

**Minutes of CAST Board meeting held on Friday 14th December
at St Boniface House, Ashburton from 10.30am**

Attendees:	John Burnett (JB)	-	Director (Chair)
	Sandy Anderson (SA)	-	Director
	Fr Mark O'Keeffe (FrM)	-	Director
	Andy Nicholls (AN)	-	Director
	Maria Edwards (ME)	-	Director
	Terry Stockley (TS)	-	Director
	Graham Briscoe (GB)	-	Director
	Dan Rogerson (DR)	-	Director
	Jacqui Vaughan (JV)	-	Director
	Ann Harris (AH)	-	Director
	Laura Sprackman (LS)	-	Director
	Raymond Friel (RF)	-	CEO
	Karen Cook (KC)	-	CFOO
In Attendance:	Alan Morris (AM)	-	ESG Chair
	Kate Griffin (KG)	-	DSC
	Helen Laird (HL)	-	Clerk
	Louise Adams (LA)	-	DofES

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer

Opening prayer by AH.

2. Apologies and Confirmation of Quorum

Quorum met.

Thanks were noted to FrR who has resigned as a member of the Board.

3. Declaration of Interest

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

JB advised that there will be discussion relating to the letter received from solicitors with regards to St Mary's Buckfast. DR advised that he knows Jackie Eason personally who has offered Governor training support so he will remove himself from the meeting for this discussion.

Additional items added to agenda

JB provided feedback from the recent meeting with Lord Agnew and the successful discussions which took place. Feedback from Lord Agnew show he was impressed with RF and KC and the progress made by the trust.

TS asked about the presentations made to Lord Agnew. JB provided some context to the verbal representations made and the questions raised as part of this process.

Sited the trust as an example of one who is getting to grips with problems.

KC added that the outcome is likely to be the lifting of the FNTI in the early New Year following the report from the ESFA.

LS asked what the process in place is to support the trust following the lifting of the notice. KC advised on this.

Decision/Action

All non-directors were asked to leave the meeting and the discussion moved to Part II. See separate minutes.
All non-directors re-joined the meeting.
ME joined the meeting.
JB advised of the agreement of the Board to confirm RF's appointment as CEO as permanent.

4. Minutes of previous meeting of 26th October 2018

4.1 Minutes including Part 2 approved as an accurate record.

Approved

5. Matters arising and actions from last board meeting

Status updated on Actions Summary.

6. CEO Report

6.1 Report

RF provided further detail to the salient points of his report.

- Vision and Values and the lead into the Strategic Plan
- Staff Code of Conduct – most Heads have returned their declarations to confirm all staff have read this. DR noted the points raised by LGBs regarding the areas which are not covered within the SoD such as exclusion processes. RF responded that the SoD has been tested in this nature recently and the ESM will begin the process involving Governors appropriately. It seems the SoD works well with regards to this area or school process.
- RF talked of discussions with the DSC group with regards to training of Governors. There has not been the capacity to do this previously within the Trust and the Diocese have been asked to be involved going forward. Proposals are expected in the New Year. TS asked if there is a risk bringing in external training with regards to the SoD. RF responded that there is a lack of understanding of the SoD and this would be an area to be looked at. Discussion on the importance of control over the information being delivery to LGBs. RF agreed the SEL and Board will work closely with the Diocese to deliver this.
- Cluster proposals – expressions of interest from 8 head teachers received. Selection process has established 3 Headteachers who will be invited to come in to discuss the pilot which will be running in January. The Headteachers will be invited to report back to the ESG and Board across the spring term.
- Cluster 1 will be in Cornwall – 4 schools
- Cluster 2 in Torbay – cluster co-ordinator from outside of the area.
- Cluster 3 is in Devon North – 4 schools
- RF talked of the work to be done in the East area and the hope that the positive news from the pilots will filter out to inspire other schools.
- LS asked if the pilots are very structured or will there be freedom for each to do things differently. RF advised this will be discussed on Monday with the ESMs and pilot leads. Each model is slightly different due to location and make up of clusters.

- TS asked how the external Cluster Lead in Torbay will work. LA responded that the cluster does not have an obvious strength of leadership and explained why the Head has been chosen detailing her link to 3 of the 4 schools already and the experience she brings.
- RF advised Nick Gibb, Minister of State at the Department of Education, would like to meet with the SEL. It is not known what the subject of the meeting will be. AM noted that Iain Grafton is also meeting with Nick Gibb as part of the school trust he works with so this could be a Plymouth discussion.

Secondary Education

- RF talked of the proposals for Secondary Education and the discussions at the ESG meeting last week.
- AN noted the intention of the paper is a briefing as the full proposal will come to the January meeting. The paper does not emphasise the full discussions at the ESG meeting. AN explained that the view point of the ESG had been to move to an Executive Leadership format across the 2 schools by September with further steps to review what a full merger might look like. ESG are discussing this at present and following the close of this group a working group may be needed to take this further.
- RF suggested that different outlines for shared leadership should be reviewed to enable clear decision making.
- AN advised agreement is needed on the programme for moving to shared leadership to enable this to happen by September 2019. Subsequently, further research can be done to establish the best ways forward towards merger.
- LS asked if the SEL have thought about the resources which will be needed. RF noted the possible need for a project manager and the potential difficulties with leadership decisions.
- GB queried whether high level technical support is needed to look through the financial aspects of the possibilities.
- RF advised the SEL will need to consult with Bishop Mark to obtain his views. FrM talked of a brief discussion which has already taken place and the preferred option is to be committed to secondary education for both sexes in co-education. JB noted the need to warn the Bishop of conversations that may need to be had with regards to sale of property and where those funds go.
- AM advised his request to close the ESG a little earlier has been declined. This area is one of the key areas which the RSC will need to see is progressing to enable the finalising of the ESG.

Leadership and Management

- All interim heads are now on permanent contracts and RF expressed thanks to FrM and KG for the support given to this process.
- RF advised this is a recognition of legal reality, not a change in policy but it gives security to the schools and the trust as a whole.
- RF talked of the recruitment of new Headteachers at some of the primary schools.
- LA provided some context to the changes in the Mary of the Cross Federation.

- TS asked if appointment notes are sent out to all schools for information and noted this would be useful information for the directors to receive.
- KG asked about the cost of the induction programmes RF has taken part in. RF advised there has been no cost.
- AN referred to the pressure on the SEL and the excessive hours worked and asked what the Board can do to support in this area. RF suggested there could be a protocol in place with regards to email communication.
- KC talked of the issue of travel and possible other ways to communicate with schools. RF agreed with this but also noted the need to be visual in schools where possible.
- DR noted the standard of information being shared is very high but referred to the need to know about Ofsted outcomes for link schools to enable knowledgeable conversations. LA responded that there is a briefing document that is prepared for link directors who may be spoken to by the inspectors.
- LA noted the number of things which were put on hold until RF was in post which has increased work load and suggested linking directors to each central area for a better understanding of support needed. AH will be happy to support the DofES. Discussion regarding a possible Task and Finish group to support the SEL. RF added this could be a group who look at Governance aspects as a whole including the Strategic Plan and Communication along with SEL workload. Further discussions to take place surrounding this to find a way forward.

Solicitor Letter from St Mary's Buckfast

- RF provided background information which has led to the receipt of this letter.
- FrM noted the requirement to create a separate SoD for St Mary's whilst enabling them to stay within CAST.
- KG provided a further update on current discussions. A letter from the Bishop will be shared with the Board.

**JB made his apologies and left the meeting at this point.
AN took over the Chair.**

6.2 Policy Review Framework

The Board were provided with the document prior to the meeting for review and RF advised this piece of work is producing coherence across the trust. The website is now being reorganised to show policies efficiently.

6.3 Strategic Plan

RF has suggested a task and finish group be established to look more closely at this and drive it forward to create strategic objectives and priorities.

AN asked for any high level comments from the Board today.

- SA noted that training for Governors is not included. AH feels this sits under the "Strengthen Leadership and Governance" section.
- TS noted the need to have the "how" included in the plan.
- AH appreciated having dates well into the future.

- AN noted that Safeguarding is buried in strategy 5 and questioned whether this should have its own section.
- The Board discussed a single management information system and the need to be clear this is what is needed and will work for the trust.
- AN noted that some milestones are descriptive without being specific.
- AN feels that to produce an updated version for the Jan Board is too much of a rush with other areas of focus at the next meeting. Suggested bringing this to the meeting on 1st March.
- It was agreed that a Task & Finish group would be established to help RF develop the strategic plan. TS suggested there should be clear Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish group. RF to put this together and seek volunteers for this group. GB recommended using Doodle to find a date.

7. CFOO Report

7.1 Management Accounts to October

These were reviewed by the Finance committee at the end of November and KC talked of the salient points.

TS noted the need to begin providing forecasts. KC responded that she plans to bring a mid-year revised budget in January. KC confirmed monthly accounts will be uploaded to the secure website.

7.2 Finance Matter Updates inc KPI

- KC advised that schools recovery plans expected by 11th January.
- KC provided an update on Business Manager roles, advising that the position in Plymouth will be re-filled. Internal and external recruitment possibilities.
- DR asked about the time that is allocated to complete these roles and the experience of those taking the positions. KC provided information on this.
- KC talked of the departure of the HR Manager and possible solutions with regards to replacement.
- KC advised on some issues with the KPIs for certain schools.
- GB asked if a piece of software is used which links curriculum planning with finance. KC advised this is something which is looked at for the secondaries but it is not appropriate for primaries. An alternative provision being investigated.
- AN asked about the funding in Plymouth and if the guaranteed levels have been resolved. KC provided some details and advised confirmation has been received.
- KC advised she has put herself forward for Schools Forum in Plymouth from January.

7.3 HR Report

No comments or questions.

7.4 Statutory Accounts for Approval

- KC advised that the statement regarding an on-going concern which was queried by the Audit Committee has been changed.
- KC provided updates on the accounts following the Finance Committee meeting in November.
- KC detailed the key changes between management accounts and published accounts.
- KC asked for the accounts to be agreed in principle subject to a few final changes as detailed to the Board.
- The Auditors have raised no concerns.
- DR added the feedback from Internal Auditors who have been testing schools.
- KC is to arrange a Letter of Representation.
- SA noted his is stated in the accounts as being a member of the Finance committee but he has never been such. KC will remove this.
- TS queried his full attendance as he believes he missed a meeting during the year. HL to check.
- All present approved the accounts with the final changes discussed. JB to sign the final version for submission.
- KC highlighted key points on the KIDD.
- DR referred to the lifting of the FNTI and questioned what the plan is to communicate this externally. GB added this should be linked to school improvements made.
- SA offered thanks to KC and the team.

Action – KC to remove SA from Finance Committee

Action – HL to check TS attendance for 2017-18

Decision – Statutory Accounts approved with final changes as discussed

7.5 Appointment of External Auditors

KC noted the current auditors are on a 5 year contract. Approval will be sought at the AGM in January to re-tender.

7.6 Top Slice

- KC provided some information about the research she has done to provide her recommendation.
- AN asked how the schools will feel about a single percentage and noted they will want to see a list of services being received alongside the percentage.
- LS asked about the other trusts who are moving their percentage up and if they run an over and under programme. KC talked of the need to send end of year profit or loss back to the schools.
- The Board approved the principle of moving to single top slice and percentage to be proposed by KC.
- The Board agreed that the schools must know what they are getting for their money.
- GB asked about the apprenticeship levy.
- DR noted the need to ensure wording is changed so that the understanding that the services are there for the schools not that the centre is taking funds from them.
- AN asked about reassignment. KC provided details about this.

Decision – approval for single top slice

Action – KC to present a percentage for top slice to the Board

8. Director of Education and Standards

8.1 Progress Data Update

Summary data was provided for the Board and LA provided further details to the information reviewed.

- A meeting is scheduled with a company to ascertain if they can provide data analysis software for the trust as Target Tracker is not doing what is needed so a review of programmes is underway.
- Timings of producing this data in time for the Board meeting have meant that there are still questions to be asked.
- The Board discussed limitations in their experience with regards to understanding the data. AH recommended looking at this on The Key as there is a wealth of information available there. LA would be happy to provide some training in this area.
- LA noted the positive news that 23 of the schools are showing in national statistics as average or above average. The trust as a whole now shows as average.
- A full summary will be provided at the meeting in January.
- LA talked of the schools not confident in predictions and advised they are now going through the lists to identify students who need further interventions. More confident predictions are expected in January.
- The Board discussed the time taken to complete the report for today's meeting.
- SA asked about progress, LA advised this data will be added and explained the reason for the focus on attainment.

8.2 ESIP Monitoring Report

No comments or questions.

8.3 DoES Summary Report

- LA advised there are now only 2 schools in Special Measures and it is hoped one of them will come out this term. The other is more challenging but it is hoped for a good outcome in May.
- JV questioned why there are 2 grades with regards to Leadership and Management within the school Ofsted category document provided. LA explained she is trying to be clear where the problem sits.

8.4 Educational KPIs

Covered earlier in the meeting.

9. Safeguarding

9.1 Report

- LA advised that a school Safeguarding review that was booked for this week has not gone ahead as the Head was not aware of the meeting. There are concerns as the school in question is vulnerable.
- Discussion about Safeguarding training for LGBs.
- KC to work with HL to look at what training is required and what is available.
- LA/MB to advise on the best way of getting Safeguarding training into the LGBs.

Action – KC and HL to look at Safeguarding training for LGBs. LA/MB to advise on the best way of delivering this

10. Governance and Management

10.1 ESG Update

- AM advised of the items remaining on the agenda;
- Secondary Education – direction of travel and timescale
- Clusters – report back on the pilot and final model
- Future of Leadership in schools – what is the plan for improving this
- Board effectiveness – working with the Clerk to facilitate this. How to enable the Board to be more effective in its challenge whilst remaining strategic. AM provided an example of where areas of importance can be missed.
- Discussion with the Bishop to enable his wishes to be clear for the Board to deliver

10.2 Link Director Updates

- The Board agreed for reports to be shared on the secure section of the website. HL to facilitate.
- Any confidential areas not to be shared highlighted to HL. ME noted that these reports are shared with Ofsted so anything of this nature should not be within the report anyway.
- GB responded to the need to have any Lead Director updates included also.
- Allocation of schools needs to be reviewed due to changes within the Board. RF and HL to review.
- Lead Directors were confirmed as follows:
 - Safeguarding - JV
 - SEND - AH
 - H&S - GB
 - RS – FrM (new Cleric director to take this on)
 - Statutory – SA
- FrM talked of his plan to step off the Board with the addition of a new Cleric, this is to be discussed with the Bishop.
- Discussion on whether replacement Directors are required. If there is a shortfall in skills there would be need to replace.
- KC reminded of the need to ensure the structure is correct. HL and KC to review.

Action – share Link visit reports on the secure section of the website.

Action – KC and HL to review the structure of the Board

10.3 Preparation for Bishops attendance at January meeting

- RF proposed the AGM takes place prior to the Board meeting. 10am start. Separate from main Board business.
- The agenda for the AGM will include; Appointment of auditors, presentation of accounts and welcome the Bishop to present on his Vision for the trust.
- GB suggested forwarding questions prior to the meeting. RF will collate these.
- The Bishop would like to see who is on the Board, status and a summary of skills. HL will prepare this information.

Action – all to forward questions for the Bishop to RF prior to the AGM (deadline 18th January)
Action – HI to prepare details on the Board for the Bishop

10.4 NGA Training Proposal

RF circulated a proposal for training for the Board to review.

DR removed himself from the meeting due to his conflict of interest in this matter.

- RF advised the Board that since sending this to them AH has offered to provide a similar training at no cost.
- AH referred to her experience of NGA membership and the The Key, noting that she prefers The Key.
- AH provided a brief background to her work as a lead in national governance.
- AH's suggestion is that once the basic work is done an external person is brought in to evaluate what has been provided and the impact.
- SA welcomes the offer from AH and proposed this be accepted. All in agreement.
- AH to be Lead Director for Governance Training.
- DR returned to the meeting.

RF confirmed with the Board that they are happy for minutes to be published on the website. All were in agreement and RF will arrange for this to be actioned.

GB asked for a presentation on Ofsted Inspection changes. LA advised she can do this and will make arrangements.

Decision – AH approved as the training provider for Governance in CAST

Action – RF to arrange for minutes to be published on the website

Action – LA to arrange presentation on Ofsted Inspection Changes for the Board

11. Close

Meeting closed at 13.40

Future Board Meeting Dates

All meetings to commence at 10.30am at St Boniface House, St Lioba Conference Room.

25th January 2019
 1st March 2019
 29th March 2019
 26th April 2019
 14th June 2019
 26th July 2019

Minutes confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting as agreed by all present at the Board meeting on 25th January 2019.

Signed by the Chair of the Board, Lord J Burnett