

**Minutes of CAST Board meeting held on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2019  
at St Boniface House, Ashburton from 10.30am – 1.30pm**

Attendees:	John Burnett (JB)	-	Foundation Director (Chair)
	Andy Nicholls (AN)	-	Foundation Director
	Sandy Anderson (SA)	-	Foundation Director
	Maria Edwards (ME)	-	Foundation Director
	Terry Stockley (TS)	-	Foundation Director
	Deacon Richard Edwards (RE)	-	Foundation Director
	Dan Rogerson (DR)	-	Academy Director
	Graham Briscoe (GB)	-	Co-opted Director
	Jacqui Vaughan (JV)	-	Co-opted Director
	Ann Harris (AH)	-	Co-opted Director
	Raymond Friel (RF)	-	CEO
	Karen Cook (KC)	-	CFOO
In Attendance:	Louise Adams (LA)	-	Director of Education and Standards
	Sarah Barreto (SB)	-	DSC in waiting
	Cannon Mark O'Keeffe (MO)	-	- DSC
	Helen Laird (HL)	-	Clerk

**1. Welcome and Opening Prayer**

Opening prayer by RE.

**2. Apologies and Confirmation of Quorum**

Apologies from LS.

Quorum met.

**3. Declaration of Interest**

3.1 Directors were asked to complete the Declaration of Interest and Attendance Register.

**4. Minutes of previous meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

4.1 Minutes approved as an accurate record.

**4.2 Actions**

Status updated on Actions Summary.  
19.22

- MB will discuss this with JV as Lead Director for Safeguarding and it can be determined what is appropriate to share with all.
- RF suggested Link Directors email him prior to a visit so he can advise of anything they need to be aware of.
- GB spoke of the work he has seen in another region and questioned how CAST can oversee this over so many local authorities. LA advised this process is far more robust now. MB liaises with the 6 local authorities and ensures the schools are working to the policies and procedures in each of them.
- RE informed there will be a review of Safeguarding processes at the Audit and Risk committee.

19.10

- RF advised of a discussion at the DSC meeting, specifically relating to SBC and the permanent

**Decision/Action**

Approved

appointment of the Deputy Head. RF will report back to the next meeting on this action.

*As the Chair was unable to join the meeting until later Item 5 was moved to follow items 6 and 7.*

## 6. Premises Update

- PS presented the annual update to the Board.
- SA asked about an incident in Barnstaple regarding the piping and the urgency to complete this repair. PS responded to this and explained the work that is being done with Devon H&S.
- AN asked if it is possible to see reports on incidents and trends of these. TS added the Board should see details of major incidents. PS advised he will be able to provide a report for Board meetings.
- AH noted the responsibilities of the LGBs in the area of H&S and asked PS how the Board can ensure these are met. PS noted that these are functions not responsibilities. AH will send the Accountability Schedule to PS so he can include these in this document.
- TS asked if the SBMs are taking on the full responsibility for their schools in managing the properties. PS noted the steep learning curve the SBMs have been on since appointment in January and the work still to be done on providing the right support and training for them. KC added some information regarding the checklists PS has established which SBMs must be using to ensure everything is as it should be. KC clarified where the responsibility lies with for SBMs and schools themselves. Feedback is ongoing with regards to these processes.
- GB talked of his lead in H&S and the work he has done with KC and PS to ensure the Board is informed and confident that they are protected.
- ME noted how far the Trust has come since PS's appointment and thanked him for the work he has done. KC asked for it to be recorded that PS has made a significant impact in his role. This was echoed by all present. Thanks were also given to GB for his support in this area.
- SA asked PS to contact Devon H&S to ensure there is a correction to the audit for Barnstaple which states the repairs are not mandatory
- SA emphasised the need for further H&S training for the Heads and SBMs. PS confirmed this will be taking place.
- GB proposed the H&S action plan which was approved and accepted by all.
- PS presented the updated H&S Policy which was approved.

Action – PS to provide a report on major incidents and an incident trend report for Board meetings

Action – AH to send SoA to PS to include H&S elements

Action – PS to ensure correct to H&S Audit for Barnstaple is actioned

Decision – H&S Action Plan approved

Decision – H&S Policy approved

## 7. Executive Update

Report provided to the Board prior to the meeting.

- RF advised that the Trust is now no longer required to meet with the RSC regularly and will now be reviewed under the standard MAT review cycle.

- RF talked of the on-going concern of the RSC over SBC and the works which are continued in this school. RF talked of the collaboration between SBC and ND which is helping the move forward significantly. RF will look to have a formal agreement in place to secure this arrangement past the next academic year.
- RF talked of the possibility to bid for funding for school improvement which will be co-ordinated by Tony Bloxham who has been reviewing the Plymouth secondary schools at request of the RSC.
- RF talked of his visits to SBC and the positive impression he has from seeing the school in action. LA talked of the hope that outcomes will be slightly improved for KS4.
- DR asked if there is anything further to be done to understand the culture and ethos which has resulted in some of the issues regarding student behaviour recently. RF talked of the work of the Deputy Head with regards to the Behaviour Policy and the stronger reward and celebration culture. The Head is being encouraged to hold more whole school assemblies.
- ME asked if there is a planned press release regarding moving the Head Office to the SBC site to show the community there is commitment to the school. RF recognised this as a good suggestion and noted the response already from the local area.
- AN asked about the response from the RSC regarding the query over Directors standing down after a 4 year term. There was some discussion regarding how this is managed and how other aspects of Board review may need to be considered also.
- GB advised of the need to comment on this in the Annual Report and the way in which any exceptions should be reported.
- The Board discussed the need to link the constitution to the skill set or the restriction to the 2 four year term maximum. It was agreed that the standard is 2 terms of 4 years but that this can be extended as an exception to meet skill set requirements.
- RF thanked RE for the support for the schools with regards to Section 48 inspections and writing to those who have received good and outstanding outcomes recently.
- RF warned of another year of Ofsted inspections to come.
- RF talked of the Heads who retire or leave the Trust and the Mass which will take place to thank them for their contribution to the Trust.
- TS asked how many of the departures were planned or expected. RF provided further information on the departures. LA advised since she joined the Trust there have only been 2 departures at this level that were unexpected. Planning has been in place for replacement of all other positions.
- RF welcomed the Directors to attend the Heads and Deputies conference in the Autumn Term.
- RF reminded that the Board need to be mindful of the work/life balance of the SEL.

Action – RF to arrange local media coverage of the move to SBC in September

Decision – Board members can sit 2 x 4 year terms which can be extended under exceptional circumstances

#### Strategic Aims

The Board received the document in advance of the meeting.

- TS noted that he sees this as a 3 Year plan and there needs to be a further high level document looking further forward.
- All were happy with the feedback on milestones. AN noted this demonstrates a lot has been completed but there is still work to be done.
- RF will bring an update to the Board at the December meeting.

#### Proposal for SEL Team

- RF reminded of the departure of LA in September and the need to determine how the SEL is structured going forward.
- RF talked of his suggestion that he take on the role of Director of Education and Standards alongside his CEO role, advising that much of the work he has completed this year will be taken by SB under her new role as DSC.
- TS expressed his concerns at this format and questioned if the CEO should be taking such a specific role.
- RF noted that the Task and Finish group did look at many other options. LA added that there is not an ESM who is qualified to take on the additional support. MB will be taking on some of the responsibilities overseeing the ESM team. The Board discussed the compounding factor of MB departing in December which has restricted options. MB will be ESM for the 2 secondary schools and will support RF with the other aspects of this area over the Autumn Term whilst a replacement for him is sought.
- GB noted the need to consider timelines to ensure recruitment is possible before MB leaves the Trust.
- ME highlighted that RF will have a clearer view of the work in this area to support future recruitments which is a positive.
- GB talked of the induction period required for a new member of the team and the continued support from RF needed during this time.
- The Board agreed there is concern over this plan but there is no other path clearly available. RE reminded that a decision was reached by the T&F group delegated to undertake this discussion.
- RF asked the Board to delegate authority for the T&F group to finalise the Job Description for the replacement of MB. TS noted this should be approved by the full Board. GB supported this. AN argued this and reminded this is a 2<sup>nd</sup> tier position.
- As there was not full agreement a vote was taken on the delegation of the JD approval to the T&F group.
- 9 for and 1 against. Carried by majority.

JB joined the meeting.

## 5.

#### **Chairs Business**

**Due to the Chair arriving later to the meeting this item was conducted following the Premises and CEO updates.**

- JB talked of the concerns raised over the decisions delegated to committees and agreed that those made

within these meetings should come back to the full Board for approval unless there is documented agreement by the Board that the subcommittee can make those decisions.

- TS advised JB of his concern over how the membership of these groups is determined noting the need to look at the skills of the Directors.
- JB talked of the on-going issues at St Mary's Buckfast and the continuing discussions regarding the Scheme of Delegation. The complaint from them has been investigated and a report produced. Bishop Mark is planning to meet with the Abbot President of the Benedictine Order. HL to arrange for a copy of all correspondence relating to this to be sent to the Bishop (copy to JB). Cannot have an academy within an academy.
- Discussions on the structure of a panel to hear the complaint. Panel determined to include DR, JV and GB. Independent member to be confirmed.
- JB noted the generally positive feedback during the RSC meeting.

Action – send all correspondence relating to the Buckfast Complaint to the Bishop

## 8. Education and Standards

- LA provided some narrative to the documents provided to the Board in advance, talking about:
  - Ofsted inspections
  - KPIs and Data – there are some discrepancies with the data feeding into this document so this has not been sent out.
  - Clusters – positive feeling across the schools and constructive discussions already taking place.
  - Assessment – Scomis have been working on the provision of across the Trust data and LA presented samples of how this will look. DR asked if this will replace Target Tracker and when. LA confirmed it will and the historical data just needs to be tidied up. The plan is to have this in place in September.
- LA provided an update on St Catherine's Wimborne and advised pupil numbers are at the predicted level although still well under the PAN.
- JB asked if there is a better perception of the Trust now among the parents. AH acknowledged this is much improved and parents seem to be supportive. There is a new Head in place for September and a strong Deputy who has come from Northampton to support as Lead Practitioner.
- MB had provided an updated Safeguarding report. LA informed that another Trust was impressed with the robust processes in place.
- ME asked about the decision on who will take the DSL role with KW being seconded to St Nicholas Primary. LA advised there are plans within the current team to cover this.

### Data

- LA highlighted some discrepancies with the data provided through the collation process which means the information provided was not correct.

- LA provided some key points of where the data differs and the improved numbers noted from SA checking this.
- LA advised that 65% of pupils across the Trust are in line with national statistics.
- MB will be presenting on this at the next Board meeting in October.
- DR suggested this information should be shared with parents to show the trajectory and publicise the improvements to attract more students.
- MO and SB gave their apologies and left the meeting.

#### Curriculum

- LA advised the RSC guided the Trust to establish a standardised curriculum across the primaries and informed of discussions of what is used to enable this.
- DR raised his concern that by placing a blanket requirement across all schools may impact those who have worked their way up to Good.
- Consistent approach in 4 areas across the Trust.
- JB thanked LA for everything she has done for the Trust.

#### AH

- AH advised that the ESMs joined the committee last week to discuss their work and discuss how they can be supported by the committee.
- AH talked of the number of schools where development is still below national average.
- Teacher predictions were generally closer to the results so it looks like this gap is closing.
- 7 schools are at risk based on the data provided at the meeting.
- Neil Maslen has been asked to look more closely at the schools involved in the Writing Project due to the variation in results from these.
- The committee reviewed the time spent on various aspects of the ESM role.
- The Link Director role was discussed following the meeting.

## 9. Finance and Resources

#### CFOO Report

- KC advised of some staff movement due to the relocation of the central office.
- SA asked about the level of funding needed to cover all works to schools. KC advised this is estimated at £3m and explained what the Trust actually has available. Priority 1 items are being focused on and will be reported through the Finance and Resources Committee.
- Discussions on the ownership of the properties and the support needed from the Diocese. Maintenance and improvements will be on the next agenda.

#### Management accounts

- No questions.

#### Budget

- KC advised that the Teacher Pay Award has been included in the budget at 2% but it has been announced

that this will now be 2.75%. KC highlighted the concern of what figure this is taken from and if it takes in to account NI, Pension etc.

- KC drew attention to the schools who have negative reserves and talked of the discussion surrounding pooling the GAG. This conversation has been started with schools and the RSC are keen for the Trust to do this. This enables clearer reporting. A recommendation from the Finance and Resources committee will come to the December Board meeting regarding this.
- SA talked of the level of negative reserves against the PAN of those schools which means different discussions need to take place. KC noted this needs to link into the strategic planning discussions. The Board discussed this issue in depth.
- AN talked of the agreement at the committee meeting that schools will not be allowed to set a deficit budget and if KC believes they cannot balance this will be referred back to the committee with clear reasons why.
- TS noted the need to look at the issues across the whole Trust not one school at a time. There needs to be a strategy for this.
- RE reminded that the fundamental purpose of this Trust is to provide Catholic education for the children in their care.
- KC advised that the committee reviewed a full schedule of schools budgets and predicted student numbers for future years.
- KC drew attention to the adjustments made to the budget following instruction from the committee.
- AN reminded that those schools with a recovery plan in place still need to set a balance budget but are not expected to meet the 1% surplus requirement. KC advised of the 2 schools who cannot produce a balanced budget.
- JB asked what the process was for the move towards pooled GAG. KC advised a working group will look at the aspects of this and a recommendation will be brought to the December meeting.
- KC provided details of the predicted surplus over the next 3 years.
- KC will provide a summary following the meeting to clarify this information.
- SA questioned what discussions have been had with the schools regarding the change in assumptions. KC acknowledged this has not yet been done as the budget has not yet been approved by the Board. Once this is confirmed this will be shared with the schools.
- The Board approved the budget subject to the circulation from KC.

Action – KC to provide a clarification note on the budget and on predicted surplus over next 3 years

Decision – Budget Approved

#### Committee Chair Update

- AN advised the committee have committed to looking at the secondary schools at every meeting.
- AN raised the issues with the banking arrangements and KC asked for permission to look at options to move to another provider. All agreed.



- AN advised the committee's Holding Management to Account document has been created and populated.
- LA left the meeting – AN gave thanks to her for all the work she has done to drive forward the improvements across the trust.

Decision –  
Agreement for KC  
to look at  
alternative  
banking provision

JB left the meeting and AN resumed the role of Chair.

## 10. Audit and Risk

- DR provided some updates from the committee and the internal audits which have taken place.
- One area still to be worked on is VAT both in schools and centrally. Training is to be provided on this.
- The Risk register will be brought to the Board twice a year and reviewed by the Committee at each meeting.
- Safeguarding processes will be a focus for the committee at the next meeting. AH added that inclusion was also a concern in the Ofsted report which prompted this focus.
- DR proposed a new member of the committee to be co-opted. Board approved.

Decision – Co-  
opted member of  
the A&R  
committee  
approved

## 11. Governance and Management

### GovernorHub

- HL presented a demonstration of this facility to show the Board how this can be used for storage and sharing of documents.
- The Board were able to view the various function of the provision and the ability to access School information at all times rather than ask for minutes etc to be sent to HL.
- The Board approved the purchase of GovernorHub for the Trust and for all schools.

Decision –  
Approval to  
purchase the  
GovernorHub  
Service for the  
Trust Board and  
all Schools

### Governance Strategy

- AH introduced the document and explained the background to its establishment following the responses from the Board regarding where the Trust is strategically.
- AH talked through the document and the steps within the Annual Improvement Plan.
- AN questioned where this document sits in relation to the Strategic Plan. AH advised she has worked with TS to establish this and informed that the Strategic Plan sits at the top and there are then a number of strategies underneath of which this is one.
- TS noted this process is being done backwards, the Strategic Plan is not yet fully established and would usually inform the plans beneath it.
- GB recognised the work AH has done and noted that everything done by the Board is Governance. All priorities in the plan appear to be about pupil progress which is not the complete responsibility of the MAT.
- GB challenged the document AH has used to begin this process advising he believes it is out of date and there are newer formats available which would be far better used.
- AN noted that RF shared this with the RSC and that the following letter stated she was pleased to see a strategy



in Governance emerging. RF noted the comments from other members of the Board are useful.

- AN stated he does not believe the Board are ready to approve the document and asked for comments from Directors to AH over the summer with a view to discuss at the Strategic meeting in October.
- TS reminded of his request for all Directors to respond to the discussions had at the strategy meeting. All to respond.
- AH noted that if the MAT were to be inspected she would be extremely unhappy sitting there without a document to support the plans.

Action – All to provide feedback to AH on the Governance Strategy  
Action – All to respond to the Strategy Document from TS

#### Link Director

AH prepared a paper following a meeting with the Education and Standards committee which was shared with the Board prior to the meeting.

- DR noted the time commitment expected which is not always possible for those Board members who are working or have other commitments. DR recommended there may be some other ways to support and monitor the schools for those with time limitations.
- RE supported that having a specified commitment could cause some issues for those with other commitments.
- AN feels the role could become too formal and push Directors to get involved in areas they may not feel comfortable to.
- AH reminded of the reasons for the introduction of Link Directors and the need to develop the role now to ensure all schools are receiving the same support.
- AH suggested the Lead Director roles also need to be laid out in the same way.
- AN asked for any comments to be sent to AH within the next 2 weeks.
- HL to look at linking Directors to Clusters.

Action – All to send comments on the Link Director role to AH  
Action – HL to link Directors with Clusters

#### Skills Audit

- AH recommended a Skill Audit format for the Board to use and asked for these to be returned to her by the end of the summer holidays.
- AN noted it may be difficult for all to be clear on what each score looks like and may require some guidance on this.

Action – All to complete Skills Audit and return to AH

#### Meeting Dates – Confirmed

8<sup>th</sup> May – This Finance and Resources meeting needs to be moved due to the change in Bank Holiday. HL will advise the committee of the revised date.

## 12. Policies

- Staff Code of Conduct – Approved
- Child Protection – Approved
- Finance – Approved
- Sex Education – Approved
- Curriculum – SA had a query with this which he would send to LA.

## 13. Close

Meeting closed at 15.40

### **Future Board Meeting Dates**

All meetings to commence at 10.30am – location to be confirmed

Friday	4th October 2019	St Nicholas Primary, Exeter
Friday	13th December 2019	St Boniface College
Friday	28th February 2020	TBC
Friday	15th May 2020	TBC
Friday	24th July 2020	TBC

These minutes were approved at the Board meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2019