



## Epping Forest Schools Partnership Trust

Held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 2.00pm  
at St John's Primary School

# MINUTES of the HR COMMITTEE MEETING

	<u>Trustees</u>		<u>Observers/Advisers</u>
*	Lesley Duffin (Chair)	*	Tula Smith (Essex HR)
*	Brenda Jarvis	*	Elisabeth Nunn (Clerk)
*	Sue Sunderland		
*	Peter Tidmarsh (CEO)		

\* indicates attendance

(The meeting started at 2.00pm.)

		<u>ACTION</u>
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies (and reasons for absence); declarations of interest in agenda; plus declaration of Business Interests/Gifts and Hospitality</b> There were no apologies for absence or declarations.	
<b>2</b>	<b>AOB requests for an end-of-meeting consideration</b> a) Strategic plan.	
<b>3</b>	<b>To approve the Committee's Minutes of 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019</b> The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2019 were approved and signed by the Chair. <u>Matters Arising</u> a) <u>Agenda item 8a: Staff Absence Insurance</u> : The CEO reported that staff absence insurance will no longer be provided by Essex County Council as from 31 March 2019. Instead, the Trust is using a Government-approved broker to obtain tenders for alternative cover. He explained that cover will be provided from April 1 <sup>st</sup> .	



	<u>ACTION</u>
<p><b>4 Staffing Matters</b></p> <p>a) <u>To receive an update on Trust central staffing and the recruitment of a Trust surveyor</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reported that the Trust has produced a job specification for the new surveyor’s post and that this document is being reviewed for suitability by local surveyor, Peter Seeley. It was agreed that a Trustee or a Governor with relevant experience should join Headteachers on the recruitment panel. This will be discussed further at the Trust’s Finance and Audit Committee meeting on March 19<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>b) <u>CEO to report back on research into teacher accommodation</u>: It was noted that the CEO and Mrs Freeman are to meet with a number of local letting companies in April to discuss the provision of teacher accommodation. He will report back.</p> <p>c) <u>To note change of school group size for Oak View</u>: The CEO reported that the group size of Oak View School has been changed from group 2 to group 5. This follows a significant increase over the past few years of pupil numbers from 72 to 121. It was also noted that the school is building a new four-classroom base for high-functioning autistic children; this should be completed by September. A discussion was held about the new building project: Trustees wanted assurance that the new building and intake of pupils and young people would pose no safety risks for the rest of the school community. It was suggested that this be highlighted as a risk on the Trust’s risk register.</p> <p>d) <u>To discuss the support staff pay award from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2019</u>: Mrs Smith tabled a document which had been circulated to schools in February regarding the proposed National Joint Council (NJC) Agreement on pay for support staff. It outlined a two-year deal for pay which involves changes to the number of pay points on the national pay spine as well as increases to the rates; this is as a result of the increase to the National Living Wage over recent years.</p> <p>A Collective Agreement has now been reached between Essex County Council and the Unions: the Essex Collective Agreement. The new national pay spine will come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 while the Essex Schools’ Pay scales will come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. A one-year transitional arrangement has been agreed to manage the affordability and implementation of these new pay scales. It was noted that HR workshops have been held for schools.</p> <p>Mrs Smith reported that academies are not party to the NJC negotiations and are therefore not bound by the award. However, she recommended that the Trust adopts the pay scales and NJC agreement; any changes would need to be negotiated with the unions via the Trust’s JCC. Mrs Smith reported that she is unaware of any other Trusts who have not adopted this agreement. She added that she is also advising all schools to complete their support staff Performance Management process by March 31<sup>st</sup>.</p> <p>A discussion was held about the possibility that some job descriptions may need to be reviewed in relation to the re-evaluation of bands to scales in 2020; this could have implications regarding salary protection.</p>	<p>Finance and Audit agenda March 19<sup>th</sup></p> <p>June HR agenda item</p> <p>Oak View new build to be added to Trust risk register</p>



		<b><u>ACTION</u></b>
	Trustees thanked Mrs Smith for her comprehensive explanation of the changes to support staff pay, noting that there will be associated costs for schools. They approved the adoption of the Essex Collective Agreement which will be implemented in two stages. This will also be recommended to the Finance and Audit Committee on March 19 <sup>th</sup> for approval.	Finance and Audit committee agenda item March 19 <sup>th</sup>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>An update on recruitment within the Trust schools</b></p> <p>Mr Tidmarsh reported that the Trust has received three Headteacher resignations which will come into effect from September 1<sup>st</sup>: Mrs Ryan from Oak View School, who is retiring; Mr Jarman from St John’s Primary, who is taking up a Headship closer to his home; and Mr Hale at Chigwell Row Infant, who is retiring. A confidential discussion was held which is attached to these Minutes on pink.</p> <p>A confidential discussion was also held about Buckhurst Hill Primary school which is currently being supported by the Trust. This appears on pink attached to these Minutes.</p>	
<b>6</b>	<p><b>To receive updates on the Trust’s Steering Groups</b></p> <p>a) Trustees had previously received the FaCSS steering group’s latest set of Minutes which were noted. A discussion was held about the services and therapies being accessed by the schools; Mr Tidmarsh tabled a document outlining these services and it was agreed that the Trust will continue to monitor the impact of the therapies and programmes. Headteachers will be reviewing the use of the therapies at their regular meetings. It was noted that the CEO will ask Jackie Scott, the FaCSS manager, to give a brief presentation on the work of this hub at the summer-term Board meeting.</p> <p>b) It was noted that the Terms of Reference for FaCSS will be received and approved at the summer term meeting.</p> <p>c) <u>To discuss the performance management processes for all steering groups</u>: This will be carried forward to the next meeting.</p> <p>d) <u>Steering groups’ finances</u>: It was noted that the steering groups for the SCITT, Teaching School and FaCSS do not currently review their financial accounts. It was agreed that this will be looked at by the Finance and Audit Committee in the summer term.</p>	<p>CEO to invite Mrs Scott to present at July Board meeting</p> <p>Approve ToR for FaCSS at June committee meeting</p> <p>June agenda item</p> <p>Finance and Audit Committee June item</p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>JCC</b></p> <p>a) Trustees noted that the termly JCC meeting was held in February; the Minutes were noted.</p> <p>b) Trustees were pleased to note that discussions were held about ‘valued worker’ scheme, ‘stars in our schools’ scheme and the unions’</p>	



		<u>ACTION</u>
	workshop training for staff. The CEO is awaiting further updates from the unions on these schemes and training opportunities.	
<p><b>8 Policies</b></p> <p>a) It was noted that the following policies have been reviewed and approved by the committee and appear on the Trust website:            Accident/Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure            Sickness Management            Performance Management            Complaints Policy</p> <p>b) Trustees noted the comments from the LGBs on the following policies; an informal meeting to discuss these comments in detail was arranged and any responses will be sent to the Clerk by 19<sup>th</sup> March. The policies are:            Grievance            Discipline            Capability            Code of Conduct</p> <p>These policies will be formally approved by the Board on March 28<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>c) <u>Leave of Absence Policy</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reported that this policy had been reviewed and approved by the Headteacher group. This will also be adopted by the Trust Board on 28<sup>th</sup> March.</p> <p>Trustees agreed that all schools should use standardised letters and forms in relation to the HR policies; it was noted that Essex provides the relevant toolkit. Mrs Smith reported that all Trust schools are being supported by Essex HR and can access the HR helpline. She added that she is sharing the Practical Guide to HR for Line Managers with the Teaching School which will help to develop the senior leaders in the Trust.</p> <p>d) <u>Complaints Policy</u>: Trustees requested that the accompanying paperwork for the Trust’s Complaints Policy is consistent with HR templates; it was agreed that Mrs Smith and Mr Tidmarsh will look into this further. The Clerk will also ask the Head of the Essex Clerking Agency for any standard templates.</p>		<p>March 28<sup>th</sup> Board agenda items</p> <p>Mrs Smith/CEO to look into standard paperwork for Complaints Policy</p> <p>Clerk to ask Clerking Agency</p>



		<u>ACTION</u>
9	<b>Clerk's Items:</b> There were none.	
10	<b>AOB</b> a) <u>Strategic Plan</u> : Mr Tidmarsh had circulated the Trust's Strategic Plan for 2019-2022 which he plans to discuss further at the Board meeting on March 28 <sup>th</sup> . It is also to be reported on at the AGM on April 24 <sup>th</sup> . It was agreed that it will appear as an agenda item at the summer term JCC meeting. b) <u>Cambridge visit</u> : It was noted that the CEO has organised a visit in June with the Headteacher group to schools in Cambridge who achieve excellent results with their Pupil Premium children. c) CEO's Performance Review: Committee members undertook an interim review on March 13 <sup>th</sup> of the CEO's Performance Management targets to ensure they continue to be relevant and achievable.	Board agenda item March 28 <sup>th</sup> /JCC agenda item in May
11	<b>Future meetings</b> The date of the next meeting is on Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 2.00pm.  The meeting ended at 4.07pm.	