



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF THE ESSEX CLERKS' ASSOCIATION
HELD REMOTELY ON ZOOM**

DATE: Tuesday 19 May 2020

TIME: 10.00am

Executive Members present:

Tina Weavers (Chair)	John Hunter	Sue Leek (clerk)
Peter Bates	Angela Fuller	Wendy Newton
Chris Orme	Marion Myers	

Also present: Carole Day, Helen Tomson, Jennifer Connolly, Christine Kitchen, Sarah Hale, Hilary Steele, Sarah Green, Lorraine Cross, Alan Thompson, Gill Corbishley, Jill Smylie, Heather Hasmujaj, Janet Sherwin, Sharon Riley, Emma Perry, Emma Simmons, Alison Hills

It was agreed that the meeting could be recorded for the convenience of the clerk. Everyone present was invited to mute their devices to reduce feedback.

- 1) Apologies for absence were accepted from Deb Bartram
- 2) Chair's report on the year's progress
 - a) Tina read out her Chair's report (copy attached).
 - b) She complimented her colleagues on the executive committee and invited any clerk to join them. There was currently little or no representation from bigger MATs, faith schools, or clerks working in schools. Recent meetings had been held at the Boreham Premier Inn but remote meetings were a possibility for the future. The committee met only once or twice each term.
- 3) Presentation of the accounts
 - a) The latest spreadsheet had been distributed. The association was in a fairly good position.
 - b) John was currently in lock-down and he would not be able to arrange

Sue

- for the accounts to be audited until August or September. John
- c) The exec received monthly accounts and end of year accounts.
- d) Alan Thompson commented that there appeared to be £10,000 missing from the deposit account for 2019/20. John apologised for this typo and would amend it. John
- e) Although there was a very healthy balance [£19,456.10], £2,000-£3,000 would have been spent on the conference and the balance was gradually reducing year on year.
- f) The exec committee had resolved to maintain the subs at £15 pa and services would continue to be provided without charge.
- g) Many invoices had been sent out.
- 4) The minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2019 were considered. Peter proposed that they should be accepted as a true record and they were **approved**.
- 5) There were no matters arising
- 6) Executive Committee
- a) The current members were willing to remain. John would remain on the committee but Marion would take over as treasurer.
- b) Loraine Cross worked in a C of E school and might be willing to join in the future.
- c) Emma Simmons asked how much of a time commitment it was. There were 4 2-hour meetings a year. Potential members were assured that the workload was not arduous .
- 7) Approve the Constitution 2020
- There were some minor changes that were unanimously **approved**.
- 8) Any other business
- a) Tina gave a brief update.
- b) A model agenda indicating the focus for the summer term would be posted on the website.
- c) Governors needed to *advise* not *approve* the plans for re-opening the school. It was an operational decision for the HT. The majority of HTs

regarded it as unsafe and the LA's Head of Primary Improvement had reported that 50% of parents do not want their children to return to school.

- d) Governors' role was to check that the Risk Assessment is robust with everything in place to support the school's decision.
- e) Every day, the DfE published new guidance that sometimes conflicted with LA advice, including that children should return full time. There was lots of guidance but it was difficult to manage.
- f) Most schools were planning to create bubbles of around 8 children with two adults to minimize infection risk.
- g) Finance should feature on agendas, especially in smaller schools.
- h) Clawback was possible but the mechanism was very difficult. Claiming food vouchers had been complicated at first but the process ran smoothly now. Some schools had had furlough money refunded, eg for music peris. Most loss of income was from rent and lettings although the purchase of tape etc was a factor.

The Zoom meeting ended at this point (10.40am) 22 attenders returned

- i) Schools using Zoom for meetings could complete a form to remove the time restrictions but invitations from school email addresses were exempt anyway. There was no time limit on the first 2 meetings. It was more secure to use the password issued by Zoom.
- j) Teams was used at Juniper and was more secure. It now allowed 9 people on the screen.
- k) Webex was alternative platform.
- l) It was not appropriate to approve the budget by email – governors needed to discuss it.
- m) Schools were invited to open *from* 1 June, not *on* 1 June.
- n) Most schools considered that if masks were needed (except for intimate care or children showing symptoms) schools should not re-open.
- o) The Unions and DfE hoped to give definitive guidance on whether schools should re-open by 28 May.



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- p) The H+S governor should have a walk around school as it's been empty for so long.
- q) An Addendum to the Child Protection Policy had been sent to schools, and this should be approved immediately under chair's action and posted on the website and minuted.
- r) It was not known whether the Financial Regulations would change.
- s) The NGA provided good information for governors and the DfE was also planning guidance for governors.
- t) The LA had produced a model risk assessment for schools.
- u) Parents meeting at the school gate would be of concern and timings should be staggered.

Clerks were reminded that the ECA was available for help and advice. The meeting closed at 11.00am.