



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

Community Schools Alliance Trust Meeting of the Trustees and Members

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on Monday 7th December 2020, via video conference call

In the Chair:	Bridget Durning (Chair)
Present:	Bob Price (Member)
In attendance:	Ann Childs (Trustee), Linda Earnshaw (Trustee), Maurice East (Bayards Hill Chair of Governors), Ben Hegedus (Head of HR), Pat O'Shea (Trustee), Rob Pavey (Headteacher of Cheney School), Richard Stamper (Cheney School Chair of Governors), Ian Thompson (Trustee), Liz Tyler-Bell (Chair of Trustees), Laura Waller (Head of Finance), Robert Kirtland (Senior Partner at Critchleys) (until item 4), Judith Geddes (Clerk)
Apologies:	Lynn Douglas (Member), Tim Wainwright (Member), Richard Huggins (Member), Jonathan Dawson (Trustee), Gareth Griffiths (Headteacher of Bayards Hill Primary School and Executive Headteacher of Barton Park Primary School)

Minutes	
	This meeting was held by video conference call following government advice due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
1.	Welcome, apologies for absence and declarations of interests The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance. Apologies were received and accepted for Lynn Douglas, Tom Wainwright, Richard Huggins, Jonathan Dawson and Gareth Griffiths. No declarations of interest were received. The meeting was quorate.
2.	Minutes of the last meeting held on 9th December 2019, and any matters arising not addressed in the rest of the agenda Members reviewed and approved the minutes of the previous meeting.
3.	Presentation of annual report and accounts for 2019/2020 The Senior Partner for Critchleys, presented a summary of the annual report and accounts for 2019/2020 highlighting a number of positive trends. The Members asked where the key savings have been made? The Senior Partner at Critchleys replied that, as shown under Note 8 of the accounts, the total for educational operations had reduced from around £4.7 million in 2018/19 to approximately £4.2 million for 2019/2020. The Head of Finance added that the biggest savings had been as a result of a reduction in staffing costs due to redundancies and a number of contracts being renegotiated. The Senior Partner at Critchleys then highlighted the management letter that he had prepared. The main areas for Members to note are:



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appendix 1 provides an update on the areas of improvement identified last year. Out of the six issues identified from the prior year, four are now closed. - Point 2 of Appendix 1, regarding the procurement process, and Point 6 of Appendix 1, Monitoring of Expenditure, remain open matters. - Appendix 2 lists the areas of improvement identified this year and contains two new points categorised into their respective risk levels (Bank reconciliation and Internal Audit). <p>The Cheney School Chair of Governors asked what the net effect of the impact of COVID-19 had been on the finances? The Head of Finance replied that the impact is difficult to quantify in its entirety but the net effect was either break even or slightly positive.</p> <p>The Bayards Hill School Chair of Governors asked who will be responsible for carrying out the review of Capital projects at Bayards Hill school going forward? The Head of Finance responded that the only major works are to do with asbestos and if this remains untouched then it is not an issue.</p> <p>The Members thanked the Head of Finance for all her hard work and the Senior Partner at Critchleys for his attendance at the meeting</p> <p>The Members approved the accounts for 2018/2019.</p> <p>The Senior Partner at Critchleys left the meeting at 5.24pm.</p>
4.	<p>CSAT Articles of Association</p> <p>The Head of HR referred to draft Articles of Association which had been circulated for Members to review prior to the meeting. The Head of HR advised that as there had been a number of changes in terms of the Trust's organisational structure he had taken the Department of Education's model Articles and included CSAT's details excluding any reference to a CEO.</p> <p>The Chair asked whether point 4b was new? The Head of HR replied that this had been included at the recommendation of the solicitors as part of the paperwork for Barton Park and was with regard to the Trust's Charitable Status.</p> <p>The Members passed a special resolution approving the revised Articles of Association and resolved to send a copy of the resolution to Companies House alongside the new Articles of Association.</p> <p>ACTION:HEAD OF HR</p>
5.	<p>Appointment / retirement of Members</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that no Members are retiring and no new Members are being appointed.</p>
6.	<p>Appointment / Resignation / Retirement of Trustees</p> <p>Members approved the re-appointment of the Chair as a Trustee.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that no Trustees are retiring or resigning and no new Trustees are being appointed.</p>
7.	<p>Update on Trust Merger with River Learning Trust</p> <p>The Chair of Trustees highlighted the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Throughout 2019/2020, the Trustees decided in principle to explore the dissolution of CSAT and the three CSAT Schools to become part of the River Learning Trust



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- During the Autumn Term 2020, due diligence has been carried out on both sides, parent and staff consultations have been held and there is ongoing discussion with the Regional Schools Commissioner- Currently, River Learning Trust is happy in principle with the merger, subject to funding being acquired for Cheney buildings. Also, the CSAT Board of Trustees is happy in principle, subject to members' approval- Next steps: 1) CSAT to submit 2 CIF bids (value £1.25 million), 2) Trustees to plan management scenarios for 2021 in case no CIF funding is received and merger is delayed, other options if merger is blocked and support for schools in the interim.- Support for Bayards is now in place through an emergency funding bid with River Learning Trust. <p>There were no questions..</p>
8.	<p>Update on the response by CSAT schools to COVID-19 restrictions</p> <p>The Head of HR advised that Bayards Hill Primary School has been slightly affected by COVID-19 and Barton Park Primary School has had no confirmed cases.</p> <p>The Headteacher of Cheney School confirmed that, unfortunately, Cheney School is being partially closed tomorrow due to the number of staff currently self-isolating.</p>
9.	<p>Closing remarks</p> <p>The Chair thanked all Members, Trustees, Governors and staff for their hard work during a very challenging year. The Members and Trustees added their thanks to everyone for their dedication throughout the pandemic and for their incredible hard work in ensuring the continuation of education and learning for all students.</p> <p>Meeting closed: 5:47pm</p>