



Registered address: Cheney School, Cheney Lane, Oxford, OX3 7

Community Schools Alliance Trust – Meeting of the Trustees

Non-confidential minutes of Board of Trustees meeting
on Monday 14th September 2020, via video conference call

In the Chair:	Liz Tyler Bell
Present:	Ann Childs, Jonathan Dawson (Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee), Pat O'Shea (Chair of the Education Performance and Achievement Committee), Ian Thompson (until item 8)
In attendance:	Ben Hegedus (Head of HR & Compliance), Laura Waller (Head of Finance), Rob Pavey (Head Teacher of Cheney School)(until item 8), Gareth Griffiths (Head Teacher of Bayards Hill / Executive Head Teacher of Barton Park) (until item 8), Judith Geddes (Clerk)
Apologies:	Bridget Durning and Linda Earnshaw

	Minutes
	This meeting was held by video conference call following government advice due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
1.	Apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted for Bridget Durning and Linda Earnshaw. The meeting was quorate. Declarations of interest There were no declarations of interest received for any items on the agenda. Updated Pecuniary Interest statements were circulated to Trustees for completion, prior to the meeting.
2.	Election of Chair and Vice Chair The Chair of the Education Performance and Achievement Committee (EPAC) nominated LTB for Chair. This was unanimously agreed. LTB proposed the Chair of EPAC for Vice Chair. This was unanimously agreed.
3.	Non-confidential minutes of the meetings on 13th July 2020 Trustees reviewed and approved the non-confidential minutes of the meetings held on 13th July 2020.
4.	Update on action points from the previous meetings An action grid detailing the actions from the previous meeting held on 13th July had been circulated to Trustees prior to the meeting. A discussion followed regarding the outstanding actions and the following questions were discussed: Action point 7 - The Chair indicated that she had reviewed the Scheme of Delegation and confirmed that the role of EPAC is to approve curriculum strategy and plans and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees. Action point 8 - The Chair stated that she had asked the Chair of Cheney's Local Governing Body about whether a decision on the changes to the curriculum had been taken but had not yet received a response. The Head Teacher of Cheney School confirmed that the expansion to Cheney Plus is already running as part of the



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	<p>School within a School initiative. The Chair of EPAC was concerned about where these decisions are being made and that some changes may have gone forward without a proper debate at Trust Level. The Head Teacher of Cheney School said that he would prepare a summary paper of the current position around curriculum changes. The Chair summarised that the EPAC meeting scheduled in December 2020 can be used to catch up on the current situation and if further discussions are required to be made by CSAT, a further EPAC meeting can be scheduled in the summer term.</p> <p>ACTION: HEAD TEACHER OF CHENEY SCHOOL</p> <p>Action point 11 - The Trust Board approved the updates to the Financial Handbook. The Head of Finance will progress these updates.</p> <p>ACTION: HEAD OF FINANCE</p> <p>Action point 14 - The Trust Board agreed to the proposed meeting dates for the academic year 2020/2021. The Clerk advised that a further meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) will be required in October for Pay and Audit reasons. The Clerk will liaise with members of the FRC to arrange a suitable date and time for this meeting.</p> <p>ACTION: CLERK</p>
5.	<p>Update on Cheney School including exam results and wider reopening of the school</p> <p>The Head Teacher of Cheney School advised that the exam results were very good but there is only a certain amount of meaningful data that can be extracted from these this year. The Chair congratulated the students on their results but acknowledged that this year's data was not particularly helpful in looking at the overall trajectory of the school.</p> <p>The Head Teacher of Bayards Hill / Executive Head of Barton Park joined the meeting at 5.53pm.</p> <p>The Chair of EPAC asked about the gap between Pupil Premium and non Pupil Premium students? The Head Teacher of Cheney School replied that the data shows a move in the right direction but again the current data is not very meaningful.</p> <p>The Chair asked what the school will be doing to address the gap between Pupil Premium and Non Pupil Premium students? The Head Teacher of Cheney stated that good classroom practice is key. This means eliminating the differences between classrooms. The Head acknowledged that Cheney has done a lot to reduce variations between individual departments but more needs to be done in classrooms by identifying the variables, addressing these and then clarifying individual needs.</p> <p>The Chair asked if enough investment was being made into teachers' continuing professional development (CPD)? The Head Teacher of Cheney confirmed that sufficient investment was being made and it was not a question of resources but a question of actually implementing internal CPD.</p> <p>The Chair queried whether the school was making enough use of the money available under the National Tutoring programme? The Head of Finance responded that the National Tutoring Programme is being rolled out in Autumn 2020. No income is received, but schools can request to access the tutoring programme. In addition, the Head Teacher of Bayards Hill stated that there is COVID-19 Catch Up Funding which will be calculated on a per pupil basis with a total of £80 for each pupil in reception year through to year 11.</p> <p>The Chair asked how the wider reopening at Cheney had gone? The Head Teacher of Cheney School replied that it had gone extremely well with just over 94% attendance last week. The Head stated that he had asked parents for their feedback which has been very positive. The Head pointed out that the main challenges are around increasing the number of students attending school and around small groups of students having to self-isolate. There are three versions of on-line teaching in place: i)</p>



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when a teacher has to self-isolate and can teach via a screen in the classroom with a cover teacher in the room, ii) online teaching if the whole class has to self-isolate, iii) live streaming lessons where some children are in the classroom and others are having to self-isolate at home. The Head Teacher of Cheney stated that live streaming of lessons has been trialled and this has worked well but the school requires to install high quality webcams with microphones which will also help over the long term for internal isolation and excluded students. The Head Teacher of Cheney summarised that the aim is to be able to operate 100% teaching regardless of the COVID-19 situation.

The Trustees agreed that having a contingency plan and trialling these processes was a very good idea.

The Chair wondered how children without access to IT will manage?

The Head Teacher of Cheney said that the solution is to get laptops to those who need them. The school has a small number of Chrome books which can be handed out but the school does not have enough for all students. Therefore, the Head stated that he is starting a fund raising exercise to try to raise the required funds (around £50,000) in order to buy a Chrome book for every child who needs one.

The Chair of the FRC asked what priority should be placed on providing a Chrome book for every pupil, given that the school has a fixed budget as the FRC is keen to spend money on the right things

The Head Teacher of Cheney answered that he is currently trying to ascertain what the needs are as it is proving quite difficult to get clear information as to how many pupils do not have reliable devices.

The Chair of the FRC stated that from an FRC point of view, the committee is very supportive of spending money on items to aid the students' education.

The Chair of EPAC asked about A level results and higher education progression?

The Head Teacher of Cheney said that overall A level results had been very good and that higher education progression had been very positive.

The Chair stated that the Board of Trustees was happy to support the school in any way and asked for the Head Teachers to continue to forward any requests in prioritising the budget.

There were no other questions.

The Chair thanked the Head Teacher of Cheney for his presentation and for all his hard work.

6. Update on Bayards Hill School including wider reopening of the school

The Head Teacher of Bayards Hill stated that the wider reopening of the school had gone well and highlighted the following points:

- Staff have had no concerns.
- Pupil behaviour around the school has been calmer.
- Staggered start times are causing slight issues for some parents and internal processes.
- Parents are allowed in Early Years classrooms but are required to wear masks. This has helped to settle children in the morning.
- Thirty one pupils have started in reception which will lead to a large funding gap next year.
- Teachers have remained with the same class they had at the end of last term but transition to new class teachers will be taking place over the next two weeks.
- Children have been taught how to use Google Classrooms online.
- Currently, the school is not running a Breakfast Club but is looking at alternative provision.

The Board of Trustees had no questions.

7. Update on Barton Park School including opening of the school

The Executive Head Teacher of Barton Park stated that the builders at the school should be commended for completing the build on time. There are currently some snagging issues but these have been highlighted to the contractors. The Head Teacher also mentioned that some key resources had not yet arrived but the main issue was to meet the needs of the pupils and so additional spending had been made on credit. The Chair of the FRC acknowledged the Executive Head Teacher's immediate operational need but was concerned as to why



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	<p>necessary supplies were not in place prior to the school's opening. A discussion then took place regarding the use of a credit card and the lack of Finance staff working over the summer period and therefore not being able to place orders over the summer period. The Head of Finance advised that orders were able to be placed apart from a period of approximately 10 days over the summer period. She added that the Head of School at Barton Park was issued with a credit card for exceptional purchases that could not be accommodated within this timeframe and a limit was placed on the card to ensure spending could not exceed £2,000.</p> <p>In addition, the Head Teacher raised a concern around the clarity of what is and what is not expected of specific individuals with regards to the opening of a new school. The Chair stated that a meeting was scheduled for tomorrow to discuss the Head Teacher's concerns in more detail.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees had no further questions.</p> <p>The Chair congratulated the Executive Head Teacher on the successful opening of Barton Park and wider reopening of Bayards Hill.</p> <p>Ian Thompson, the Head Teacher of Cheney School and the Head Teacher of Bayards Hill / Executive Head Teacher of Barton Park left the meeting at 6.54pm.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>CSAT Policies Update</p> <p>The Head of HR confirmed that there have been no significant changes in employment legislation since the policies were last reviewed. However, changes have been made to CSAT policies in order to remove reference to the CEO, whose post no longer exists.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees approved all of the updated Policies and Scheme of Delegation.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Finance Update</p> <p>The Head of Finance verbally updated the Board of Trustees regarding the Trust's Finances. The following key areas were covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Budget for 2020/2021 has been signed off by the Trust Board and has now been signed off to delegated budget holders.- Large adjustments for support staff are required regarding Cost of Living increases due from 1st April 2020. This has been accrued in the Financial statements for the year ended 31st August 2020. <p>The Chair of the FRC asked whether budget holders are going to receive a monthly report which they can track against their budget? The Head of Finance said that this information can be accessed via the live Finance portal.</p> <p>The Chair of the FRC asked whether it would be better to give the budget holders this information directly rather than them having to look for it? The Head of Finance replied that this would be time consuming. The Chair of Trustees asked whether the Corero system could be used to help facilitate the correct process of budget management? The Head of Finance said she would look into this.</p> <p>ACTION: HEAD OF FINANCE</p> <p>The Chair of the FRC followed up on the previous discussion regarding the payments made for Barton Park over the summer using a credit card and stated that the Trust should ensure that control mechanisms are in place for exceptional payments, in the same way they are for standard payments. The Head of Finance accepted this point and that the message to everyone over the summer had been that the means of payment was an exceptional case.</p>



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	<p>The Trustees had no further questions.</p>
10.	<p>Risk Register</p> <p>The Head of HR stated that the biggest risk regarding the full reopening of schools was at the operational level and the lack of testing.</p> <p>The Chair of the FRC asked whether the Trust was paying employees to self-isolate? The Head of HR confirmed that this was the case unless employees do not follow Government Guidelines or CSAT's own guidelines e.g if they have to quarantine but knew the situation in advance.</p> <p>The Head of HR said that if employees were not unwell but had to self-isolate that the aim was for them to work from home.</p> <p>The Trustees had no further questions.</p>
11.	<p>Confidential Items</p> <p>These are minuted separately.</p>
14.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Approval of Governors</p> <p>Paperwork relating to the approval of two new Governors to the Barton Park LGB had been circulated to Trustees prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The Trustees approved the appointment of both Governors.</p> <p>Indicative Annual Planner</p> <p>The Clerk will set up Board of Trustee meetings and Committee meetings via Google Meet as indicated in the annual planner and will organise an FRC - Pay and Audit Committee meeting for October 2020.</p> <p>ACTION: CLERK</p> <p>CIF Bids</p> <p>The Head of Finance highlighted that appeals have been sent back regarding CIF bids for Cheney's Wainwright asbestos, Cheney's Chadwick Heating and Bayards Hill's asbestos issues. The Head of Finance also pointed out that the state of the Trust's buildings will be considered as part of the proposed merger with River Learning Trust.</p>
15.	<p>Date of next meetings</p> <p>Wednesday 21st October 2020 at 5pm</p> <p>The meeting ended at 7.40pm.</p>