



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 30th November 2020, via video conference call

In the Chair:	Liz Tyler Bell
Present:	Jonathan Dawson (Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee), Bridget Durning, Linda Earnshaw (until item 5), Pat O’Shea (Chair of the Education Performance and Achievement Committee), Ian Thompson
In attendance:	Maurice East (Chair of Bayards Hill LGB), Gareth Griffiths (Headteacher of Bayards Hill / Executive Headteacher of Barton Park) (until item 3), Ben Hegedus (Head of HR & Compliance), Rob Pavey (Headteacher of Cheney School) (until item 5), Bryony McCraw (Head of School of Barton Park), Richard Stamper (Chair of Cheney LGB), Laura Waller (Head of Finance), Judith Geddes (Clerk)
Apologies:	Ann Childs

	Minutes
	This meeting was held by video conference call following government advice due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
1.	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted for Ann Childs.</p> <p>The meeting was quorate.</p> <p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received for any items on the agenda.</p>
2.	<p>Headteachers’ updates</p> <p>Bayards Hill School</p> <p>The Headteacher of Bayards Hill highlighted the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- There is currently a safeguarding issue with regards to the access between the music school and the primary school. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) will be visiting the site on 1st December to investigate the situation.- The lease agreement with the music school is an issue.- The asset register for Bayards Hill School is not accurate or complete.- Staffing is at 78%. However, some areas are still too costly and the current weighting needs to be addressed whilst there are currently not enough TAs for SEND pupils.- RLT recently visited the school; currently awaiting their feedback.- Consultation on the reduction in PAN is underway. A coherent plan needs to be put in place regarding staffing as a result of a reduction in PAN.- Need a clear understanding of which policies are at CSAT level and which are School Policies.- Budget is predicting a deficit of £12,000 so more work needs to be done on this.- The Emergency bid from RLT has been successful.- New Governors have been appointed to Bayards Hill LGB, although there are no Parent Governors at present.



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The Chair of Bayards Hill LGB commented that the amazing progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage at Bayards Hill had been highlighted in a recent meeting with RLT. He added that this is down to the school's leadership and dedication of the Early Years staff.

The Headteacher of Bayards Hill asked for further clarity on what is required and expected of the school given that there is no longer a CEO at CSAT?

The Chair agreed that further information and clarity on the Trust structure, the expectations of Headteachers, and agreement on where accountability on different issues sits within CSAT would be very useful. It was further agreed that the Chair will organise a meeting between herself, Headteacher of Bayards Hill, Chair of Bayards Hill LGB and Head of HR to discuss these issues and the Headteacher's concerns.

ACTION: CHAIR

The Chair asked the Headteacher of Bayards Hill how the staff and children at the school are doing? The Headteacher of Bayards Hill replied that there are some long term absences and the staff are stretched but are coping and the children have settled in well. He added that the school has received positive feedback from parents.

Barton Park School

The Executive Headteacher of Barton Park highlighted the following key areas:

- The Nursery at Barton Park has gone to outside tender and the ABC Headington Nursery Group has been chosen to run the Nursery at Barton Park. Currently awaiting approval from Ofsted.
- Some work is still outstanding on utility contracts.
- The school's budget has not yet been signed off.
- Early Years' outside area is a concern and needs to be updated.

The Head of School of Barton Park said that the school roll is steadily increasing with 21 children across both classes, leaving 9 remaining places. She added that assessments had been carried out in November and Year 1 and Year 2 are making accelerated progress in phonics.

With regards to the Early Years Outdoors environment, the Head of School of Barton Park advised that a plan is in place for this which had been discussed with their consultant from OCC and was just awaiting budget sign off.

The Head of Finance said that depending on the amount of money required, the budget may need to be signed off by the Finance and Resources Committee (FRC). The Chair of the FRC stated that the next FRC meeting is scheduled for 9th December 2020 so, if ready, the Committee can look to sign off any budget at that meeting.

It was agreed for the Head of Finance, Head of School of Barton Park and Executive Headteacher to discuss the plan for the Early Years outdoor environment and agree a budget.

ACTION: HEAD OF FINANCE, HEAD OF SCHOOL OF BARTON PARK AND EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER

The Head of School of Barton Park advised that a Welcome video had been uploaded to the school's website which the Trustees may wish to watch.

The Chair thanked the Executive Headteacher, the Head of School and Staff at both Bayards Hill and Barton Park for their brilliant work in managing the return to school.

The Executive Headteacher left the meeting at 5.36pm.



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Cheney School

The Headteacher of Cheney highlighted the following key areas:

- This is the first day back in specialist rooms. Received 500 responses in respect of a parent survey on this issue.
- Average attendance for the academic year is just over 94%. Attendance of vulnerable and SEND students has particularly increased.
- Data is showing that behaviour is becoming less of an issue with much fewer detentions.
- Results from learning walks are positive.
- Online learning is well embedded. For some very vulnerable students, this way of learning has been transformative.
- Year 11 are taking their mock exams very seriously. Interventions have started with students most at risk of underperforming.

The Chair asked how the school is spending the catch-up premium funding?

The Headteacher of Cheney replied that the catch-up money is being used to ensure all students have a chromebook so they can access on-line lessons. However, the school has kept $\frac{1}{4}$ of the money in reserve for the national tutoring program and another $\frac{1}{4}$ for faculties to spend e.g on their own teachers carrying out additional lessons such as at the weekend.

The Chair thanked the Headteacher and Staff at Cheney for their brilliant work in managing the return to school.

The Chair said that at previous Trustee meetings the Headteachers produced a report with particular sections to complete covering areas such as attendance, behaviour, staffing etc. She asked the Head of HR to circulate this template for Headteachers to use in future to help collate the information required for Trustees more easily.

ACTION: HEAD OF HR

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Finance Report

The Head of Finance highlighted the following key areas:

- No specific updates on CIF bids.
- Have applied to the low carbon skills funding scheme but have received no reply to date.
- Internal audit has been carried out remotely. Draft report will be sent directly to FRC.
- Continuing to monitor expenditure.
- Have received a draft management letter from the auditors.
- Trustee report is currently being drafted, looking to send this out by the end of this week.
- No individual school will be in deficit.

The Chair asked why the point about the deficits of individual schools was different from what the Bayards Hill Headteacher had just told the Trustees?

The Head of Finance advised that she has looked into this and more income has been recognised than expected. She also added that the auditors will be attending the AGM scheduled for 7th December to present the accounts.

The Head of Finance stated that in the accounts the cash reserves policy is around 9%-12%. RLT places no limit on the reserves that a Trust can hold.

The Chair asked the Head of Finance to check what the FRC had previously agreed around this issue and compare it with RLT's policy and update the FRC at the next meeting on 9th December 2020.

ACTION: HEAD OF FINANCE



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	<p>The Clerk will add this to the agenda for the next FRC meeting.</p> <p>ACTION: CLERK</p> <p>The Chair of Cheney LGB asked why the October management accounts showed a surplus of £75,000 in respect of Cheney staffing costs? The Head of Finance answered that this is in respect of back pay that hadn't yet gone through.</p> <p>There were no further questions.</p> <p>LE left the meeting at 6pm.</p> <p>The Headteacher of Cheney left the meeting at 6.02pm.</p>
5.	<p>Risk Register</p> <p>The Head of HR referred to the Risk Register which had been circulated to Trustees for review prior to the meeting. The Head of HR pointed out the great work carried out by the Finance Team in respect of reducing the deficit, which is now moving in the right direction.</p> <p>A discussion followed regarding the move to an RLT model, which will allow for greater autonomy for CSAT schools in specific areas such as catering, cleaning, caretakers and IT. The Head of HR advised that a paper is currently being drafted on this and pointed out that with greater autonomy comes greater responsibility and accountability. The risk lies in ensuring clarity around where accountability sits and implementing effective and proper checks and balances to continue to alert any areas of concern.</p> <p>The Chair referred to point 6 in the risk register and asked about the latest update from the Confederation of Schools Trusts which highlighted a promise of funding to cover staff absences? The Head of Finance responded that she was aware of this potential funding and was looking into it although certain criteria have to be met.</p> <p>The Chair of the FRC was concerned that the risk register does not capture the risk of the merger with RLT not happening; even if the possibility of this is low, if it happened its impact would be significant? The Head of HR said that he would add this to the risk register.</p> <p>ACTION: HEAD OF HR</p>
6.	<p>Policy Review</p> <p>The Charging and Remissions Policy had been circulated to the Trustees for their review prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees approved this policy.</p>
	<p>Confidential Items</p> <p>These are minuted separately.</p>
13.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>It was noted that Bridget Durning's term of office will end on 4th December 2020 and that the Chair of Cheney's LGB's term of office will end in April 2021.</p> <p>Both said they would be happy to stay on in their respective roles to help with the transition of CSAT to RLT.</p> <p>The Trustees approved the re-appointment of Richard Stamper as a Governor on the Cheney Local Governing Body. The re-appointment of Bridget Durning as a Trustee is on the agenda for the AGM on 7th December 2020.</p>



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14.	Date of next meetings AGM - 7th December 2020, 5pm FRC - 9th December 2020, 5.30pm EPAC - 15th December 2020, 2pm Trust Board - 22nd March 2021, 5pm The meeting ended at 7.13pm.
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Signed Date