

CAMBRIDGESHIRE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 3rd MAY, 2017 – 2 PM to 4.30 PM

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

Present:

Richard Thomas	Independent Chair of CSIB; Educational Consultant
Tamara Allen	A1 Cluster
Dave Barron	Fenland TSA
Di Beddow	Unions
Tracy Bryden	Diamond TSA
Penny Conway	Little Paxton Primary School; GAG Member; NLG
Steve Dann	Post-16
Tony Davies	Chair of CPH
Jonathan Digby	Chair of CSH
Keith Grimwade	Director of Learning, Cambs County Council
John Hartley	CSH
Geoff Hayward	HE
Ysanne Heald	TEEM Education; CEYTS
Helen Manley	Senior Adviser Curriculum Teaching and Leadership, Cambs County Council
Helena Marsh	CASSA
Simon Pratt-Adams	HE
Andrew Read	Diocese of Ely
Nina Redhead	Wisbech Schools Partnership
Rachel Snape	Kite TSA
<i>Julia Baddeley</i>	<i>Business Support Assistant, Learning Directorate (minutes)</i>

1. **Welcome and apologies**

RT welcomed Board members to the meeting and apologies were received from: Simon Bainbridge, Susannah Connell, Andrew Goulding, Joe McCrossan, Jacki Parris, Rosemarie Prince, Nina Redhead, Carol Shaw and Jo Trump (new Principal of Hills Road Sixth Form College).

2. & 3. **Minutes of the previous meeting, 15th March 2017 and matters arising**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed subject to an amendment to Page 4, fourth paragraph, JD said that the Unions meeting week commencing 20th March related to Workload Charter, not Pupil Premium.

Action

RT said that items for the next CSIB agenda on page 7 to be transferred to the July agenda.

RT

With regard to the SEND Support Action Plan, HM explained that the working group is about to meet, and that progress on the plan will be reported to the CSIB on a regular basis. It has representation from all phases.

There were no further matters arising not otherwise on the agenda.

4. CSIB Action Plan

4.1 RT said that the Board needed to evaluate achievements over the last year and that the original Action Plan was now due to be replaced.

4.2 Self-evaluation – to what extent is the Board achieving its purpose? What should be our next steps?

4.2.1 KG said that the Board represented the bringing together of an impressive group of people. However, he said that the seven aims listed in the Terms of Reference remained to be achieved.

4.2.2 Comments from the Board were invited and were made as follows.

- JD said the Board had had little impact for secondary schools; they are almost all academies and have worked with the LA on secondary reviews for 2016/17. Helena Marsh said that the experience and ideas from the Board had not translated in terms of school improvement. It was acknowledged that the Secondary Academies Improvement Board run by the RSC had been the main forum for secondary academies and that the biggest issue for them was recruitment and retention. JD mentioned that it is hoped that Post-16 will join CSH in September (Post-16 data is not accessed at present).
- DB expressed concern regarding the workload for teaching leaders.
- Helen Manley pointed out that resources had been lacking until recently and said that this may have affected impact.
- RS said that there are objective pieces of work being delivered on, for example, a Pupil Premium event with the Faculty of Education and a Phonics Project, both of which may not be obvious to the Board.

5. Future of CSIB, action plan, priorities and Engagement with schools

5.1 KG said that in moving forward, it was important for the CSIB not to lose sight of its achievements and to assess what should be preserved. He saw the School to School Support Group as a very effective part of the school-led system in Cambridgeshire. RT posed the question: if the Board ceased to exist, what would be missing?

5.2 Comments were made as follows.

- SEND is a key area and a more holistic view is of value (YH).
- We act as a forum, but not as a board; concerns regarding system led decision making (AR).
- KG was keen to emphasise that the education system was school-led in terms of decision making and accountability. AR said that this responsibility must be exercised and that the quality of the Terms of Reference was key to the Board's effectiveness. He suggested the possibility of the Board dissolving itself, rather than being a third or fourth group.
- Helena Marsh saw 'improvement' rather than 'accountability' as vital to counteract the fragmentation in the system and as the main context for Board.
- Not knowing individual role; actions against priorities and delegated tasks advocated as the way forward (RS).
- KG mentioned that following the Mayoral elections, paragraph 35 of the governing document referred to the appointment of an Education Board with RSC and other key stakeholders being represented (first discussion taking place week commencing 8th May). There is also an RSC led sub-regional group proposal for providing a bidding mechanism with the same membership as the CSIB. In addition, schools meet as part of CPH, CSH and Special School Heads. KG said that for agreeing priorities, partnership working, evaluation and impact it was necessary for the CSIB to be largely school-populated and guided by the three Heads groups.
- TD and TB outlined the content of a letter from CPH dated 28th April which had been sent to RT and circulated prior to the meeting. They reported that CPH are unaware of the overall impact of the Board. There is a desire to have a school-led school improvement system and CPH representatives did not feel they had real involvement, that there was 'a real disconnect'. They felt what was needed was a simple coherent system to communicate priorities and bid for funding from 'a' board. CPH could gather intelligence at a cluster level to submit to an operational unit, such as the School to School Strategy Group. Actions would be mapped out over a timescale for implementing and schools would report back and hold the Board/Strategy Group accountable. CPH involvement in the design of the system would be welcome as CPH are not sure how CSIB fits in with the design on the operational side.
- RS said that TSAs are carrying out work and securing finances but are not very good at communicating back.
- Schools communicating what they need in detail is lacking at present (eg a Pupil Premium Review).
- RT summarised the problem in terms of how to get a wider focus – a model of communication and challenge encompassed in the CSIB.
- Helena Marsh suggested building on networks as the enabling mechanism.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RT said a different model of working was required for the autumn term and that he was willing to draft the action plan which would need to be 'owned' by schools. He said that resources were now available for the Board to spend on all schools to impact on school improvement. KG said that these resources are finite and that of the £30,000 legacy, £20,000 remained together with a one-off County Council allocation of £190,000 to support school improvement. • KG proposed the following actions to the Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. revision of the CSIB Terms of Reference to better deliver a school-led school improvement agenda, and ii. setting up a sub-group, comprising the three headteacher organisations, to generate a proposal to bring to the next meeting of the Board (4th July) regarding moving forward to a school-led group. 	
<p>5.3 Further debate took place but RT favoured setting up a small group to focus on the matter; the way forward for the next academic year will be the main agenda item for the 4th July meeting.</p>	RT/KG
<p>5.4 RT to email possible dates and further details for the focus group as soon as possible.</p>	RT/KG
<p>6. Agreeing a process for allocating school improvement funding</p>	
<p>6.1 KG proposed the allocation of funding for school improvement bids, outreach, access to HE etc, after consideration of this year's performance data in September (the Education Achievement Board is scheduled for 6th September). He said that funding should be allocated on the basis of maximum impact. Helen Manley said that the operational procedure system needs attention.</p>	Helen Manley
<p>7. SEND Peer Review Action Plan/Local Area SEND Inspection update</p>	
<p>7.1 KG said that the draft Action Plan will be further scrutinised on 8th May (at a meeting with parents, primary headteachers, TSAs and Regional Commissioner). CSIB will have a role in monitoring progress of the plan.</p>	
<p>7.2 No official feedback on SEND Inspection was available.</p>	
<p>8. RSC update - If possible in 'Purdah'</p>	
<p>8.1 RSC/representative was not present.</p>	
<p>9. Festival of Education</p>	
<p>9.1 RS tabled a Cambridge Independent article from 26 April edition entitled 'Let's be Flamingos of Hope, not Lemmings of Despair' and said that, with support from a wide range of project partners, the Festival would run for a week. It will commence on Saturday 24th June and culminate in a one day conference on Saturday, 1st July at</p>	

<p>Anglia Ruskin University (capacity for 200 but could be extended to 400). Five key themes have been identified and speakers have been approached; RS said that it is an evolving picture and contacts for nursery and third sector speakers would be appreciated. She displayed the related website: http://www.cambridgeshirefestivalofeducation.org (twitter @CambsEdFest and facebook @CambsEdFest) and tabled sheets of Festival stickers. Website to be further populated shortly.</p>	All
<p>9.2 Helena Marsh spoke of the Festival being a celebration of Teaching and Learning in Cambridgeshire and of the challenge in making teaching 'irresistible' to those interested in taking it up as a profession. She advocated schools getting involved and hosting open-house events all over the county to raise the profile of teaching (for example, CASSA are holding a day in the life of a teacher at Impington Village College). Helen Manley is drafting a letter to all schools regarding getting their staff to attend events in PPA time. Sponsorship is being sought and there will be group discount and Early Bird offers. The speakers and budget for the Festival need to be finalised in the near future and the board was asked to help out with workshops.</p>	Helen Manley All
<p>9.3 The sum of £10,500 was proposed for this year's budget by Helen Manley. This was approved by the Board with the option to hold the festival for a further two years if it was deemed a success. Evaluation is planned and an administrator to be appointed to collate impact etc, subject to the Board's approval.</p>	Helen Manley
<p>10. AOB</p>	
<p>10.1 YH mentioned Teaching, Innovation and Leadership Fund bidding (item 4 of last minutes) and KG confirmed that no action was taken because of Purdah at present.</p>	
<p>11. Arrangements for Independent Chairing of the CSIB</p>	
<p>11.1 RT left the room for this item. KG said that RT had been appointed for one year and that the role of independent chair was due for review. He suggested that in any case, RT's contract should roll over to the end of the summer term. KG confirmed that he had covered the cost of independent chairing for the first year (£5,760 per annum; £480/day) but that the Board should cover the cost in future.</p>	
<p>11.2 It was acknowledged that decision making needs to be impartial and the impact of independent chairing was considered. KG said that the LA would in any case continue to administer and facilitate meetings.</p>	
<p>11.3 It was agreed that it would be better to elect a chair from within the group because this would make it easier to be genuinely 'school led', and KG therefore proposed that for the academic year 2017/18 the Board move to no longer paying for an independent chair and</p>	All KG

that a Chair and Vice Chair be elected from members of the Board. This proposal was seconded by DB. RT will be asked to assist with transition to the new arrangement and his last meeting will be on 4th July. (Update: RT has kindly agreed to do this.)

Date of next meeting

2:00 to 4:30 pm on Tuesday, 4th July 2017 at Swavesey Village College