



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
HELD FRIDAY 11th DECEMBER 2020 AT 9AM**

PRESENT: Jon Carthy - Byron; Nickie Forrest – New Road; Maureen Grabski – St Mary’s RCP; Monique Harlin – Wainscott Dora Indresano- Maundene; Kathy Sexton (Chair) – St Michael’s ; Barry Symons -Oaklands; Tim Williams – Wayfield

APOLOGIES: Paula Fewtrell – St Margaret Infants

ABSENT: Catherine Logan - Twydall

IN ATTENDANCE: Anne Robinson (Clerking Service)

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION
1	<p>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>The chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting, especially new representative Monique Harlin who was replacing Rishi Boyjoonauth as Zone 3 representative</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Paula Fewtrell. It was noted that Jon Carthy would arrive later. Catherine Logan’s absence was noted</p> <p>The committee reviewed the agenda commenting on the impact of Covid on headteacher morale. The role of the LA in mitigating the rate of infection in Medway was discussed. It was agreed that the chair would draft a letter to headteachers recognising both the pressure they were under and their contribution and circulate for comment prior to distribution. She would also suggest that Chris Kiernan may wish to issue a similar letter.</p>	KS
2	<p>MICHAEL GRIFFITHS (COMMISSIONING LEAD); AELISH GELDENHUYS (HEAD OF PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMMES); CAROL CAMPBELL (ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SOCIAL CARE)</p> <p>The guests listed above joined the meeting. The chair confirmed having received a paper from the commissioning lead, that had also been circulated to headteachers by Chris Kiernan. She summarised the response that her SENCO had submitted in response, which she believed to be indicative of the wider experience. This was supported by the headteacher from Wainscott, although it was also noted that some schools had not experienced difficulties. Issues included lack of school nurse responses to referrals; termly professional meetings had not happened thus schools were relying on information from parents about support received; where there was turnover, schools were not being provided with or made aware of new named contacts; accessing other pathways in the absence of school nurses or referrals from them was not possible; multiple referrals being returned requesting additional information, even though this had been provided; children being referred to incorrect pathways; the knock on impact on parental relationships with schools; challenges of working in multi-agency ways in the absence of a school nurse.</p> <p>Michael Griffiths and Carol Campbell responded, summarising how the school nurse team had been impacted by Covid, initially by re-deployment to essential</p>	

	<p>support and then by resignations, recuperation and leave entitlement, catch up requirement and personal sickness and self-isolation requirements. In readiness for term 3 a briefing paper had been issued, as had a personal letter from the Ms Campbell with details of each school's named school nurse and dates in terms 3 and 4 for professional meetings, which could be rearranged if necessary. It was noted that the letter, sent in hard copy had not yet been received and a request was made that it was emailed. It was agreed that Barry Symons would forward email details of primary headteachers, SENCOs and DSLs to both Mr Griffiths and Ms Campbell to support this and any future communication needs</p> <p>The chair recognised that even setting Covid aside, the development of the service was a significant challenge but commented that much of headteachers' frustrations to date could have been addressed by better communication. She was pleased that action was being taken in that regard.</p> <p>Mr Griffiths re-iterated that the behaviour and development pathway was in a trial period and while due to be reviewed at this point, the impact of Covid on capacity meant that this review was better delayed until later in the year. The executive committee supported this view.</p> <p>Ms Campbell commented on the need for communication to be two way and also reinforced that the role of the school nurse in supporting behaviour was only in relation to health needs and not the right route of support for behaviour that was social rather than health related.</p> <p>In response to invitation to comment, Ms Geldenhuys reflected that conversations with MCH following her attendance at the last MELA meeting had centred on improving communication and suggested returning to MELA at the end of the spring term to review the impact of the actions taken. In the interim, Mr Griffiths would continue to attend SENCO meetings to gain ongoing feedback. She also intended to run another health seminar and suggested that headteachers may wish recommend what content would be most useful.</p> <p>The chair thanked guests for their attendance and they left the meeting.</p>	<p>BS</p> <p>All</p>
3	<p>FEEDBACK AND WAY FORWARD</p> <p>The executive committee reflected on the discussion under item 2, recognising the benefit of named nurses and continuing to invite representation at future meetings. Disappointment at the quality of communication, particularly at the beginning of term was re-iterated. It was AGREED that Mr Griffiths, Ms Campbell and Ms Geldenhuys be invited to attend the late spring meeting of the MELA executive</p>	KS
4	<p>KELLY COGGER (SOCIAL CARE)</p> <p>It was noted that Ms Cogger was unable to attend and had sent belated apologies</p>	
5	<p>BREAK</p> <p>The committee agreed to continue without a break</p>	
6	<p>REVIEW OF FEEDBACK FROM HEADS AND SOCIAL CARE EXPERIENCES</p> <p>The chair referenced a report that had been previously circulated and summarised some of the key findings. It was AGREED that anecdotal feedback collected by the chair would be forwarded to Ian Sutherland, Rory Patterson and Lee-Anne Farach who would be invited to the next headteacher briefing.</p>	KS

	Questions from headteachers would be invited in advance and made available to the invitees.	
7	<p>EVALUATION OF THE HEADS' VIRTUAL BRIEFING</p> <p>17 headteachers had responded to the evaluation and all had found the briefing useful. It was AGREED that the briefings should continue on the basis of three per year. Future agenda items could include social care; assessment and Ofsted.</p>	KS
8	<p>FEEDBACK FROM ANY MEETINGS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS</p> <p>It was noted that feedback from the meetings that Kathy Sexton and Barry Symons had attended had already been circulated.</p> <p>Tim Williams confirmed that school forum had agreed to top slice a total of £0.5million in order to fund outreach provision for 1 year from Fortis and Rivermead Inclusive Trust and a further 0.5% to support high needs funding for this year. The 6% growth cap had been removed from the funding formula. In respect of the outreach provision, the committee recognised the validity of protecting employees from redundancy in the short-term but were clear that in future years there must be a fair and transparent process that allowed all schools and/or trusts to bid to provide services on an equal footing.</p> <p>Barry Symons advised that Chris Kiernan wished to establish a task and finish group to look at behaviour so that interim support could be put in place pending the opening of The Beeches in 2023. The fact that Twydall had possibly been involved in preliminary discussions was considered and the need for a fair and transparent process for funded support was vociferously reiterated, particularly given some schools had been providing outreach support at no cost. A worrying trend towards lack of transparency by the LA on a number of fronts was mooted and it was noted that the chair had already drafted a letter to raise this concern. It was AGREED that Dean Brewer, Tim Williams and Karen Joy would put themselves forward for an initial meeting with Chris Kiernan and that Barry Symons would contact Mr Kiernan to initiate that meeting</p> <p>Jon Carthy reported on the LA corporate consultative committee meeting on the Council wide 21/22 budget. A shortfall of £12million was noted. A proposed 5% rise in Council tax would cover some £4 million, which would of course impact on families with pupils in schools. Reserves in the order of £10million were held, which it was hoped would be retained, as it was understood that there would be no further Covid relief funding from April 2021, which may necessitate dipping into these reserves. The provisional budget included a 1% pay increase for support staff which Council Members were keen to maintain, although the government's public sector pay freeze announcement may impact this. Collection rates for Council tax was down 1% although business tax collection rates had increased. 75% of the reduction in income to the Council was from parking and leisure. Medway expected to be in a position to publish a settlement offer regarding historic term time only pay claims by the end of January 2021.</p>	BS TW DB KJ
9	<p>MELA FINANCE</p> <p>A spreadsheet summarising the financial status was shared. It was noted that other than payment to Lawrie Rose in respect of charges related to organising the conference cancelled due to Covid, there had been little movement. The chair confirmed having written to Mr Rose thanking him for his service and</p>	

	<p>advising that the committee would be in touch in the event that further services were required. The healthy balance was noted and it was suggested some of this could be directed towards IT provision, including MELA specific conferencing tool and support for the MELA website. It was AGREED that Barry Symons would explore this further</p>	BS
10	<p>MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING HELD 2nd OCTOBER 2020</p>	
10.1	<p>Approval for accuracy The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true record</p>	
10.2	<p>Review of actions and matters arising With the exception of the following, all actions were complete, dealt with on the agenda with no further matters arising</p> <p>Recommend to headteachers the removal of clause 2.7 from the terms of reference and advise that there would be no subscription required for this academic year. Confirm terms of reference at next meeting</p> <p>Make a template finance policy for the custody and management of MELA funds available. This action was complete but it was agreed that Maureen Grabski would forward the policy to Dean Brewer for review and subject to this it would be agreed at the next meeting</p> <p>Consult of proposed consistent Zone constitution document for discussion at next meeting. Dean Brewer undertook to upload the document for ease of access</p> <p>The chair confirmed she had updated the strategic plan to highlight headteacher wellbeing but undertook to ensure the updated version had been circulated</p> <p>It was confirmed that headteacher reference group meetings were expected to go ahead and that a rota should be continued. It was noted that Dora Indresano and Dean Brewer had other obligations on Thursday morning and would find attendance difficult. Maureen Grabski would continue to attend where Zone 1 was rostered, advising the chair of any clashes and Tim Williams and Monique Harlin would attend for Zone 2 and Zone 3 respectively. The chair undertook to draw up a rota and circulate it</p> <p>The chair confirmed she had emailed the secondary heads association in respect of transition but had not had a response. It was agreed that she would send the draft to Jon Carthy for comment before sending to the new chair.</p> <p>Request that Mr Kiernan’s outstanding actions be addressed within headteacher briefings (communicate LA stat duties; SEND strategy meetings; consult on LA strategic improvement plan). It was agreed that Mr Kiernan be invited to the next meeting and these points would be raised</p>	<p>ZONE CHAIRS AGENDA</p> <p>MG DB Agenda</p> <p>DB Zone chairs Agenda</p> <p>KS</p> <p>KS</p> <p>KS</p>
11	<p>ZONE FEEDBACK Zone 1 – Raised a query about placements at Trinity. There was no feedback from the executive; Fair access was also discussed and the extent to which the panel was aware of placements being made outside FAP so that these schools could be recognised. The extent to which any schools received credit was also discussed. The chair was attending FAP as an observer in January and suggested that an invitation was extended for the lead to attend the next MELA meeting. The benefit to school leaders of being able to attend virtually so as to ensure representation but reduce travel and attendance time was</p>	KS

	<p>noted as was the benefit of a degree of continuity in the panel when current terms of office terminated and ongoing review to ensure balanced representation, particularly where schools transferred into or between trusts.</p> <p>Zone 2 – Had met and discussed Covid and Social Care</p> <p>Zone 3 – Had met and provided mutual support; Kelly Cogger had attended and provided an overview of Early help; Lee Anne Farach had provided background regarding Social Care and Fiona Evans had attended as food and nutrition lead for Medway public health to discuss childhood obesity.</p> <p>Zone 4 – Had met and discussed Covid arrangements; there had been an NAHT presentation</p>	
12	<p>AOB</p> <p>The committee agreed to invite Martin Potter to the next meeting but with the aim that he demonstrated a level of accountability rather than just observe. The chair would make contact, extending the invitation and asking him what he would like to present on.</p> <p>Dean Brewer raised the Medway equality and diversity task and finish group. He advised that although on this occasion there had been some drift in the agenda there was a good variety of representation and that he would continue to attend. He agreed to share the minutes when they were received and feed back on future meetings</p> <p>Inviting the LA attendance lead to a meeting was suggested. Barry Symons advised that he had email correspondence regarding that team’s position on attendance which he would forward</p>	<p>KS</p> <p>DB</p> <p>BS</p>
13	<p>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <p>Dates for future meetings were agreed as: 5th February; 26th March; 21st May; 9th July</p> <p>The chair thanked colleagues for their time and the meeting closed at 11.am</p>	

Confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting	
Date:	

ACTIONS ARE SUMMARISED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Item	Action from the meeting held 2 nd October 2020	Who by
1	Draft a letter to headteachers recognising the pressure they are under and their contribution during challenging times. Suggest to Chris Kiernan that he does likewise	KS
2	Provide Carol Campbell and Michael Griffiths with email circulation list to include primary headteachers, DSLs and SENCOs	BS
2	Provide Ms Geldenhuys with any recommendations on content of health seminar	All
3	Invite Michael Griffiths, Aelish Geldenhuys and Carol Campbell to the meeting on 26 th March	KS
6	Invite Ian Sutherland, Rory Patterson and Lee-Anne Farach to the next headteacher virtual briefing. Provide them with chair's anecdotal feedback on social care and arrange for questions in advance from to be gathered from headteachers to also be shared	KS
8	Liaise with Chris Kiernan to advise of committee members willing to engage in an early discussion about interim behaviour support	BS
9	Explore opportunity to utilise executive committee budget to support dedicated MELA conferencing/doc storage function and website support	BS
10	Recommend to headteachers the removal of clause 2.7 from the terms of reference and advise that there would be no subscription required for this academic year. Confirm terms of reference at next meeting	Zone chairs agenda
10	Make a template finance policy for the custody and management of MELA funds available to Dean Brewer. Approve at next meeting	MG/DB Agenda
10	Consult of proposed consistent Zone constitution document for discussion at next meeting. Dean Brewer to upload the original document for ease of access	DB Zone chairs
10	Ensure updated priority 3 on the strategic development plan to reflect headteacher wellbeing is circulated for comment/agreement	KS
10	The chair to provide the meeting schedule/rota for headteacher reference group.	KS
10	Re-contact the secondary heads' association chair to express the committee concerns and seek assurances about arrangements for secondary school choices and transition (forward draft to Jon Carthy)	KS
10	Invite Chris Kiernan's to the next meeting and request that outstanding actions be addressed at that point (communicate LA stat duties; SEND strategy meetings; consult on LA strategic improvement plan)	KS
10	Invite Rob (fair access panel) to the next meeting	KS
12	Invite Martin Potter to present at the next meeting	KS
12	Forward minutes from Medway curriculum equality and diversity group to executive committee members	DB
12	Forward email setting out attendance team position on attendance to executive committee	BS