

**Minutes of CAST Board meeting held on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023**  
**In person from 10.30am**

Attendees:	Ruth O'Donovan (RO)	-	Foundation Director (Chair)
	Andy Nicholls (AN)	-	Foundation Director
	Sandy Anderson (SA)	-	Foundation Director
	Ann Harris (AH)	-	Foundation Director
	Steve Hole (SH)	-	Foundation Director
	Deacon Nick Johnson (NJ)	-	Foundation Director
	Polly Montague (PM)	-	Foundation Director
	Graham Briscoe (GB)	-	Co-opted Director
	Alison Nettleship (ALN)	-	Co-opted Director
In Attendance:	Zoe Batten (ZB)	-	CEO
	Karl Murphy-Barnes (KMB)	-	CFO
	Rose Colpus-Fricker (RCF)	-	COO
	Kevin Butlin (KB)	-	Director of Education
	Helen Brown	-	DSC
	Leah Paiano (LP)	-	Clerk

**1. Welcome and Opening Prayer**

RO welcomed and led with a prayer.

**2. Apologies and Confirmation of Quorum**

Quorum met.

**3. Declaration of Interest**

NJ - Governor at St Edward's School and his wife is a school employee within CAST.

None declared.

**4.1 Minutes of previous meeting of 06.10.2023 and confidential minutes 06.10.2023**

Minutes of 06.10.2023 approved as an accurate record of the meeting

Confidential Minutes of 06.10.2023 approved as an accurate record of the meeting

**4.2 Action Summary – October 2023**

Updated on the Actions Summary.

23.17 RCF liaised with HB, CES and the Diocese. Position of caution to now use the suggested wording from the CES to support the Equalities Act 2010 not Admissions, await the new Bishop and not built into the proposed policies. Ongoing.

23.04 SELT prepare and A&R review at Feb meeting.

22.41 Ongoing

**Decision /Action**

Minutes from 06.10.23 approved

22.24 HB confirmed it has been discussed and awaiting an update from DfE and CES to be aligned with pastoral side of the Catholic church and to remain faithful to the teachings of the church. Ongoing but will become pressing.

Q. What is the position in terms of Admissions of transgender children, is it something to bring into school or speak to Diocese/HB first as have transgender pupils currently? HB confirmed managing on an individual basis, and to continue as we are.

22.08 Ongoing. Now complete. ZB suggests completing the action as the group has been set and will provide updates through Board reports.

21.34 SBC funding process, still with the solicitors, ESFA are chasing RCF.

## 5. Chair's Business

- **AC**

AC has decided to resign due to work commitments. A shame due to his skill set. RO suggests contacting him in the new academic year.

Succession planning for a Foundation Director and to speak to RO with suggestions.

- **Training**

Complete training and record on GovernorHub.

Q. Log Training or experience dealing with a specific issue? Training only.

Annual reviews to be completed next month. Can review training during those meetings.

Q. Will there be a form issued prior to the meeting with the Chair. RO to issue. External Review highlighted the positive use of these forms.

- **Governance Review Areas for Action**

ZB, RCF, RO and LP to meet to track the actions. Added to the A&R action tracker. Included in RCF's report.

- **Articles of Association**

Q. What is status of our Articles of Association? I note that the MAT website is still publishing 2013 version. Articles on the website are 2013 version and the 2021 version shows as pending. Hold a meeting with the Diocese to further work on these Articles in the new year and look at the Protocols. Members to approve and will need an extraordinary meeting.

RO thanks to AN, RCF, ZB and LP to try and finalise. HB and the Diocese have been carrying out their own research and thanks to them also.

TWN has been shared. There is an action plan and timelines to discuss at the next meeting.

Q. Is it live yet? No, just with Directors and Members. ZB will provide an update at the AGM as well. ZB has contacted the RD team on the required level of detail in the response letter.

Q. When it will be published? Notify just prior to publication but have been good at keeping ZB up to date. KB and ZB have met with school leaders. The carefully

All to complete and record training on Governor Hub

RO to share the annual review form

crafted strategy does not underestimate the seriousness, being process-driven so the school leaders can focus on the school,

Directors reiterated the Board's ongoing focus and commitment to the school.

## 6. CEO Update

Q. Do we have a member of the SLT with specific responsibilities for Attendance? Do all our LCBs have a governor with specific responsibility for Attendance. I attach a letter I am proposing to send to the Chairs of my Link Schools – Is it appropriate I should do that?

Attendance is national topic of focus. KB is responsible as DoE but distributed via every SIO, every HT, and LCB who are monitoring and challenging. A collective responsibility. The strategy in place is right, data is reported through E&S and the Board, restructure the E&S meetings to sharpen the focus. School attendance is being published in the CAST Edit.

### NJ arrived 10.58am

A letter from the Link Director helps to cement attendance as a key focus and priority. ZB welcomed the suggested letter from SA.

SA wants to demonstrate that Link Directors have a direct reporting responsibility to Chairs and how the organisation fits together, a more formal communication link.

Directors discussed whether this was operational but agreed that this is a strategic position. All Link Directors to use the template letter. Ensure that discussions with HTs don't discuss individual pupils, in early spring term there will be a Trust Attendance Policy to ensure there is a consistent standard in line with the DfE.

Link Directors agreed to trial it but not to become involved in attending further meetings.

Use the guidance and extract the bullet points to guide the visit, guidance sheet and include the attendance questions.

Q. CEO Report/DofE report - Why is the 2024 target for year 6 writing ARE (70%) lower than the 2023 outcome (72%) and national average (71%)

Q. Why is the Writing target for 2024 the only target that is lower than the actual achieved in 2023 – 2% lower?

Q. On GPS performance there is a new school Our Lady's Plymouth should that be Barnstaple?

Huge focus on targets throughout the year, move into projections, at the end of year point in time assessments. Schools manage the aspirational elements and are realistic based on evidence, a balancing act. Targets are entered in Insights data tracking system. Targets are challenged at school level, first data window of the year so the E&S report will review target against projection. Need to review with schools why targets and projections are different and the reasons why. Not concerned about this figure but discussing in schools. Targets for all year groups, don't force schools to be in line with national, review the gaps and the data. Don't believe schools are doing less well in writing.

Link Directors to use the attendance letter template

Q. Low PAN in lots of schools and disproportionately large number of SEND? Challenging demographics for many schools, disadvantaged but well performing, and vice versa. Increase the challenge of SEND and the movement of children, lack of LA provision, has an impact on those children but also the learning outcomes of others.

Impacts on the finances also. Every LA that CAST serves, the only one not in financial intervention is Plymouth and that is because it has already been identified for financial injection. We are proud of welcoming all children and supporting them because of our mission as a Catholic Trust but unfair when there is a lack of LA support and funding. We have a higher proportion of children in our data that have challenges that affect their outcomes.

National SEND system is broken. Permanent exclusion in a primary school, huge amount of work undertaken by the school, LA requesting the exclusion to be rescinded as they don't have an alternative provision in place and offered to pay. This is not an isolated story.

Q. Why is the forecast revenue income from Local authorities forecast to be 23.7% (£571k) lower this year compared to last?

Q. Why is the forecast income from nursery/wrap around care forecast to be 14.8% (£278k) lower this year compared to last?

Have not reforecast the management accounts for this year, still forecasting based on the budget that was set. Have been prudent, income is slightly ahead, additional income for SEND and Nursery last year and expecting it to happen again, being prudent until that money comes in.

Q. Reduction in the per head income, wrong numbers? The funding remains the same, would anticipate the SEND figure to increase and applying for more EHCPs. The same for wraparound care, funding has not changed.

Q. Estates strategy document - appendix 1 objective 1 background refers to a "newly formed estates committee" (also referenced in objective 5). Is this a hangover from a previous version? The updated version has been shared. RCF to check for further reference to a Estates Strategy.

Q. Template for CEO report, 60 pages long, time it takes to produce, is it taking SELT away from the day-to-day work, happy to spend that time on it and the Board information? A fine balance in giving enough information and too much information. A large Trust and lot of areas to cover. National updates are for information only.

Reporting more by exception which is more focussed. October report was shorter, but the December window involves lots more data. Levels of reporting do take SELT away from the ongoing work, but there is a lot to report on, but the Board requires the detail.

ZB welcomed the question and will further reflect with SELT on this.

Part of the information in the CEO report has been provided to Committees and that is reassuring in terms of workload. Directors highlighted the detail and national picture in the report and found it helpful.

RCF reporting by exception pilot as an outcome of the Governance Review, is that helpful to Directors? The Board felt this was successful and to continue. KMB

RCF to check Estates Strategy for reference to committee

	<p>asked if this should be highlighted with the Auditors to ensure they are happy with the governance reporting. RCF and KMB to confirm.</p>	
	<p>Governance Action Plan. Only one high action which has been discussed.</p>	<p>RCF and KMB to confirm reporting by exception is acceptable to auditors</p>
	<p>Q. Report on Plymouth demographic, LA doesn't want to consider closing schools, should we review this as a possibility and to review Catholic education going forward? Report to F&amp;R, A&amp;R and SELT, carry out internal reviews all the time, a strategic piece of work for SELT and bringing together all the information and how it looks going forward.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Q. 5, 10 years? Cannot plan that far in advance due to the changing landscape of education, political pressures. Need to look at the known facts including demographics.</p>	
<p><b>Heat Map</b></p>	<p>New format and the first release of this data.</p>	<p>School name to be frozen pane</p>
	<p>Freeze the pane of the school's name.</p>	
	<p>The Directors highlighted the positives of the new version of the Heat Map, with the data making sense and being easy to reference.</p>	
	<p>RCF to provide thanks to PS.</p>	
	<p>Q. Where does 0.5 come from? Column F is a weighting figure based on data sets. Score for each area and the weighted score.</p>	
	<p>Q. Weightings calculated by SELT? Yes.</p>	<p>Education ranking positions to be reviewed</p>
	<p>Education Ranking – positions to be reviewed.</p>	
	<p>Future releases of the Heat Map will include a comparison of previous data sets on the Trust Position tab.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Estates Strategy</b></p>	
	<p>October considered revised appendices to amalgamate into the main document. Reference to Estates Committee.</p>	
	<p>Annual Estates Report and RCF proposed to submit at the March Board meeting. Annual Sustainability Report for January as May and July meeting is a weighty agenda. The Board approved this.</p>	<p>The Board approved the Annual Estates Report – March Board, and</p>
	<p>RCF liaised with SH as Estates Lead and GB as Chair of A&amp;R prior to the Board meeting, have a suggested risk monitor to report to A&amp;R (not the same as the Risk Register) looking at estates' risks. A spreadsheet to A&amp;R, mitigating strategies, overview of costs, compliance and regulatory requirements, sustainability awareness, recommendations and projections. A new report which addresses a reporting gap. F&amp;R reports will remain as it is now.</p>	<p>Sustainability to January</p>
	<p>Q. Financial overview of potential costs, does it take input from F&amp;R or comes back to F&amp;R. Comes back to F&amp;R, A&amp;R is current and a forward look.</p>	
	<p>Q. If set a budget going forward, would it be out of budget? Areas will be identified and not current live projects.</p>	

Q. If going to build a new school, what is the Diocese contributing to that cost, building will be owned by the Diocese? Diocese could give the permission to knock down, but running the business on their behalf, would have to give the money. HB felt it should be collective between the Diocese and CAST as a starting point. ZB confirmed the mechanism is in place, working group between CAST and the Diocese which meets regularly and discussed estates and premises, a joint process.

If building a new school, partnership between CAST and the Diocese and other funding streams. HB assured the Board of the open discussions of the DES, Properties and CAST.

Q. The vision? A joint vision with a higher chance of progression.

P.47 Draft Annual Accounts gives an indication of expenditure towards repairs and maintenance almost £1.8m this year. Meet with the Diocese estates team regarding capital works.

Q. What happens when Trusts set up free schools or the LA builds SEND schools. Free school could only maintain 50% as a Catholic Trust.

All capital funding to maintenance of schools comes direct to CAST, there is no money from the Diocese, separate funds from DfE for rebuilding projects, to ensure fairness for all schools nationally. The Diocese does not receive any funding for the estate.

Q. If pitching for rebuilding? Money would come to CAST.

The Board approved the Estates Strategy and RCF will complete the amendments.

## **9. Safeguarding**

Staff suspensions.

- TA since Autumn term, CP related, proceeding through disciplinary.
- Admin. Conduct and CP related. Disciplinary being followed.
- SLT suspended since summer, CP related. Disciplinary in final stages.
- Teacher. Pending outcome of police enquiry, not CAST related. Suspended since summer term, CP related. Awaiting police updates.
- Teacher suspended before half term, CP and conduct related. Disciplinary process being followed.
- MTA. Conduct, non-CP related. Disciplinary process being followed.

Q. On full pay until police update, engaging with the police force and have this person under suspension whilst being paid, is there any way to move things forward considering the budget? Multi agency involved and a shared frustration, raised this week.

Remains our employment responsibility and for wellbeing also. Trust makes regular contact.

Q. Has a person to contact? Yes. Every person who is suspended is allocated a point of contact.

Q. Appeal process would come to the Board, if decision to dismiss is being appealed, need training? Each situation is different, consider staff on panels, Directors could be used but not at an early stage.

Q. Confident as CEO that Directors have the required skills to undertake this role? Look at expertise but prior to any panel would be briefed and supported.

Q. Is there something we could learn about our recruitment process, were we thorough enough? KB confirmed that in the context of these cases, it is not relevant.

Q. Assurance to the Board. Contextual and cannot go into details. Processes have picked up a potential concern regarding an external member of staff.

Q. Long list of six people? Longer than last year, 1000 employees, high risk of allegations, HR are good at these processes being completed, these processes include external factors.

Regarding recruitment checks, diligently undertake, as good as the day they are carried out, consider the challenge being faced by staff, considering Wellbeing Strategy and ensure policies are in place to raise awareness and to signpost strategies to prevent escalation in behaviour.

Priority identified from children's point of view and staffing context, domestic abuse. Policy being worked upon, DSL briefings that focussed on domestic abuse, 1 in 5 children live domestic abuse. Lot of work with DSLs, staff in all schools complete the domestic abuse training, all central team members. Biggest challenge is 1 in 5 children, potentially 2 adults, some of those are in our workforce, as a victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse can be a transferable risk which is highly sensitive. Need to find the balance in protecting children and supporting children. Posters provided for schools as never any domestic abuse posters displayed in staff areas or toilets, provided helplines for support for victims and perpetrators.

SG review at ND. Positive review, filtering and monitoring issues which are being worked on by the Central Team. Filtering is in place, but the monitoring requires work. Trust IT Manager is working on this. Picked up on one review, reviewing across the Trust.

Ofsted SG complaint for a school. KB already involved. HMI spoke to HT; matter has been closed until next inspection. Lot of time investigating the complaint. New processes in place.

SG2 forms provided at the end of November. Lack of compliance, 50% return rate. Asks schools about LA returns and areas of development, each LA has a different point so amending the CAST deadline. Common areas - pupil voice, staff training to cover DA, AP checks and Trust policy last year, supervision in place for all staff. System of professional supervision for DSLs, training from senior Ed Psych for peer supervision once per term, once per term is supervision with LP. Cases for schools are horrific at times, awareness in schools of requiring support and mechanisms in place. Follow cases with whole school training in TIS and support for parents.

Plymouth Safeguarding Education Reference Group. Suicide and self-harm – STORM training. Trained practitioner at ND, auditing schools to see who are STORM trained, aim is to have trained staff so that schools can access that support.

## **10. RE and Catholic Life**

HB provided a written report. Updates to follow at each meeting.

CPDF calendar has been included and pleased to report Directors have attended training.

RO and ZB thanked HB for her thorough report.

NJ queried his Lead Director role. Previously, Lead Director role has been blended in terms of reporting with the DSC. NJ and ZB to have a further meeting on how it will look in practice, what else does the Board need to know about the Catholic Life on the ground and people's lived experiences, feels in line with other Lead areas.

Q. Job description for each of the Lead Roles to know exactly what each person is taking on. This was considered to be a sensible idea.

**Meeting paused at 12.52**

RO gave her thanks to AH for her commitment to the Board and to Plymouth CAST.

**Meeting reconvened at 13.15**

**11. Finance and Resources**

**11.1 Minutes are in the Board pack.**

Key points – capital budget for the next year. Proposing £2m of reserves to supplement the capital budget. Needs Board approval.

Q. What to be spent on? Mixture of general maintenance, sustainability projects to improve energy efficiency, roofing, a detailed list of program works of varying costs.

The works program was set based on conditional surveys which have been updated and reevaluated the needs of the schools. £2.5m last year.

Q. Were alternative uses of this money, increased funding for teachers and educational support, been discussed? £7m reserves, hold £4m, can be used for any spend.

Q. Where is the best use of this money, supporting education or the buildings, how is it prioritised to spend on buildings than teachers, as we need teachers to grow schools? SELT have put the proposals forward to look after the buildings. In 2021 there was a 5-year capital program and the £2m is to support that program, always identified for capital and have to ask Board approval, don't want to dip below the minimum level of reserves, have a buffer should we need to, but need to consider potential financial challenges ahead. F&R discussions have considered needs of E&S.

The Board approved the £2m capital spend.

Discussion on the decline in pupil numbers and the financial impact. Good work by KMB and team on ICFP. Good data set.

**11.3 Terms of Reference** amended to clarify Estates and IT responsibility. RCF provided an update on the changes. The Board approved.

**11.2 Management Accounts**

£2.5m capital spend approved

F&R ToR approved



As at October 2023. The forecast position is linked to the income position. SBMs will be carrying out robust budget monitoring in the new year. Next set will be presented in January. Profile our budget in 12ths, income is slightly ahead by £372 000 but due to LA funding. Pay costs issue – the supply and agency teaching line. SBMs are to investigate this line as overspent and need to understand what is happening, will report back to F&R and Board.

Non-pay. Favourable position in repairs and maintenance against the profile budget. Resources and services not a surprise as schools tend to front load their purchases at the start of the year.

Cashflow - end of financial year, £12m, investments are considered as cash. 2.5 months of expenditure.

Q. If we know things are going to happen like pre-buying, can you profile accordingly rather than 12ths? It can be done but the system used means we can't do it quickly, one school's budget monitor is a day's work. Looking into improving systems, would be able to do this, e.g. water is paid quarterly. It's possible but would be hugely time consuming.

Monthly Management Accounts discussed at F&R and should be available to all Directors and be able to evidence to all Directors that they have been shared.

## 12. Audit and Risk

### 12.1 GB thanked RO and ALN for attending the A&R meeting with the Auditors.

Reports have been provided to the Board and have all been reviewed and approved by A&R.

As per the minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> December, the Risk Register was updated, KMB statement on the MUSTS Checklist, extensive report on Data Protection including filtering and monitoring, self-assessment on internal and external auditors, schools meeting PAN is a focus and top of the Risk Register.

### 12.2 Internal Audit Annual Report. Internal Auditors are required to produce an annual report. The Board accepted the Annual Report.

### 12.3 Annual Report and Statutory Accounts – Introduction.

Finalising the review on pensions, small item linked to checking pension records. GB asked the Board to give delegated authority, following the auditors' response, to allow GB to accept the final comment and to accept the report. The Board approved this delegation.

The Board delegated authority to GB to accept auditors' update

### 12.4 Westcotts Financial Report. KMB provided a brief summary. Not final accounts yet, every three years the auditors undertake a LGPS triennial review to ensure accuracy but they are still reviewing Devon. Don't believe this will affect the final accounts.

Q. Requested the auditors set the dates for earlier in the year at the A&R meeting, to be more realistic and prevent the Board being in this position.

KMB to set earlier dates with auditors

Review meeting with the auditors and will include this.

Final year end position £7.2m, reserves last year of £8.2m, all around capital. Board approved to spend £2.6m, some has been spent and some has been rolled forward. In year overspend was expected, pension liability and depreciation included. The Trust remains in a good, solid position. Authorised £2m capital spend. The auditors say we are a going concern for the next 12 months. Need to carry out work for 24/25.

**12.5 Westcotts report to the Board**, also known as the Management Letter. Two unqualified opinions to do with the Annual Report and Accounts and the regulatory aspects. Comments on significant risks, nothing to report. Internal control findings. Did challenge over signed contracts but there was no legal requirement to have signed contracts but did not hold ID in staff files, will be added to the Audit Tracker and followed through.

The Board accepted Westcotts report

The Board accepted Westcotts Report to the Board.

**12.6 A&R Committee Report.** Summarises the work of the Committee during the year. GB provided his conclusion from the A&R Committee report.

A&R Report was approved

The Board approved the A&R Committee Report.

**12.7 Annual Report and Statutory Accounts.**

GB advised the Board of the approval required:  
 P22 – authorising Chair to sign report  
 P28 – Chair and CEO to sign governance statement  
 P29 – CEO as Accounting Officer to sign statement  
 P30 – Chair statement of trustees’ responsibilities  
 P30 – Members of the Board  
 P35 – Chair financial records  
 P38 – Chair assurance report.

Recommend the Annual Report and Statutory Accounts for Members’ approval

Management letter to the Board and management response also is returned to the ESFA.

RO thanked GB for the clarification. The Board recommended the Annual Report and Statutory Accounts to the Members for approval.

**12.8 External Audit Letter of Representation.** GB provided an overview of examples that need to be advised following 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023. The Board approved.

LOR approved

**12.11 Terms of Reference.** Specific with regards to IT, and GB as Lead Director. Board approved ToR.

A&R ToR approved

**12.10 Risk Register.**

Risk Register was reviewed in the Committee meeting. RCF confirmed the review was November 2023, reporting by exception. Wording to Risk Reference 15, increase to a school due to flooding. Increase to Risk Reference 1. Increased linked to TWN letter being received. Risk Reference 8. Decreased. Ongoing annual audits being taken, cyber security policy in place, cyber essentials certificate.

Risk Reference 9 decreased. For reasons above.  
 Risk Reference 10. Increase. Pupil numbers.  
 Risk Reference 15. Increase.

Risk Reference 23. No change to risk but change to wording.  
 Risk Reference 25. No change to risk but change to wording. A high area of risk, new payroll provider failing to deliver on capability of pension administrator, have confirmed do not have the capacity, HR are picking this up but not an area of their expertise. HR Manager holding but not sustainable and will require a recruitment process. Payroll provider is in breach of contract.

Q. Serious enough to change the provider? Like the software and lots of benefits but can't continue to pay the price and pick up the work.

Directors discussed the role of the parish church to support schools to recruit and increase pupil numbers. Diocese are working with CAST but need to have an engaged relationship with schools and parishes to support pupil numbers. HB engagement from DES and priests to strengthen and move forward, new priests from India and Africa and part of training is links with schools.

NJ offered his thanks to GB for his work and commitment in his role as Chair of Audit and Risk. The Board echoed this.

### 12.9 Review and Approve External Auditors

A&R Committee recommend the external auditors to the Board to continue for one more year prior to considering a tender process. KMB will follow up with the auditors on timescales. The Board accepted this.

The Board accepted this recommendation

### 13. Remuneration

SA has provided a report to the Board for the next meeting.

SA provided an overview of the RemCom meeting.

Amended the points to align with the national pay scale, now pay to the national maximum. Paid to a points score according to pupil numbers. Score to actual headcount. Lot of HTs are paid above. As a Committee we can be approached to seek approval to go above scales.

Q. Occasion when not uplifted? Yes, a meaningful process linked to appraisals and performance management.

### 14. Governance and Management

#### 14.2 Lead Director Reports.

Two Lead reports – Statutory Grants and Governance.

#### 14.3 Link Director Reports.

9 reports. RO will follow up with Link Directors. Summary of issues provided.

Q. How will actions be followed up? Link Directors need to follow up in the next meeting, start meeting with old report.

KMB to investigate a Trust wide scheme

NJ has visited Marnhull and will provide the report.

Q. CAST wide absence scheme for all staff? Discussed at F&R, historically the Trust bought into a scheme, but the cost/return rate was not beneficial. KMB will investigate. LP to highlight school level or Trust wide concerns.

LP to highlight Trust or

<p>Q. What if a teacher is off to look after own child? There is a policy but only provides one day. Differentiation in terms of absence reporting and will be to review that data which will filter into the insurance policy.</p> <p>ALN provided an example as the insurance provides access to Drs, counselling, financial advice, £6000 cost per school, but also provides cover for SELT and central team. KMB asked ALN to provide the company information. Staff have benefitted from this.</p>	<p>school concerns</p>
<p><b>14.4 E&amp;S Terms of Reference.</b> The Board approved.</p>	<p>E&amp;S ToR approved</p>
<p><b>14.5 Careers Guidance Lead Director.</b> Careers guidance published, GB has contacted CST and NGA for a checklist to use at Director and Governor level. Looking forward to the challenge.</p>	
<p><b>15 Policies</b></p>	
<p>Circulated a paper for pre-read. Awaiting draft policy examples from policy advisor. Working with HB. 25/26 policies, consultation ending 31<sup>st</sup> January. Determine by 8<sup>th</sup> February. Must be shared with LAs and published on websites. Once template is approved, it will be personalised for each school. Modelled on the DCC template, HB and RCF have confirmed the distinctiveness of the Trust.</p>	
<p>Single sex policy statement – HB discussed with CES, discussed with Diocese, HB confirmed not received DfE guidance and to further discuss with the Diocese, align with law and Canonical law and not enough information to make those decisions but need to consider, work with RCF going forward.</p>	
<p>Q. Does a lack of policy make it easier to have the potential for a merger? Waiting until we have more guidance.</p>	
<p><b>ALN left at 2.32pm.</b></p>	
<p>CES conference, think theologically, ethically and pastorally. Thinking of it pastorally as a church as this time.</p>	
<p>Making the CAST template more closely aligned to the CES model, to strengthen the Catholicity, revised policy to include the Catholic foundation, increased the Catholicity in the subscription criteria and a subsequent change to the SIF form.</p>	
<p>Can see the difference between Cathedral and ND policies. Significant changes and are perfectly lawful according to the admissions advisor.</p>	
<p>RCF talked through the oversubscription criterium. Only change has been to enhance the priority of Catholicity.</p>	
<p>Q. Has to go to the school adjudicator? Thought LAC children have always been at the top? Confirmation that it is lawful.</p>	
<p>As a Diocese, we need our own guidance which has gone through the Adjudicator.</p>	
<p>Q. This reflects that guidance? Yes. For 25/26 have chosen to take out “prove regularly attending church” to remove barriers.</p>	
<p>Board of Directors is the Admissions Authority. RCF requested approval to LP and RCF by end of business on Tuesday.</p>	

Q. Question 3 in RCF's paper? Must have permission from the Board to go to consultation.

Q. Who are we consulting with? Schools, LA, parents, the public.

The Board approved the Admissions policies for consultation.

The Board approved the Admissions Policy consultation

**15.2 Health & Safety Policy.**

A minor but important change. Section 2.6, H&S Policy to align with the Scheule of Accountability and the frequency of checks. Previously termly and not an annual check, to triangulate with HT, SBM and Governor check. Name change to the checklist.

H&S Policy approved

The Board approved the H&S Policy.

Contact list is included for Directors. LP to create a folder on GovernorHub.

LP to add contact list to GHub

RO have thanks to all.

**17. Close**

Meeting closed at 14.45

**Future Board Meeting Dates**

**2023-24 Board Meeting Dates – All to be held at the CAST Offices**

Friday	8 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	10.30am
Friday	17 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	10.30am
Friday	7 <sup>th</sup> June 2024 – Strategy Day @ Buckfast Abbey	9.30am
Friday	19th July 2024	10.30am