.3. Rosemary reported that a further £420 of subscriptions had been banked since issuing the Finance Report. The total balance was now £10, 271.
- 6.4. It was agreed that Rosemary would send Committee members the subscription spreadsheets so that they might check that their schools had subscribed **(ACTION: Rosemary Waddell; All)**. It was agreed that Pam would ask clerks at the next Clerks' Briefing to remind their schools to subscribe **(ACTION: Pam Langmead)**.
- 6.5. The Committee discussed whether to issue reminders for subscription renewal. It was agreed that this would be discussed further at the next meeting **(ACTION: All)**.
- 7. Briefing Papers and Guidance. To discuss topics for future Briefing Papers**
It was agreed that Pam would write a Paper on what requirements had been removed and what had been retained **(ACTION: Pam Langmead)**.

8. Clerks' Training and Development. To discuss the replacement of the national Btec Clerks' qualification discontinued by Edexcel

Pam reminded Committee members that Essex was in the process of completing its last national Btec Clerks' Qualification (Edexcel). There would no longer be an Edexcel national qualification available in Essex. The Committee agreed that a Clerks' qualification was required especially as the Government had identified the need for 'qualified' clerks. This was discussed. It was noted that there were a few existing Clerks' Btec awards (eg Wiltshire; Coordinators of Governor Services [COGS] etc) but none of them were national awards and some were little more than the Clerk Induction Training that Essex provided. It was noted that setting up and administering a Btec programme was expensive and that it was unlikely that Schools, Learning and Development would be in a position to do this.

9. To discuss Academies

- 9.1. Steve reminded Committee members that Essex could have more than 50 Academies as from September 2011. It was noted that Academies posed a concern for many clerks. Rosemary reported that most clerks had opted for the Academy session at the Clerks' Conference. This was discussed. It was noted that there was a knowledge gap on clerking Academies that the ECA should address. The Committee discussed existing information resources on Academies. It was agreed that the ECA would address the issue by:
- 9.1.1. Writing / issuing guidelines manual for Academy clerks containing links to key resources.
- 9.1.2. Training courses specifically for Academy clerks.
- 9.1.3. Create a separate Academy page on ECA website containing links to key resources.
- 9.2. It was agreed that to provide clerks with information in the autumn 2011 term, the ECA should create an introductory set of guidelines rather than a full manual. It was

agreed that Steve would draft the guidelines based on the existing 'Getting Started' Guidelines for clerks and circulate to an Academy Working Party for comments **(ACTION: Steve Islip; Pam Langmead; Sue Julian-Ottie; Chris Kitchin; Peter Bates; Rosemary Waddell; Tina Weavers)**. The guidelines would be reviewed at the next meeting to determine how it might be developed further **(ACTION: All)**. Pam to send Steve the existing 'Getting Started' Guidelines **(ACTION: Pam Langmead)**.

9.3. It was agreed that Pam would ask Graeme to create a new Academy page on the website **(ACTION: Pam Langmead)**.

9.4. It was agreed that there should be an Academy representative on the Executive Committee. Sue J-O was appointed the Academy representative.

10. Any other business

There was none.

11. Date and time of next meeting

Committee members were reminded of the date of the next and subsequent meetings as being (all at 10am, Baddow Hall Junior School):

19 September 2011

28 November 2011

19 January 2012

29 March 2012 (following AGM) (Chelmsford City FC)

5 July 2012

(ACTION: All).

(The meeting ended at 12.05pm).

Summary of decisions

- Defer Admissions Briefing Paper until new Admissions Code had become legislation (see 4.4).
- Dates/times for Clerks' Briefings for 2011/2012 to remain as published but when setting dates/times for 2012/2013 to bear in mind Great Baddow clerks' issues (see 5.1.2).
- Agenda for autumn 2011 term Clerks' Briefing agreed (see 5.1.3).
- Sue Julian-Ottie appointed Academy representative on Executive Committee (see 9.4).

Summary of Action Points

All

- To send Pam suggestions for Clerks' Briefing agenda before mid August (see 5.1.4).
- To ensure own schools had subscribed (see 6.4).
- To discuss subscription renewal reminders at next meeting (see 6.5).
- To attend next meeting on 19 September 2011, 10 am, Baddow Hall Jnr School & note date of subsequent meetings (see 11).

Peter Bates

- To participate in Database Working Party (see 4.2).
- To participate in Academy Working Party (see 9.2).

Julia Harvey

- To participate in Academy Working Party (see 9.2).

Steve Islip

- To participate in Database Working Party (see 4.2).
- To draft Academy Guidelines and circulate to Working Party (see 9.2).

Sue Julian-Ottie

- To participate in Database Working Party & ask Graeme to implement agreed revisions & roll out to Exec Comm (see 4.2).
- To participate in Academy Working Party (see 9.2).

Chris Kitchin

- To participate in Academy Working Party (see 9.2).

Pam Langmead

- To upload Hillingdon Policy Schedule onto ECA website (see 4.1).
- To investigate insurance used by NGA and ESGA (see 4.3).
- To circulate draft Clerks' Briefing agenda mid August (see 5.1.4).
- To provisionally book Clerks' Conference 2012 as agreed (see 5.2.3).
- To ask presenters to use microphones at next Clerks' Conference (see 5.2.4).
- To ask clerks at Clerks' Briefing to remind schools to subscribe (see 6.4).
- To write Briefing Paper as agreed (see 7).
- To participate in Academy Working Party (see 9.2).
- To send existing 'Getting Started' manual to Steve (see 9.2).
- To ask Graeme to create a new web page for Academies (see 9.3).

Rosemarie Lunn

- To ask presenters to use microphones at next Clerks' Conference (see 5.2.4).

Provisional until confirmed at the next meeting

Rosemary Waddell

- To participate in Database Working Party (see 4.2).
- To circulate subscription spreadsheet to Committee (see 6.4).
- To participate in Academy Working Party (see 9.2).

Tina Weavers

- To participate in Academy Working Party (see 9.2).