

**Minutes of CAST Board meeting held on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2020**  
**At the CAST Offices, Plymouth and remotely via Zoom from 11am**

Attendees:	John Burnett (JB)	-	Foundation Director (Chair)
	Andy Nicholls (AN)	-	Foundation Director
	Sandy Anderson (SA)	-	Foundation Director
	Terry Stockley (TS)	-	Foundation Director
	Deacon Richard Edwards (RE)	-	Foundation Director
	Jacqui Vaughan (JV)	-	Foundation Director
	Ann Harris (AH)	-	Foundation Director
	Dan Rogerson (DR)	-	Academy Director
	Graham Briscoe (GB)	-	Co-opted Director
	Les Robins (LR)	-	Co-opted Director
	Zoe Batten (ZB)	-	CEO
	Canon Mark O'Keeffe (CnM)	-	Member

In Attendance:	Karen Cook (KC)	-	CFOO
	Kevin Butlin (KB)	-	Director of Education and Standards
	Sarah Burreto (SB)	-	DSC
	Helen Laird (HL)	-	Clerk

**1. Welcome and Opening Prayer**

Opening prayer by SB.

**2. Apologies and Confirmation of Quorum**

Laura Fox sent apologies.  
 Quorum met.

- 3.** DR and JB confirmed their standing interests  
 AH advised she is no longer Chair of Governors at St Mary's.  
 JV noted that the company she works for provides services used by the Trust.  
 All Directors have received the Annual Return Booklet for completion which will update the Declarations of Interest on record.

**4. Health and Safety**

**Annual Health and Safety and Premises Update**

- The Board received the report prior to the meeting.
- PS noted the difficult time education has faced in the past 6 months and acknowledged the support of staff and outside agencies to enable the schools to remain operational.
  - H&S Audit scores have reflected better compliance and reporting.
  - Implementation of key holding and manned response processes in place Trust wide.
  - Reporting on OSHENS still needs some work in areas. KB and the ESM team are supporting with this.
  - Local Authority provision for pupils of concern has reduced which causes some issues for schools.
  - H&S Committee noted an unclear process for resolution of audit actions and feedback to central team for monitoring. This is now being put in place.
  - H&S Governor training is a focus.
  - PS asked for the Board to let him know if there is anything they feel they need to know throughout the year.

**Decision/Action**

- SA noted the professional support provided by PS to schools over recent months and thanked him for this.
- SA noted that violent incidents have increased by 40 and questioned why this has happened when the schools were closed for a period of time. PS reminded that schools were not closed, just reduced attendance. PS noted the reporting has improved greatly but also that there are one or two children who have on-going issues and account for a majority of the incidents. PS has been encouraging Heads to record these more to allow a bigger picture to be built for future support.
- GB spoke as the Lead Director for Health and Safety and noted he had hoped to have the minutes from the recent committee meeting included in the agenda for today.
- GB advised that some schools have not been following requirements and advised that training is needed in different areas.
- TS endorsed the comments on the work PS has been doing. TS queried the objective to set September 2022 for all schools to achieve an audit score of 95%, should this not be set for 2021. PS advised that it is unlikely that a full cycle of schools will have had their audits by 2021. GB added that some of the schools that improvement is needed in will not be inspected in the coming 12 months.
- TS asked about the reporting of near miss incidents and how will this be done. PS will be providing further information to the schools and support with the OSHENS system. Training on this is needed.
- AN asked about RIDDOR and queried if the Board should be notified of these incidents. GB noted this could be highlighted in the CEO report to the Board. AN requested this to be notified to the Board at the time as it is reported externally. PS will copy HL on notices to the SELT who will in turn disseminate to the Board.

#### **Healthy and Safety Policy**

- SA queried why the details of the H&S Governor should be published on the website. PS clarified that this would be contact via the school rather than the private details. This can be reflected in the policy.
- SA asked about inspections and PS confirmed the wording will be amended to read 'at least termly'.
- SA raised a question about the regularity of inspections. PS explained the policy is an overview of the minimum expectations and the detail of this is provided within OSHENS. KC suggested adding in a statement to clarify this.
- SA questioned training for H&S Governors. PS advised that he and Steve Hole will be looking at what training should be provided and will confirm details at a later date.
- TS asked about the Flow chart on page 8 – should there be time scales included. PS will circulate an updated version.
- Policy approved with the noted changes.
- JB thanked PS and he left the meeting.

#### **5. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

The Board unanimously elected JB as Chair for the rest of this year after he confirmed his agreement to stay until the end of the Academic Year.

AN was elected as Vice-Chair for this year following his nomination by JB and full support of the Board.

Action – PS to copy HL on RIDDOR reports to SELT who will in turn share with the Board

Action – PS to make amendments to H&S Policy and re-circulate a final version to all via HL  
Decision – H&S Policy approved with suggested amendments

Decisions – JB elected as Chair and AN as Vice-Chair

Agreement to recommend 2<sup>nd</sup> Term for Sandy Anderson to the Bishop

- SA would be happy to remain involved for another term but is likely to remain in post for a year or 2.
- GB proposed SA be re-appointed for another term due to the continuation of his historic CAST knowledge.
- All were in agreement. HL will seek approval from the Bishop for another term for SA.

Agreement of 2<sup>nd</sup> Term for Dan Rogerson

- DR would be happy to take on another term and will remain committed for as long as he is able.
- All in agreement and DR was appointed to a 2<sup>nd</sup> term as an Academy Director from 17/10/2020 for 4 years.

Action – HL to seek approval from the Bishop for reappointment of SA

Decision – DR appointed to a 2<sup>nd</sup> term as Academy Director

## 6. Minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Minutes were agreed to be accurate and approved by all.

### Action Summary July 2020

19.47 – CES have provided draft articles which have gone to Buckfast to be looked at. SB and CnM meeting with Buckfast shortly and will then work with ZB. Hoping to provide an update at the next strategic meeting.

## 7. Chair's Business (Oral)

Welcome to ZB and thank you for a great start.

Thank you to KC and KB for their continued work over what has been a difficult 6 months.

## 8. Chief Executive Update

CEO Report – A Vision into Reality

ZB presented her vision to the Board.

- ZB drew out the key words from the vision statement. One Trust and one family of schools, providing excellent Catholic education to every child.
- ZB talked of the Strategic Aims of the Board and how she plans to build on this and the improvement strategy.
- ZB noted that a greater degree of alignment is needed across the Trust, we need to remove barriers.
- ZB talked of the importance of investing in the people in our Trust and retaining them.
- ZB talked of the systems and structures in place to support this vision. Continue to build on technology and develop a portal for the Trust where collaborative working will be the norm. Peer review processes will be important to this sharing of best practice, allowing practices to embed.
- ZB noted the number of schools awaiting inspection and advised the team are working hard towards supporting those schools.
- ZB detailed her plans with regards to developing middle leaders, talent spotting, ensuring leaders are in the right areas. Supporting and developing Catholic Leaders. ZB hopes to be able to work with the Diocese to provide the support needed.
- ZB noted there are exciting opportunities with Diocesan colleagues to develop a number of areas within the Trust.
- Key focus will be on the SEND pathway across the Trust to add capacity to the system.

- ZB spoke about her plans to work with AH, KB, CnM and SB to promote a picture of Governance underpinned with good training and clear understanding of their role. LGBs are subcommittees of the Board.
- ZB wants the Trust to become an employer of choice and build relationships with local and national Trusts as well as international opportunities.
- ZB wants to strengthen the links with local parishes and their involvement with the schools.
- Develop links with PCC and the Chamber of Commerce to secure additional apprenticeship levy.
- Social action projects will be something to look at in the future.
- At the heart of the work the Gospel Values and virtues underpin everything. A leave no stone unturned approach. Putting staff and pupil wellbeing at the heart of the organisation.
- A survey will be going to colleagues across the Trust today to establish how things are at this moment.
- Every child will be in an excellent Catholic school receiving the best education every day.
- JB thanked ZB for her inspirational presentation. Raising pupils' expectations is hugely important.
- TS raised the issue of financial stability and noted the clear concerns in the 3-year forecast. ZB acknowledged this is a key area for the Trust and assured the SELT are very focused on this, reviewing those schools that are financially challenged. Working with Diocesan colleagues on models of leadership and a focus needs to be on growing the schools to improve pupil numbers. ZB noted that many of the ways of improving schools are not financially related and could have this knock on effect. TS noted that a more strategic view is needed on what a sustainable Catholic education provision in the south-west looks like.
- AH thanked ZB for the presentation which reflected the passion she had at interview. Noted that in December the SoD can be revisited and queried when this will be reviewed. ZB responded that this needs to be done sooner rather than later. ZB would be happy to work with AH and others to do this.

## 9. **Education and Standards**

Director of Education Report

Update from Chair of Education and Standards

- KB's report was provided to the Board along with AH's summary of the committee meeting prior to this meeting.
- AH ran through the salient points of the items discussed and the decisions made at this meeting.
- KB advised that the general picture in terms of Covid recovery is that all schools opened fully in September. Attendance was good for the first few weeks. This is dropping across the Trust and nationally as the autumn coughs and colds are seen along with concerns over Covid.
- Majority of pupils are not experiencing the "lost generation" worries predicted in the media. ESMs will have visited every school by the end of next week.
- Data capture has been brought forward to give a clear picture for the team of any gaps. Expectations are still AR+ by the end of the year.

- A Level and GCSE outcomes were affected by the issues with Centre Assessed Grades this year. Once resolved the results were positive across both schools. Rigorous processes were in place to ensure the grades were a true reflection of achievement. There are still some concerns as detailed in the report for certain groups of students and subjects.
- Significant issues discussed at committee regarding the data analysis systems in place across the primaries. System used by the secondary schools is very good but reporting structures are being worked on to ensure the data provided is what is needed to be seen.
- Priory Learning Trust are engaged to work with SBC and provide support on Teaching and Learning. This appears to be working very well following a stall prior to the lockdown period. Engagement is good and a report to the RSC has been submitted.
- KWH is in place as Executive Head for the 2 secondary schools and is committed to both schools. She is visible in both schools and on the ground when there. She has a clear vision on the journey needed. Need a more holistic view across both schools. Careers Guidance and Education is to be reviewed against Gatsby Benchmarks. SBC has no MFL for some year groups as it has not been selected as an option.
- JB congratulated all on the work done to enable a successful opening of the schools.
- JB asked for confirmation that the changes made for SBC have been successful and if standards are improving. KB advised that this summer's P8 and A8 are much improved. KB advised that the feedback from visitors indicates there has been a significant cultural shift in the school.
- JB asked for the congratulations of the Board to be passed on to KWH and the staff at both ND and SBC for the work being done.
- The Diocese have supported Graham Johnson to remain as Chair of the LGB for the 2 secondary schools until the end of this Year. The combined LGB have met this week and are now working to reconstitute the LGB from January when a new Chair will be elected.

## 10. Finance and Resources

### CFOO Report

#### 3 Year Forecast

- Changes have been made to the 3-year forecast as requested and KC re-circulated this for agreement.
- All were happy with the amendments made and approved the budget.
- AN drew attention to the concerns detailed and the potential work that will be needed going forward. Proposals will be brought to the Board meeting in December following discussion at F&R. SA queried whether a separate meeting may be a better idea.

#### Draft Year End Management Accounts

- KC advised she is working through these and all but 3 schools are showing an improved position. Due mostly to the reduced opening of schools in the summer term.
- Cashflow will be updated to December 2021 which will be provided to F&R at the next meeting and the Board meeting in December.

Decision – 3-Year  
Budget Approved

**Teacher Pay Award**

- DR noted his Declaration of Interest and removed himself from discussions on this.
- KC detailed the pay award and advised this was included in budgets set previously. The pay award was approved

Decision –  
Teacher Pay  
Award Approved

**Internal Audit Tender Proposal**

- DR advised that Devon Audit Partnership, Francis Clark and RSM presented to the panel as part of the tender process. All had strengths and weaknesses and were fully discussed by the panel before recommendation was taken to the A&R Committee.
- It was felt Francis Clark have the experience needed, are in the locality of the Trust and offer good value for money.
- The Audit and Risk committee recommended to the Board that Francis Clark be appointed at the Internal Auditors for the Trust. JB declared an interest as he has connections with Francis Clark and withdrew himself from the vote on this.
- The appointment was approved by all else present.

Decision – Francis  
Clerk appointed  
as Internal  
Auditors

**Proposal for disposal of St Boniface Land (Speedway)**

- KC and AN advised this has been discussed at the F&R committee and the recommendation is to approve a sale of this land in principal to move forward with the stages required in this. A final proposal would then be brought back to the Board for approval. JB asked for confirmation that full advice will be taken to ensure the money for this is maximised.
- KC advised this land is not located near the school and has been leased to another organisation for a number of years. It is not used by the school and would not be due to flooding.
- The board discussed the need to re-invest any profits from a sale back into the school.
- The Board approved the proposal for work to be done towards the sale of this land and will receive details of a final proposal at a later date.

Decision –  
Approval in  
principle of the  
sale of the St  
Boniface Land

**Update from Chair of Finance and Resources**

- All points covered above.

**11. Audit and Risk  
Risk Register**

- The committee are reviewing this and it is brought to the Board for information.

**CST Covid Risk Paper**

- This is vital to include in the current climate as we move into the coming months.

**Update from Chair of Audit and Risk Committee**

- DR is grateful to the committee for reviewing this at every meeting and welcomed any feedback from the Board.
- Operational work is ongoing in the schools against their risk registers.
- Report from internal auditors on Business Continuity which raised some questions which are being reviewed. Awaiting some delayed reports from the Internal Auditors.
- GB noted that the Board risks are show stoppers and advised that the new Internal Auditor selected have used this to plan their audit.

**12. Governance and Management  
Board Self Review**

- AH advised she is waiting for 2 returns for this review so has not been able to provide a summary to this meeting. Asked for these to be done.
- SB reviewed the audit in December last year and identified some areas for training. Formatsio training has been offered to Governors and Directors but there has been a low take up and SB would like this to be made mandatory. JV responded that she has tried to complete the modules but has not received the log in information to access this. SB will support this to enable JV to access.

Annual Returns

- To be returned to HL.

**13. Close**

Meeting closed at 13.25

**Future Board Meeting Dates**

All meetings to commence at 10.30am at the CAST Offices, Plymouth

Friday	11th December 2020	10.30am
Friday	26 <sup>th</sup> February 2021 - AGM	10.30am
Friday	26th February 2021	11.30am
Friday	14th May 2021	10.30am
Friday	23rd July 2021	10.30am