

**Local Advisory Group Meeting
via Google Meet**

Wednesday 23 June 2021

MINUTES

PL	Paul Lovern – CEO	CG	Charlene Gethin, CEO from September 2021
SC	Sue Cockayne – Director for LAG and Chair of LAG	AH	Alison Howard - Clerk
HB	Heather Bowman – Chair of Directors		
AA	Antony Allen – Parent Member Richard Crosse		
MHE	Marcella Henley – PTA Member Richard Crosse		
PBu	Phil Burrow- Parent member Richard Crosse		Abbreviations
GP	Gillian Pitchford - Community Member Kings Bromley	RC	Richard Crosse
AR	Anna Redpath - Parent Member St Mary's	SM	St Mary's
CC	Claire Clarke – PTA Member St. Mary's	TH	The Howard
MH	Marie Havelock – Community Member Colton	AS	Anson School
PB	Phil Bate – Parent Member Howard	PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
CM	Claire Malcolm – The Friends Member Howard	TA	Teaching Assistant
CB	Chris Billingham – Community Member Elford	NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
EB	Emma Bowring - Headteacher Richard Crosse	SLT	Senior Leadership Team
JW	Jon Wynn – Headteacher St. Mary's	EY	Early Years
RM	Rachel Mills – Headteacher Howard		

Attendance : PL, SC, AA, MHE, PBu, MH, PB, CB, EB, JW, RM, CG, AH

1. SC welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting opened with a prayer.

2. Apologies : There were apologies from HB, GP, AR, CC and CM.

3. Pecuniary Interest

There were no changes to Pecuniary Interest declarations.

4. Minutes of last meeting

These were accepted as a true record and will be signed by SC when circumstances allow.

5. Headteacher Reports

Richard Crosse School: EB presented the report for RC, starting by saying that an outside area is being developed at the school. The children have been litter picking round the village and there has been a visit by a PCSO to talk to the children about community issues. The new Rector, Father Jeremy Brading, has visited RC and will be making regular visits from September. With regards to staffing, new staff will be joining RC in September and interviews are being held shortly for a TA position. A TA is retiring this summer, having been employed for many years in the school, but she will be coming back into school as a volunteer. A new cook has been appointed. EB thanked the PTA for their financial assistance towards developing the outside area, which will include a nurture hub, a herb garden and a water feature; the PTA have also provided EY equipment and books. EB reported that an Olympics Day will be held at the school, involving sports, art and history. Due to the present Covid restrictions, some Transition Days have taken place online; Reception parents are

visiting after school to look at how the school operates. The Leavers performance will be filmed this year. Y6 transition arrangements for High School are also in place. It is hoped that the Leavers Service will take place on the Showfield this year and Y6 pupils have many activities and events in place for their last few weeks at RC. EB thanked everyone for their support for her first year of Headship.

The Howard School: RM presented her report, saying TH was in a good place, the children are happy and do not seem to have been too affected by the Covid situation; there is a good atmosphere in school. A very positive school review had been carried out by PL. RM aims to make the last few weeks at TH as memorable as possible for the Y6s and the usual leaving events have been adapted to accommodate the Covid arrangements. There will be a May Queen event in July and an opportunity to say goodbye to the Y6 families. With regards to staffing, a TA with responsibility for Care Club has left the school and two people have been appointed to cover this. Congratulations go to the teacher who has recently had a baby and will be returning to school in February. RM reported that an experienced teacher has been appointed from September who has already met with some parents and who is very enthusiastic about her role; RM thanked the teacher who has been covering the maternity leave saying she had been a real asset. The National Tutoring scheme has been very successful, helping children with Reading, Writing and Maths. RM thanked AA for an amazing day at Greenpower; it was lovely to spend a full day with the Y6s. Events planned this term include a visit to a chocolate factory, Alton Towers and the Adventure Farm. RM thanked the PTFA for their financial assistance with trips and said they had sourced a great deal of commercial sponsorship towards a number of projects at school, including fencing and a Forest Lodge which it is hoped can be used as a classroom. RM informed the LAG members that it is an exciting time at TH, there is a vibrant atmosphere and everyone is enjoying being back in school.

St Mary's School: JW gave a report on SM, saying how well the children had settled back into being in school, they had returned with a happy and positive frame of mind; he thanked his brilliant staff for their hard work. There have been outdoor learning and gardening sessions, together with many enrichment activities. KS2 are enjoying a number of visits, including Packington Farm. The National Tutoring scheme has been very useful and the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) has given nurture support. One member of staff is working towards a Forest School qualification and another has gained a Middle Leadership qualification. An NQT is staying on at the school to work with Class 3 and a teacher will be returning to work with another teacher in Class 4. A TA is leaving to have a baby having done a brilliant job with the EY. JW expressed the view that all the staff have been very busy behind the scenes, with lots going on over the last few months. For the future, JW sees the focus as the outdoor area and IT; there is expected to be a SIAMS (church) inspection during the next term but the school is well prepared for this. He thought that there were lots of positives at SM and the school is moving forward well.

SC thanked the all the HTs for their reports and thanked the Headteachers and all the staff for all their hard work over a difficult year.

6. Trust Updates

PL started by saying this would be his last LAG meeting as he was retiring this summer and he wished to introduce Charlene Gethin who would be joining a MAT with lovely staff and children. CG said it was a real privilege to be appointed and she hoped in time to fill PL's shoes; there was a lot of learning to do, but she had enjoyed visiting all the MAT schools. She gave a short history of herself, having been a Deputy Head in a small rural school when she had had to act up to be Head on two occasions when the Head was on maternity leave. She then became Head at Rangemore in 2007 and enjoyed being part of the community there; she then took on Newborough School in addition to Rangemore, becoming Executive Head over the two schools for the last 8 years. CG felt that it was now the right time to become CEO and the Trust was the right place to move to; she already felt part of it after her induction meetings and she was grateful to PL for sharing his knowledge and wisdom.

PL stated that being CEO of TSSMAT was a lovely role and he was sure she would enjoy it. Going on to his Trust updates, he praised the Greenpower race day, saying that the Trust had brought along 7 cars, showing a real collaborative approach. He thanked AA for all his hard work and said that AS will now be included in the project; PL knew that the children got a great deal from it, both in terms of fun and learning - D&T, science, co-operation are all involved and the children will always remember the project.

PL expressed a big thank-you to staff for all the many cross-school events, which showed a real team effort and put the MAT in a very strong place.

At the last LAG meeting there had been discussion on continuing the early school finish on a Friday; although there had been many positives about the plan, PL and the SLT listened to parental feelings and the government education agenda and decided that it was not the right thing to do to finish school on a Friday lunchtime. The plan has been reviewed and the Friday afternoon will be used to provide a number of collaborative opportunities for the children.

Regarding staffing, there have been a number of staff away on maternity leave this year, but staff have been recruited to cover this.

PL felt that the Covid pandemic had delayed a lot of things over the year, including the IT projects; however it is planned to have wholesale investment in IT across the MAT to make the system fit for purpose and ensure that up-to-date, good quality equipment is in place.

PL asked whether any LAG members had questions and AA asked whether TSSMAT was in talks with other schools about joining the MAT; PL said that talks were always in progress behind the scenes and there was always some possibility of further growth, but it took time for schools to commit to joining and for due diligence to take place by TSSMAT.

SC wished PL all the best for the future and PL said he had mixed emotions about leaving TSSMAT, it had been a hard decision to make.

7. Community Updates

Richard Crosse/Kings Bromley: MHE reported that the AGM of the PTA was being held that evening. In summary, around £1000 had been raised in 2020, whereas in a normal year it would have been £4000-£5000. A small number of events including a disco and a Christmas raffle have been held. The 59 Club is still running, but it is a challenge at present to approach new members. An application has been made to the Co-op Community Fund to help with fundraising with the nurture project. Around £2000 has been given to the school to buy outdoor equipment for EY, books and Christmas craft activities. MHE wished say a big thank-you to PL, who was a great leader for RC when MHE first became involved with the school, then across the MAT as a whole. She welcomed CG to TSSMAT.

GP had sent her apologies, but said there was nothing major to report from the Parish Council.

The Howard/Elford: CM's report had been sent in and is attached to these minutes. In brief, she reported that it had been a challenging year for fundraising but around £2300 has been raised for the school, enabling funding for school trips, Leavers' hoodies and work on the outdoor area. Parents are being asked to shadow the present PTA members for a year, before moving on to the committee in September 2022.

CB said that her role was more to take information back to the community than to report on it, but she felt that the village had been impressed by TH's approach during the lockdowns, compared to other schools in the area. CB thought parents had greatly appreciated becoming more aware of what happens in school during the last year. She considered that PL will be very much missed as part of the community and she welcomed CG to the Elford community.

St Mary's/Colton: CC's report had been sent in and is attached to these minutes. The Horti-Hub is now complete and equipped, a new shed has been erected, the PTA have funded a number of other items and now have plans for various fundraising events. The PTA have submitted a nomination for the National PTA Awards, including making a video, and are awaiting the result. PL is wished a happy retirement and they welcome CG to her new role.

MH said she was happy to hear the children back in the playground and looking forward to return to school in September to help with reading. She praised the wonderful job the staff had done and

thanked PL for his leadership; TSSMAT was now part of village life. It had been a pleasure to work with PL and the Trust over the years.

SC thanked the PTA and community members for their reports and asked for further questions. PB thanked all the members of staff, saying they had done a wonderful job over the last 12 months, he and his family were very grateful. He also thanked AA for his work with Greenpower and PL for all his hard work over the years and particularly for keeping TH going as a thriving school.

AA said that the children had really enjoyed the recent outings and the Greenpower day had been a great success; TSSMAT won the 'Spirit of Greenpower' Award with 7 cars built by the three schools. He thought it great that sports and trips were now back in place. He considered that, particularly during the last lockdown, there had been a great step up to online teaching and teachers had coped well, offering individual support to pupils. AA went on to say that PL had been on a massive journey, from one school to four schools and thanked him for his leadership; the professionalism and understanding of PL and his staff had stood out from the start. AA welcomed CG to TSSMAT. PBu echoed PB's and AA's comments, offering his gratitude to PL and saying that he had always been impressed and reassured by PL's presence; he welcomed CG to the MAT. PBu asked whether PL considered that lessons had been learned and shared across the Trust during the recent pandemic; the children had had a positive experience and it would be good to use this and improve on it if further lockdowns happened. PL replied that all the staff had evaluated the lessons learned and were constantly learning new ways to approach different events. The use of online teaching had been particularly powerful, with support offered on a one-to-one basis as needed. When TH had to close, due to Covid infection, the strategies adopted went very well and would be a blueprint for the future. Feedback from parents was particularly important, as parents were often unsure whether they were doing things right. Last-minute changes of mind from the government did not help, but PBu agreed that the Academy learned that they were on their own in some respects and had to make their own decisions, sometimes with little government support.

PL went on to say that online teaching could be used in future if schools had to close due to snow or heating problems, but the MAT will decide each case depending on circumstances.

RM thought that the pandemic showed the strength of the MAT, with schools working together and acting on feedback from parents. JW had had to recently close two 'bubbles' due to a positive Covid test, but the system was in place to deal with this. EB said how proud she was of her staff who developed their IT skills very quickly to deal with online lessons. PBu congratulated the staff on how well they had coped with the changing situation over the year.

8. Any other business

LAG members wished to express their thanks for all the efforts and hard work by TSSMAT staff and said that PL will be greatly missed, but they are looking forward to working with CG.

SC concluded by saying she looked forward to meeting in person before too long.

Date and location of LAG meetings 2021-22

4pm	4 October 2021	Richard Crosse/Google Meet
4pm	7 March 2022	St Mary's/Google Meet
4pm	20 June 2022	The Howard/Google Meet

Please note that these have been set for a Monday next year.

Signed.....

Sue Cockayne, Chair of Local Advisory Group

Date.....