

Special General Meeting of Cheney Friends

Tuesday 14th January 2020

Present: Claire Stevenson (Secretary), Gill Wilkins (Treasurer), Olivia Goodrich, Kate Hackett (Senior Leadership Team and Head of Sixth Form), Jane Tuck, Sue Harmer, Tamasin Lilwall, Hannah Rea, Helen Davis, Marie-Alice Frappat, Philippa Trehearne.

Minutes

Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Emma Meats, Uniz Manda-Liu and Gabrielle Lees.

Items for Open Forum

There were no items put forward for discussion.

Presentation of the Sixth Form

Before the meeting got under way, Kate Hackett was asked to give the PTA an update on Cheney's Sixth Form.

The Sixth Form provides a variety of Level 3 courses – principally A Levels and BTECs. From September 2020, it will also be possible to study for a certificate in Food. Typically, around half of Cheney's Year 11s move on to its Sixth Form, and most students now take three subjects (which is recommended, in order to gain good results), rather than four. Some subjects, such as Latin and Classical Civilisation, are taught as Twilight courses (i.e. after normal school hours).

It is a lively Sixth Form, with a good mix of gender, and with more and more SEND pupils staying on. However, not many students come in from other schools.

There is quite a high entry level for Sixth Form, with no unconditional offers made. Some students may have an interview if teachers feel they may not achieve the results required to study their chosen subjects. Year 10s will be given taster sessions for the Sixth Form, and Year 11s can talk to their teachers about the subjects on offer, as well as discussing these at their Parents' Evening on 23rd January and at the Open Evening on 29th January. Some years, it is not possible to run all the subjects originally offered (e.g. psychology or languages), if there is not enough interest from students.

Cheney Sixth Form students can benefit from a good extended curriculum, with visiting speakers, such as politicians, the chance to take the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award, and authorisation to use the library and other facilities at Oxford Brookes University. Around 25 students per year take part in “Brookes Engage”, which is a programme offering extra help and support to some Sixth Formers.

The school is keen to grow the Sixth Formers’ participation in the lower school, and for them to mentor other students to assist with their learning. They are also expected to do three hours of volunteering around the school per fortnight, which can involve helping in lessons or the library, or carrying out other duties. There are no PE lessons in Years 12 and 13, but the Sixth Form does have football and basketball teams. The deadline for applying to Cheney’s Sixth Form is **9th February 2020**.

Cheney Friends has been asked to help with the catering at the Sixth Form Open Evening on 29th January. The Open Evening will be comprised of a presentation in the Assembly Hall, followed by subject talks in different rooms of the Lane Building. Cheney Friends will provide teas and coffees in Pam’s Diner (in the Sixth Form area), alongside some of the Sixth Form students who will be selling cakes and biscuits in aid of Cystic Fibrosis. It was agreed that Cheney Friends would provide the hot drinks free of charge, and ask for a donation to be made towards the Cystic Fibrosis charity. Claire, Helen and Olivia are available to help on the evening, and anyone wishing to bake cakes or biscuits for the charity stall would be very welcome to do so.

Appointment of the Officers and Committee Members of Cheney Friends

There was a brief discussion about the positions available, and Claire informed the meeting that Uniz Manda-Liu and Ben Pinches now wish to step down from the committee, due to other commitments.

The Officers and Committee Members were nominated (and seconded) as follows:-

- Gill Wilkins will remain as **Treasurer** for the current year.
- Claire Stevenson is now **Chair** of the PTA (vacating the position of Secretary).
- There is no **Secretary** at the moment, but Claire will continue to convene the meetings, book the meeting room and circulate emails to Cheney Friends and school staff members. It was agreed that a different person could take the minutes at each meeting. Kate Hackett suggested that the school provide CF with a visitor’s code for wifi access, should a laptop be needed during the meetings.
- The **Committee Members** are now: Gill, Claire, Olivia Goodrich, Hannah Rea, Jane Tuck, Tamasin Lilwall, Lisa Crook, Marie-Alice Frappat, Helen Davis, Louise Marsh (member of the Senior Leadership Team and the PTA’s School Link), plus a Parent Governor (to be determined). There are two new Parent Governors, and Claire will contact these to invite them to join the Committee. It was suggested

that Jen Henderson (Cheney Communications and Environmental Impact Team) also be invited to join, as a staff member. Any other parents wishing to be closely involved with the work of Cheney Friends could be co-opted to the Committee.

Approval of the minutes from the AGM in November 2018

As the minutes from AGMs are only approved at the following AGM, it was too soon to approve the minutes from November 2019. However, the minutes from the AGM held in November 2018 were approved.

Finance and fundraising, including approval of the Finance Summary and Accounts for 2018-19

Finance

Gill circulated the Final Accounts and Finance Summary for the 2018-19 school year. These showed that the overall money available was down on the previous year, which was explained by a large grant from the Doris Field Foundation coming in to CF's account in 2017-18 and going out in 2018-19. The accounts had been audited by Adrian White, who is happy to remain as CF's Auditor for the current year. The accounts for 2018-19 were approved, and everyone was in favour of Adrian White continuing as Auditor.

Gill presented the current financial situation (as of 14th January 2020), as follows:-

- Just over £100 has been raised from the sale of secondhand uniform since the start of the school year.
- £429 was taken from refreshment sales at the Christmas Show.
- Sue Harmer has been very successful in obtaining grants from various fund-giving bodies. The Music and Drama Departments launched an appeal in 2019 to raise £9,000 for the Performing Arts, and Sue has obtained grants totalling £5,450 so far. Sue was congratulated on these fundraising successes.

The Music and Drama Departments add value to the school, and Cheney Friends supports them by donating the money from refreshment sales at their shows to the department in question. However, Gill suggested that some of the funds raised by selling refreshments could be put towards the purchase of items to help CF with these sales, such as flasks, urns, PVC tablecloths, mugs, cups, etc. Some, or all, of the £429 from the Christmas Show could be put towards these purchases. Everyone present agreed to this.

It was also felt that Cheney Friends should publicise itself more during events such as refreshment and uniform sales. Using the tablecloth-style banner would be a good start – except that this has been mislaid! It might not cost too much to have a vertical banner on a stand made (which could be folded away when not in use) – and this could be looked into. In the meantime, we can distribute the Cheney Friends flyers at each event we run.

Kate Hackett also mentioned that the Sixth Form area and kitchen can be used for certain events, if needed.

Fundraising

Cheney Friends has recently been asked to help fundraise for subscriptions to A Level Reviews for the library, and for a fridge for the DT Department. CF will also continue to raise funds for projects put forward by the school's Environmental Impact Team, e.g. water fountains, the improvement of outdoor spaces.

Thanks to Hannah Rea, Cheney Friends is back on the waiting list for Waitrose's Green Token scheme at the Headington store, and we could aim to raise money for the fridge needed by DT through this.

Regarding the reviews for the library, it was suggested that good quality magazines for younger students could also be provided, such as Aquila, The Week and BBC History. The Book Canon books, which would be read and discussed by a number of students, could be purchased too, if needed. Claire to contact Jill Fenton (the school's librarian) about this.

A Fundraising Sub-Committee was set up, composed of Claire, Hannah, Tamasin, Olivia, Jane and Sue. An up-to-date wish list was needed from the different school departments. As Sue has been successful in obtaining donations from Oxford Colleges with charitable community funds, it was suggested that we contact other Colleges and Oxford Brookes University as well.

Discussion of a possible amendment to the Constitution (to cover the possibility of receiving funds for other schools within the CSAT)

Cheney Communications had forwarded a request to Cheney Friends (via Claire and Gill) just before Christmas, asking if CF could receive funding for Bayards Hill School into its bank account, as part of an application for funds to improve the primary school's library. The funding on offer could apparently only be made to organisations with an annual income of less than £1 million (which is not Bayards Hill's case). Claire and Gill could not give a positive reply to this request – which required a quick response – as it needed to be properly discussed with other PTA members at a meeting.

Cheney Friends' Constitution does not currently mention other schools within the CSAT. Article 2 of the Constitution states the aim of Cheney Friends as follows: *"The objects of the Association shall be to advance the education of the students of the school by providing and assisting in the provision of facilities for the education at the school (not normally provided by the Local Education Authority)"*.

There followed a discussion about this request, with the following points made:-

- Cheney Friends is a charity, and must be careful about how it receives funds, where these come from, and what they are intended for.
- If the Constitution is changed to include other schools within the CSAT, this would signify a change to Cheney Friends' main objective (as quoted above) – and could even lead to CF having to re-register as a charity.
- The best solution would be for Bayards Hill School to set up its own PTA, so that any donations could be made directly to this, and all accounting would remain transparent. It was thought that Bayards Hill did have a PTA in recent years. If this is now dormant, or has been disbanded, perhaps members of Cheney Friends could assist parents from Bayards Hill in setting up/reviving a PTA.
- We could contact Parentkind (the National Association of PTAs) for advice, if need be.
- The overriding feeling was that Cheney Friends should not accept funding for other schools within the CSAT, and that the Constitution should be left as it stands.

Upcoming events, January and February 2020

Cheney Friends has been asked to help with the following events over the coming weeks:-

- 1) **Secondhand uniform sale** at the Year 11 Parents' Evening on **23rd January**. This will take place from 3.30-7.00pm. Claire and Olivia are available to help. Claire to ask Cheney Communications to contact Year 11 parents/carers, to publicise the sale and put out a call for uniform donations.
- 2) **Catering** at the Sixth Form Open Evening on **29th January** (as discussed above). Claire, Olivia and Helen can help at this event.
- 3) **Secondhand uniform sale** at the Year 8 Options Evening on **6th February**, from 5.30-7.00pm.
- 4) **Refreshments sales** at "Shrek" on **12th and 13th February**. Helen, Sue, Jane, Tamasin, Claire, Olivia and Gill are available to help.
- 5) **Secondhand uniform sale** at the Year 8 Parents' Evening on **27th February**, from 3.30-7.00pm.

Claire to circulate Calls for Volunteers as necessary.

A.O.B.

A couple of other fundraising ideas were put forward:-

- A raffle, probably to coincide with another school event, such as a show. We should look into the laws and conditions concerning running a raffle or similar fundraising activity.
- A quiz night, which could prove popular, but would have to be well organised.

There being no further business, the meeting was then closed.