

Meeting Minutes of Full Trustee meeting 19th January 2021 7pm – Zoom meeting

Present: Alistair Mack, Andrew Day Andrew MacLellan, Cheryl Lowe, David Farrer, Gill Ambrose, Janet Bunker, Keith Carne, Marguerite Roberts, Richard Summers. Ruth Adams Stewart Taylor, Tricia Pritchard, Isobel Rawlinson (Director), Sarah Helme (Finance Officer & Admin), Victoria Goodman (Events)

1) **Opening Prayer** led by ST

2) **Apologies:** Andrew Read, Matthew Pettifer

Declaration of Interest – Nothing new (refer to conflicts of interest register)

3) **Minutes of last meetings (9th November 2020) / Outstanding actions**

The minutes were approved as an accurate account of the meeting. There were no questions about the minutes from other committee meetings. Outstanding actions either completed, ongoing or on the agenda.

4) **AOB** – None

5) **Items for discussion**

a) **Trustee 2021 declarations & appointments**

- The majority of declaration forms have been returned and SH thanks Trustees.
Action: SH to follow up outstanding forms
- KC and AM stated they were happy to continue in their Chair and Treasurer roles unless others were interested, no interest shown and Trustees voted both posts in.
- Michael Beckett (AMack currently representative) and ST are retiring in September. RA also announced she is leaving St Georges in August. KC thanks them all for their work and contribution. *Action: Feb Exec meeting to consider Trustee positions*

Meeting structure and dates 2021

KC and IR provided an update on the Special Exec meeting held 15th January which focused on the TofR for new school support group which the meeting called the Education Committee. The TofR for this Committee and the other groups are finalised and will be circulated in due course. A review of the charity scheme and rules is also taking place. *Action: Updated TofR, rules and scheme changes to be circulated*

b) **School sites & Trust role**

AM explained Bidwells initial property work raised questions about the legal role of the Trust, the school and LA/DEMAT. Legal advice has been sought via Lee Coley (Stone King) who is drafting a legal statement, this is being finalised. In summary, the Trust is the land and building owner. The schools governors are responsible for the maintenance of the school using school budget and LA/Diocese funds (DFC/SCA). They are also responsible for sourcing the additional 10% for these budgets. Any alternations required to the sites/buildings must first be cleared with the trust. However, the trust is willing and able to provide the 10% funds and other services. The next step is to finalise the legal

Trustee and staff name abbreviations

Alistair Mack – AMack, Andrew Day – AD, Andrew MacLellan – AM, Andrew Read – AR, Cheryl Lowe – CL, David Farrer – DF, Gill Ambrose – GA, Janet Bunker – JB, Keith Carne – KC, Marguerite Roberts – MR, Matthew Pettifer – MP, Richard Summer – RS, Ruth Adams – RA, Stewart Taylor – ST, Tricia Pritchard – TP, Isobel Rawlinson – IR, Sarah Helme – SH, Victoria Goodman - VG

statement, confirm the Trust offer and communicate to schools and Bidwells to enable the property review work to be completed.

b) Budget

AM explained that the 2020 spend shows a significant underspend due to the numbers of projects that could not be delivered due to COVID-19. This money is being carried forward to the 2021 budget for the projects to continue.

DF asked about any outstanding invoices. SH explained they are all known except for one and the approx. or known cost included in the data.

AM explained the distribution of the overall budget by area 2019-21 which remains fairly consistent year on year.

The 2021 budget paper provides the detail of how the budget was created with papers for the areas of Spirituality, School support and grants. AM explained that the 2020 underspend has been added to the 2021 income and reminded all that the other potential funds (that can be drawn on for unexpected costs or additional projects to support our schools) are from Capital Gains over the last 5 years (to Oct 2020).

DF asked about how and when the decision would be made on any additional funds for schools this year. AM explained that the Education committee will take time to be established so £40k has been put in this year's budget to address any immediate needs. IR will be contacting school heads and explaining the application process. Requests for any larger projects should be submitted to Exec for approval until the committee is up and running.

KC and TP both explained the need to properly establish the remit of the new committee and how they will work to support schools deliver their educational goals.

JB asked about St Lukes Barns as there is no budget set yet. IR explained that there have been several meetings with the school, DEMAT and KC and herself. To date there has been no proposal and the agreed next step was to consider one when this was agreed. To date there has been no clear development plan.

6) Operational standing items

a) School updates – link Trustees

o St Pauls – AMack

20 children (12%) are currently at school during the latest lockdown with the rest home schooling via the Google classroom. Helen is pleased with pupil engagement and work. Staff morale is currently high despite the present circumstances. Meal vouchers are being offered to FSM pupils. No Ofsted expected in current academic year, but school feels in a good position for next inspection and no longer require LA intervention and support. 159 pupils in Sept but Reception nos. for next year are lower than Y6 leavers meaning this fig. will drop which impacts the funding. He thanked CSoC for the laptop provision which is supporting home-schooling.

TP asked if the reasons for the declining numbers are known and the school are making plans to deal with this. AMack replied that reasons for this are a declining birth rate, decline in foreign academics to the university and the poor Ofsted rating. *Additional information is in Appendix 2*

o Park St – AD

100 in Sept vs 118 PAN as also impacted by lack of foreign academics to the University. Currently have a balanced budget and parents are very supportive of the school and made a video to promote the school. More children at school than during the last lockdown and recent data indicates that children were not significantly impacted in terms of progression by last lockdown. Thanks to CSoC for teaching support grant which has allowed greater flexibility. The quality of teaching has improved and highlighted were

work is required with some staff which is being addressed. No Ofsted expected but feel in a positive position and considering paying for a new SIAMMS inspection to address points raised at the time. IR commented on the great atmosphere when she visited before Christmas and the new KS1 outdoor space.

KC commented that it was positive to hear about the positive use of the support grant.

○ **St Philips – AM**

35% of pupils are at school during current lockdown so every teacher is in school running a class. This is making it hard to deliver online and staff are doing work out of hours to record lessons and signpost set work on BBC Bitesize and the Oak Academy. The last lockdown impacted learning and behaviour but the catch up fund is being used well, such as new software to assess pupil attainment and react to any needs quickly. Nos. are down slightly mostly due to Ofsted rating. Plans for expanded nursery provision/hours (originally for Easter) from Sept. Hot meals being served at school and vouchers for FSM pupils at home. Thanks to CSoC for laptops.

○ **St Lukes – JB / GA**

133 pupils in Sept and a low reception intake for same reasons as other schools and added competition with the University Primary School. 30 pupils currently in school during latest lockdown. Positive feedback on home learning from parents. Now had a period of time with new headteacher and despite significant TA restructuring morale remains positive. Vouchers being used for FSM pupils. Current priority for the school in the Early years outdoor space, hopefully works will commence at Feb half term.

TP and KC thanked link trustees for the informative school updates. The charity needs to consider where we can add value to the schools offering experiences and opportunities outside the curriculum and attract parents to the schools.

b) Directors overview

IR explained the circulated report provided an overview to 2020 and outlined 2021 priorities, she thanked staff and Trustees for their input during a challenging year of virtual working and using zoom as the main communication tool. KC also thanked the staff and pointed out the positive work that IR had carried out with the schools. VG reflected that the lockdown had made her re-look at the way of delivering once face to face returns.

c) Risk assessment

IR explained the circulated document had been worked on at F&P and reviewed at Exec. KC expressed a desire for relevant sections to be owned by committees going forward. TP asked how often it will be reviewed and the progress of any Amber ratings checked. Action: IR to provide an update at Feb Exec and add to June FT meeting.

d) Safeguarding update

CL explained that SH had attended training at a conference and audited our processes. We have limited contact with children and these are always supervised by school staff but the processes keep us compliant if a concern were to arise. SH explained the plan highlights current work to carry out, the meeting noted the report.

7) Matters to report

The only question was from GA who asked about re-advertising the Collective Worship resource and suggested using quotes, all thought this was a good idea. Action: IR/SH

8) AOB - Kitchen ventilation

AM raised the ongoing issue at ST Pauls and St Philips with the kitchen ventilation works carried out without our permission by the LA. He has been trying to obtain information about the decisions for the size and type of equipment installed as well as upkeep costs. A survey

carried out only identified that the equipment worked. AM asked for permission to pursue this with the LA and seek support with costs or removal. All agreed. Action: AM to speak to LA and update trustees

Next meeting - 16th June as per timetable discussed in the meeting

The meeting finished with grace at 8:45

Appendix 1 - actions from this and previous meetings

Meeting date	Action	Update
19.1.21	SH to follow up with the few outstanding declarations	Completed
	Exec to discuss trustee roles at Feb meeting	
	IR to provide an update at Feb Exec and add to June FT meeting.	
	IR and SH to sort out a Facebook and Website post for Collective worship	Completed
	AM to speak to LA and update trustees	
8.11.20	IR to explore a zoom session for Foundation Govs	In Spirituality plan

Appendix 2 – Additional information on St Pauls

St Pauls school - reasons for lower pupil numbers are a combination factors:

- a) Dating from 2018 a new low national birth rate (ONS figures) and predicted to fall further.
- b) A major drop in international students (some reports estimate an unprecedented UK wide 47% reduction).
- c) The legacy of a poor (Requires Improvement) Ofsted. The consequences of a cycle of poor performance –not just a one off dip-are long lasting. Remember St Paul's achieved a RI in December 2015 and its last Good was July 2012.
- d) Viable state and private school alternatives.

Two examples prove the last point:

- St Alban's Catholic School on Lensfield Rd has an Outstanding Ofsted (November 2014).
- St Matthew's on Norfolk Street has an overall Good Ofsted (March 2020 and a drop from an Outstanding in 2011) but with two Outstanding components in Personal Development Early Years provision. Such success matters-just ask our immediate neighbour (not a Catholic family) whose two children went to St Matthews, attracted by a record of strong leadership and educational achievement, and rejected St Paul's.

These schools with non selective intake and no fees are within walking distance of St Paul's. They are both oversubscribed for first preference admissions. They demonstrate primary schools are at this point of time a highly competitive market and they have the edge. If further evidence is required compare the consistent Year 6 SATS results and it shows why St Paul's struggles and why I thanked CSoC for funding promotional material to help raise the school profile. That is very likely an ongoing battle and where the 'fighting fund' referred to last night could, amongst other requirements, (such as maintaining on line learning) be utilised.

For your information the co-ed Stephen Perse directly opposite St Paul's has fees of £17,994 per year. Bursary Funds are granted to 80+ children. I have no way of establishing if the Perse attracts potential St Paul's pupils but this level of fees is readily achievable to the prosperous catchment area.