



Cheshire Academies Trust
Inspiring hearts and minds



Our children will show even greater academic progress, emotional resilience and have benefitted from a wider and richer curriculum

**PART ONE MINUTES
OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING – MEETING 5**

Date	Wednesday 9th February 2022 at 6.30pm
Venue:	Via Teams

Invited to Attend (Governors):	
Kate Lee (KL) Jon Lenton (JL) Victoria Roper (VR) Katrina Barlow (KB) Muriel Breugelmans Helen Patterson Brenda Rewhorn (BR) James Ferguson (JF) Tyler McPherson-Hill	Co-opted governor/Chair of Governors Principal Co-opted governor Staff governor Parent governor Parent governor Co-opted governor Co-opted governor Staff Governor
Apologies: Rob Herd (RH) Andrew Vaughan (AV)	 Co-opted Governor Parent governor
Also in Attendance:	
Steve Ellis (CEO) Luci Jones (LJ) – in part Anne Lyons (AL) – in part Amanda Crowder (AC) – in part Sally Sumnell (SS) Susan Gell (SG) Debbie Tomkinson (DT)	CEO Chief Finance and Operations Officer Academy Business Manager Academy Business Manager Assistant Headteacher Assistant Headteacher Governance Professional

AGENDA ITEM 1	WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Statutory) AND CONFIRMATION WHETHER MEETING IS QUORATE
Discussion:	KL welcomed all to the meeting. The apologies of AV and RH were accepted.

AGENDA ITEM 2	DECLARATION OF PERSONAL & PECUNIARY/BUSINESS INTEREST (Statutory)
Discussion:	There were no conflicts of interest in relation to any of the agenda items. No new interests were declared.

AGENDA ITEM 3	HR/FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE
	<p>The Academy Business Manager’s report was circulated in advance of the meeting. AL and LJ were in attendance to present the report to governors.</p> <p>Financial Summary – position for the year</p> <p>Governors were provided with an update on the performance against the 2021-22 budget and end-of-year expectations.</p> <p>Boughton Heath (BHA) has historically had a lower than average cost senior leadership team (SLT) and this continues to be the case. BHA has a high number of pupils over the Published Admission Number (PAN) - the normal number of pupils is 210 and there are currently 224 on roll. This means that BHA is in a good position financially.</p> <p>Main school budget</p> <p>The budget was set with a £48k surplus at the end of the year and it is anticipated this will increase to just under £67k. The reasons for the increase are set out in the report but includes income that was not included in the original budget. There have also been savings in staffing costs as a result of a teacher pay freeze which was not known at the time the original budget was set.</p> <p>The Kitchen and Club are both expected to over-achieve on income targets. Capital budget is on target and the intention is to spend this on a new sensory room.</p> <p>Q: Are there any risks related to energy costs and inflation and have these been captured in the budget? A: The budget includes costs that are known and assumptions are made in relation to inflation and other areas. When any increases are known they are factored into the budget. The impact of utilities increases is not currently known. The trust have been investigating how to manage potential cost increases such as the DfE buy-in consortium. Work will take place to see what the costs increases are likely to be and how they can be mitigated. A 25-30% increase has been factored into the budget.</p> <p>Q: Is it possible to receive an update on the impact to the budget if there is a 25% increase, 50% increase and 75% increase. A: LJ confirmed when the data is available this will be shared with governors along with any advice given to schools.</p> <p>Q: Will pay increases have an impact and is it possible to make assumptions on a worst-case scenario? A: The forecast across all years is the same as the last guaranteed pay rise unless there is formal information available. Next year, pay increases will be factored into the budget at 2.75% until more information is available. This is an informed decision based on data. Pay increases are not normally confirmed until after the budget setting process. The Secretary of State for Education writes to the Teachers’ Pay Review Body and this will highlight if there are expected to be an large increases. This is the data that is checked when assumptions are made. An example of this was that it was expected that there would be a minimum salary of £30k for teachers and if this had been factored into the budget there would have been an increase in salary expenditure. This has now been delayed until 2024 and there will be an national election and teachers’ pay will be a policy decision for a new administration.</p> <p>Grant Analysis</p> <p>One of the points raised in the trust’s external audit was that whilst academies looked at how grants improved educational outcomes, the auditor wanted the impact from a financial perspective. The grant analysis outlined the main grants received and what they are intended to be spent all. All of the funds are due to be spent in-year.</p> <p>Financial Risk</p>

The risk around finance is low. The risk around exceptional expenditure is high as the school has a lot of money. There are plans to spend this but it is not known, at this stage, when the projects will begin.

It has been difficult to get quotes for the proposed extension for a Y3 class. One contractor did visit the school and the advice was that internal re-configuration may be more appropriate. An architect will be asked to prepare a proposal and they may be able to recommend builders.

At this stage it is not known when work will begin to take place. It is hoped that funds will be invested this year and everything is being done to progress this but it may be that funds will need to be carried over. There is no risk of claw-back but it would mean there will be a higher carry-forward than is currently being reported.

Governors noted the predicted out-turn for 2021-22

Asset Register

It is a requirement of the Academy Trust Handbook that a governor be appointed to review the Asset Register. VR agreed to review the register.

GDPR update

The GDPR assessment has been delayed as the lead person is new to the role. This has been recorded as a slightly higher risk but AL will be receiving GDPR training and then a GDPR review will be implemented.

Q: If there is a breach, is the school exposed as the risk has been identified as being higher?

A: The risk to the school would be higher if GDPR had been prioritised over areas such as finance and HR.

Q: What happens if there is a breach?

A: There is a process of notification and the breach will be reported to AL, GDPR governor, JL and LJ. There would be a meeting to assess the significance of the breach and if it was reportable. Advice may be sought from solicitors on how this should be reported. The usual advice is that a plan needs to be in place to address the breach. There was one breach at BHA approximately 18 months ago where a list of children's names was accidentally emailed to parents including the name of one child who was no longer at the school. The matter was reported to the Information Commissioners Office who was happy with the plan put in place.

Governors agreed with the plan for the GDPR assessment in June.

Governors were informed that budget setting for September in April and some of the information required for an accurate budget is not available to this point.

There has been no provision in the budget for increased NI payments. As part of the autumn term spending review, the government has stated that the public sector will not be expected to meet these costs and so there will be a net nil position in relation to NI payments.

The government have announced a supplementary grant to cover to meet the health and social care levy and wide costs. The grant is more than the estimated cost of the increase in National Insurance payments.

The payment for maintained schools and academies is the same but multi-academy trusts will have additional payments to make in relation to central trust teams and so it may be that maintained schools are more generously funded. LJ has raised this as a question and is awaiting a response. It is anticipated there will be a grant of £26k to meet the additional costs. The actual cost to Boughton Heath is anticipated to be £18k.

There was a question around whether the national payments should be aggregated. LJ advised that there will be two payments – one for 5/12 of the year and one for a full year. There are

some early red flags around possible increases to staffing and utilities costs and when they refer to wider costs this is what the government could be referring to.

POST MEETING ADDENDUM

In a post-meeting update to governors, LJ advised:

In her report, LJ advised NI will increase from April at an estimated cost of £7,514 per annum. She also estimated BHA's total annual grant to be £25,736. As a result there will be a surplus grant of £7,592 in the period April to August 2022 and a surplus of £18,222 in the period September 2022 – August 2023.

The surplus figures were calculated as follows based on the periods April – August 2022 (current financial year) and September 2022 – August 2023 (next financial year).

Estimated annual NI increase £7,514 and estimated annual grant payment £25,736 therefore annual surplus (September 2022-August 2023) £18,222

NI cost increase April 2022 – August 2022 estimated £3,131 (5/12ths £7,514) and estimated grant payment £10,723 (5/12ths £25,736) therefore surplus April – August 2022 (current financial year) £7,592

Governors noted the information regarding the supplementary grant.

Academies have received an indicative General Annual Grant (GAG) for next year. For a number of years, the government have been suggesting that a national funding formula will be introduced but the Cheshire West and Cheshire Forum is currently still responsible for deciding the formula. The high numbers at BHA mean that it is expected that there will be an increase in funds.

Work has taken place on modelling the staffing structure and more information will be provided in the next finance report to governors.

The information provided to governors is the current working budget which is updated when more information becomes available. This is a general guide to the future financial forecast for BHA but until funds are invested, there will be a high level of surplus.

Q: Are the forecasts based on the same pupil numbers each year?

A : If changes are known, the budget will be updated but if not the pupil numbers based on the October census will be rolled through the years as they are the figures that drive funding.

Q: In year three it is projected that BHA will be going into a deficit – at the next meeting could more information be provided on any possible actions that may need to be taken?

POST MEETING ADDENDUM

LJ addressed the discrepancy between the teaching and support staff.

This data comes from a pre-generated report so LJ has submitted a request to the system development team to identify the fields the report draws from, to enable her to understand what is causing the difference. LJ to update when she receives further information.

Link Finance Governor report

VR reported that she had met with LJ and AR and discussed the finance report. There were no areas of concern and BHA is in a very positive position.

Approval of expenditure under the Scheme of Delegation

There were no items of expenditure requiring approval under the Scheme of Delegation.

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AGENDA ITEM 4	PART ONE MINUTES OF MEETING – January 2022
Discussion:	The Part One minutes of the meeting of 19 th January 2022 were circulated in advance of the meeting and approved by governors.
DECISION	RESOLVED: That the Part One Minutes – January 2022 be accepted as a true and accurate record. All agreed.

AGENDA ITEM 5	MATTERS ARISING
Discussion:	<p>LJ to clarify the position in relation to staffing costs. COMPLETE</p> <p>Parent governor elections to take place at the beginning of December. It is hoped that the vacancy will be filled by the next LGB meeting.</p> <p>Governors to complete the NGA Safeguarding training and to send completed certificates to JF. ONGOING</p> <p>Governors to complete Introduction to Governance and Compliance courses by spring term. JF to re-send details. ONGOING</p> <p>RH and JL to complete Assessment Link governor visit. ONGOING</p> <p>KL to provide verbal update on governor one-to-ones. COMPLETE</p> <p>Before and After School Club update to be included on February agenda COMPLETE</p> <p>History and geography subject leads in attendance at the June meeting to provide an update on the curriculum – NOT DUE</p> <p>School vision to be included on February agenda. COMPLETE</p>

AGENDA ITEM 6	CHAIR'S ACTION
	The Chair had not taken any urgent decisions taken on behalf of the local governing body.

AGENDA ITEM 7	PRINCIPAL'S ACTION
	The Principal had not taken any urgent decisions on behalf of the local governing body.

AGENDA ITEM 8	EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE
Discussion	<p>Autumn Term Pupil Outcomes Summary Report</p> <p>The autumn term pupil outcomes summary report was circulated in advance of the meeting for governors' information. The report provided analysis from the academies across the trust and builds on discussions in the previous meeting.</p> <p>Governors noted that it was positive that BHA was performing well.</p> <p>Q: Why is there such a gap in writing compared to other schools? A: The writing assessment is poor data and academies will be changing the methodology for the assessment of writing. A further update will be provided in the summer term which will provide more accurate data. The data in the report does not indicate that writing standards are lower at BHA.</p>

Q: Attainment rises as children move through the school. Is that a normal trend nationally?

A: It is a trend nationally. This does not mean that teachers are not doing a good job it is because there are more gaps to fill because of the pandemic.

Q: If Y1 assessments are moderated should there be more consistency?

A: There is no standardised testing in Y1 and so it is difficult to triangulate data. This is being address through a Y1 working group.

A governor requested that information about the context of academies be included at the beginning of the report and SE agreed to consider this.

Q: Is it correct to say the gender gap bigger in early years and is closing in older years?

A: This may change in spring so the real test will be from validated data in the summer.

School Session Times

Governors received and noted the information on school session times and term dates.

SEND Update

The SEND report was circulated in advance of the meeting and SG was in attendance to take questions from governors.

Q: Has the number of first concerns which lead to SEN support or EHCP recommendations increased?

A: The pandemic has not significantly affected children. Two children have moved onto the register with social, emotional and mental health issues and this is the first time children have been placed on the register with these particular needs. Children will be placed on the register when issues are identified. There is a first concerns form available on Teams which staff complete.

Q: Are children still waiting for appointments with an Educational Psychologist?

A: Yes, it is difficult to get an appointment and this has got worse since the pandemic. The local authority SEND team are supposed to have a 48-hour turnaround and they have set up a mailbox for urgent matters which they will aim to respond to within three days

Q: Could the trust employ a part-time educational psychologist?

A: It is possible to buy-in external support but they may not have capacity.

Q: How is collaboration working across the Trust?

A: It is working well, there is good knowledge across the academies. Collaboration is particularly good with the Cheshire West schools who use the same paperwork.

Q: Have staff received ELSA training?

A: Training is not taking place at the moment.

KL advised that she will be undertaking a SEND link governor visit and will circulate her report for the next meeting.

Teaching and Learning

JL advised that monitoring is continuing with a focus on reading, writing, maths and science. Monitoring is carried out as a SLT and subject leaders are delivering their findings in a staff meeting approach of lesson observations has changed to a more coaching model as this is a more evidenced way of impacting on teaching and learning and is working well.

ACTIONS

SEND link governor visit report to be included on next agenda

AGENDA ITEM 9	VISION AND STRATEGY
Discussion	<p>Vision</p> <p>JF informed governors that the NGA’s Learning Link on vision is very useful and there is a model that can be used. JF to circulate link to the training after the meeting. Governors to complete the exercise on school missions, values and aims by Monday 28th February.</p> <p>SE advised that the work on the trust vision was based on the work of Simon Sinek and the importance of identifying why an organisation does what it does as this can be difficult to articulate.</p> <p>Q: Should governors consider having a facilitator to assist in the process? A: It was agreed that this would be helpful. VR noted that she has professional experience in this area. Mike Giffin, link trustee for Boughton Heath has also helped with the work on the vision and it was agreed that he would be asked to be the facilitator. VR, MG, JL and KL to discuss the most appropriate methodology to use.</p> <p>Q: What is the expectation from the trust in relation to vision? A: Each school is unique and governors must do what is right for the school.</p> <p>An update will be provided at the next meeting.</p>
	<p>ACTIONS</p> <p>Vision to be included on next agenda</p> <p>Governors to complete vision exercise by Monday 28th February 2022</p> <p>VR, MG, JL and KL to discuss the methodology to be used in reviewing vision</p>

AGENDA ITEM 10	COMPLIANCE AND SAFEGUARDING
Discussion:	<p>Safeguarding Update</p> <p>JL provided a verbal update on online safety.</p> <p>Online safety is taught through PHSE lessons in all year groups and there is also a scheme of work for computing which covers online safety. There have been bespoke assemblies to coincide with Safer Internet day.</p> <p>JL provided an update on road safety</p> <p>The school has junior safety officers who liaise with the council. There are plans to reintroduce the Walk to School scheme and children watch videos on how to cross the road. The Bikeability scheme will be re-introduced as soon as it is possible to do so.</p> <p>School Security update</p> <p>JL provided a verbal update on school security</p> <p>The school had some vandalism prior to the installation of the new fence during the summer holidays. Since the fence has been installed there have been no further incidents. The situation is closely monitored and there are close links with the police and PCSO. There were some concerns about anti-vaccination demonstrators who had been targeting local schools but there have been no incidents at BHA.</p> <p>Before and After School Club</p> <p>JL provided a verbal update on before and after school club provision.</p>

	The after-school club continues to grow in popularity. Investment has been made in relation to the activities and sporting offer. Covid has had some impact in that if the threshold for the number of positive cases is met, children are not able to take part in clubs with other year groups. Children were able to attend wrap-around care and mini-bubbles were created.
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AGENDA ITEM 11	GOVERNANCE AND RISK
Discussion:	<p>Governor Vacancies</p> <p>There is one parent governor vacancy and it is anticipated that the new parent governor will be in post for the next LGB meeting.</p> <p>Governor Visits</p> <p>AV has completed the Pupil Premium link governor visit and his report will be circulated for the next meeting.</p> <p>Curriculum link governor visit report to be included on next agenda.</p> <p>Governor Training</p> <p>It was agreed that VR, KL and JF complete the vision training.</p> <p>JF has created some videos on how to use online systems and it was agreed that these would be beneficial to be rolled out across the Trust.</p> <p>Governor One to Ones</p> <p>KL provided an update on governor one-to-ones.</p> <p>During the meetings there were discussions about face to face and virtual meetings. It was suggested that a blended approach would be beneficial. Covid has made being a link governor more difficult but there have been ways around this.</p> <p>Lots of training has taken place and it was suggested that three or four groups look at different modules and share knowledge across the LGB.</p> <p>Governors were very positive about the training that the trust provides.</p> <p>Governors felt they understood their role and everyone was keen to review the vision. There were discussions about how to link community in with the vision and how the vision can be linked to school KPIs.</p> <p>Governors get a lot of satisfaction from their role and feel valued and able to express different views.</p> <p>Governors were keen to meet up with other link governors.</p> <p>Governor Impact Statement</p> <p>Governors received the updated governor impact statement</p>
	<p>ACTIONS</p> <p>Pupil premium link governor visit report to be included on next agenda</p> <p>Assessment link governor visit report to be included on next agenda</p> <p>KL, JF and VR to complete vision training</p>

AGENDA ITEM 13	DATE OF NEXT MEETING
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