

**Minutes of CAST Board meeting held on Friday 19th May 2023
at Plymouth CAST Office from 10.30am**

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

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer

RO welcomed all to the meeting. SA attended via Zoom.

The Board had a minute's reflection to mark the passing of Bishop Christopher.

2. Apologies and Confirmation of Quorum

Apologies from AC, NJ and JV. Quorum met.

3. Declaration of Interest

NJ – wife works for Trust

JV – a number of CAST schools being funded by her Charity.

Nothing further declared.

4. Minutes of previous meeting of 10th March 2023

Minutes approved as an accurate record.

Attendees – AN as Chair and RO not included. LP to correct.

4. Actions Summary

22.23 Instructed Insignis to invest up to £2million at any one time. As first time, invested £1.25m. Accounts £1m for 6 months, £250 000 smaller interest rate on a rolling 45-day agreement. As risk free as possible. Mid-June plan to end the 45-day rolling investment and receive information on current possibilities from Insignis. "2m investment should give £80 000 each year.

22.08 Have pushed back to enable the full collaboration to take place. Will be looking for a small number of Directors to join Central colleagues to join the working party.

**Decision
/Action**

The
minutes
were
approved

Q. Do we have a marketing company or looking to use one? No, due to the cost but do have staff internally with expertise. We also have a group of internal colleagues who will be forming a working party to continue our focus on marketing in the new academic year.

21.49 Remove as an ongoing action. AH and HB were happy.

21.34 RCF working with solicitors, documents are ready for checking.

5. Chairs Business

- **Governance Review**

Positive overall but will highlight some potential changes. Attending the July meeting. DfE funding has changed so the next step will not be funded. LF will be in touch as a follow up but not in the usual manner.

- **Lead Director Update**

Align with the LCB roles. GB has accepted GDPR and has attended three sessions from the CST. Four areas identified – GDPR, cyber security, SAR including personal storage and emails, Safeguarding – monitoring and filtering. SH has requested Estates.

Draft protocol – Statutory Grants by SA. Detailed reports are not scrutinised by the Board so take to E&S. SA confirmed the report is written after the meeting as a result of KB's report but not discussed. Statutory Grants to be considered at the following meeting.

Q. Lead Director Protocol and Link Director? LP to share Link and Lead protocols with Directors. RCF to provide Lead Director updates – SH Estates and GB Health, Safety and GDPR. The Board has more levels of delegated authority than LCBs. To the next meeting.

- **Plymouth CAST emails**

RO highlighted the changes on GovernorHub. Directors to amend.

- **Regional Director letter**

Hannah Woodhouse – SBC is the definition of a school that is coasting. To notify the Board of Trustees and to provide a response by Thursday 15th June. Going to discuss at the Strategy Day to enable a robust response.

GB highlighted the CST notification that includes an invitation to attend a presentation on coasting schools based on the Schools Causing Concern document.

ZB thanked GB for highlighting this and quoted from the document and the process that will be followed. The Secretary of State has the power to terminate the funding agreement. The Diocese has also received this letter. Plymouth is an Education Investment Area which is why there have been two packages of support. It was made clear at a previous meeting with the RD, it was made clear that the school would not receive any further support packages, this seems to be in conflict with the information in the coasting document. Before taking action, the RD will assess the Trust's ability to support the school to drive rapid and sustained improvement improve by looking at a range of evidence. There is a commitment not to use 2020/2021 assessment data from the Covid period. A termination warning notice can be issued but the funding arrangements are taken into account, which includes the Diocese to make representation.

Statutory Grants to be considered at E&S
Lead Director update to July Board meeting

SELT will be providing information at the Board Strategy Day.

6. CEO Report

A question was raised at the recent RE & Catholic Life Governor training: "Will Link Directors be provided with the minutes of LCB meetings?" Please can the Board consider?

As a point to note, the minutes of LCB meetings (together with business interests) are in the public domain, so I wonder if this is simply addressed by the schools publishing the minutes on the school website (also useful for Ofsted purposes) so that Link Directors may avail themselves of the documents should they choose to do so?

RCF sought feedback from the NGA reviewer. Minutes are in the public domain and advised the website to include a statement saying that minutes are available and to contact the Clerk. RCF and LP are looking to use GovernorHub to access the documents and will check which schools are publishing minutes on websites.

RCF and LP to audit which schools publish minutes

Q. Attended two LCB meetings and requested to be added to GovernorHub databases for those schools.

Q. ICT update - How long will it be before the Trust has a (cloud based) unified information system that can be scrutinised at management level in any school at any time? The ability report and verify a variety of business data e.g. live vacancy rates, attendance, financial control, failure reporting and safeguarding is vital for the success of the Trust and the consistency of practice across the piece. For trust to properly exist, it is also necessary. Is it correct that we do not have that level of single access yet? Anticipated longest term would be three years. Currently running a procurement process for SIMS for three years to allow a suitable timescale to further investigate options. Data capture audit to identify areas of gaps and duplication, meeting set for 6th June. Scomis will support free of charge, aim to have fewer but larger contracts to allow centralised management. Finance software companies are working to address the lack of systems built for Trusts, looking at a budgeting system which has been released recently for Trusts and are scoping out in terms of cost and time efficiencies. KMB confirmed that there needs to be improvements in the systems used and the link between them.

Q. Once you identify a suitable system, involve checking with other MATs that are using the systems are time well-spent.

Q. Websites - The same question applies to websites. Can you specify clearly a date for complete harmonisation? This has a direct association with brand identity - how is our possible name change going? Looking at Autumn, to be achieved July 2024 to allow third party contracts to end. Making a conscious decision to use the name CAST, this is being positively used.

Q. Suggest launching the website to coincide with name. Schools that are a long way from Plymouth are affected, people make the link with Plymouth CAST and Plymouth. We refer to the Trust and CAST which is inclusive and part of the Diocese family of Plymouth. Will be discussed with the Diocese in due course.

Q. Discussed at LCB meetings recently, making a reference to CAST and reinforced that schools are part of CAST. What do we call ourselves when people outside of here mention us. This was confirmed by other Directors. ZB confirmed the schools are part of the CAST family and reference CAST central colleagues. CAST is everyone, SELT and Board of Directors but all included in CAST. This is a focus for current Ofsted inspectors and the focus on the structure of governance within

CAST. Introduction of Local CAST Board which some schools accepted this gladly.

Q. HR and Wellbeing update - How much did our use of the agency to help fill vacancies cost and as their work seemed to produce nothing for us, did we get a reduction? Two agencies. Future's Education £21 000. The applications were internal. No discounts. TES cost for unlimited posts for the year, £5999. One position filled and one position still vacant.

Q. Catering - in the area of my 'conflict of interest' in Poole, I have had cause to be a volunteer in the kitchen at times of sickness/short staff. I note that some meals are often largely wasted, which is a concern. The current contractor at St Mary's is a local firm, whose owner's children went through the school and who is attentive to reports about food quality and acceptability from lunchtime and other school staff and responsive as far as they can be. Well-fed children will learn better it seems. Is their criteria, not only for food provision but also consumption? St Mary's has a new relationship with the contractor. Part of a direct award which is seeking to appoint to the current provider to have a centrally managed contract which includes the carbon footprint of meals and a focus on the menu and food waste.

Q. Listen to schools on menus and take up. Current contract with Chartwells and manage waste to inform menus. Some children are part of UIFSM and FSM, wastage should be picked up and this will be picked up in the school. The cheapest is £2.30 and the most is £2.65.

Q. Catholic Leaders. At the Ed. Stds. Meeting (see minutes) We know that we will be losing 12 heads between now and July 2025, with a probability of losing 7 more Heads. Yet the forecast is that we will have 3 fewer non-Catholic Heads? Catholic Heads come from Catholic teachers – less than 5% of our teachers are Catholic, what can we do to address this shortfall? In the non-education world, I would be attending Universities to offer the outstanding undergraduates' incentives to join my company. Are we attending the Catholic teacher training establishments to identify the best undergraduates and offering them an attractive career with CAST; enhanced starting salaries, experience over different schools, enhanced CPD etc. (which I believe we can do as a MAT)?

Figures discussed at E&S had actuals and projections which are being discussed by SELT and HR, always planning and being proactive. Pay Policy pays teachers the national pay rate. Offer CPD teachers such as NPQs, schools are actively promoting Catholicity in local communities. Working with universities for Marjon and Exeter for SCITT. Engaging with four Catholic universities and overtime this is hoped to lead to further relationships and to raise the profile. There is a plan and relationships are being built.

Appointed a Catholic HT and was previously a teacher within the Trust, has returned. Internal candidate was also identified, executive solutions has identified a Catholic leader, current DHT is converting, Catholic leader as Head of School becoming an Acting HT. In a more positive position than previously.

HB highlighted the real commitment in CAST to secure good Catholic leadership and thanked the Board for being involved in that process.

Q. Worth a research project from Marjon about growing your own? New EHT is undertaking a doctorate which captures Catholic leadership.

Q. Understand that HTs are to be Catholic but didn't realise that applies to DHT also, how rigid have to be on the DHT. HT, EHT, DHT, some AHT, RE Leads are

reserved posts. There is a real commitment from CAST to never lose on the quality of the leadership. Have a positive relationship with the Diocese and can look creatively at solutions, value the relationship with the DSC and Team. As long as Catholicity is preserved, the CES (Paul Barber) are more relaxed about how this is achieved. HB explained an openness and understanding to achieve the best leadership for our schools, can identify potential leaders.

Q. During a school visit, didn't know DHT was not Catholic as the focus was there.

Q. Have worked with the CofE Diocese, the commitment and dedication to the Catholic vision is evident.

Q. Governor training – What proportion of our governors attend the training? How are we going to encourage the non-attenders? Attendance is notably improving. Recent training – NoV, 28 schools, Chairs – 25, Paperwork – 20 schools. Publish training on GovernorHub, Chairs' Forum, Clerks' Forum, not always convenient for Governors. Training is always recorded and published with resources on GovernorHub, and each session includes a survey on the quality of the training.

Q. When has this started, training is good, and slides are shared but asked if they could they be recorded? New paperwork training has been recorded since December and will be shared on GovernorHub.

Q. Living Wage – I support the payment of the living wage to all except apprentices. Committed to giving the living wage, included in the COO report.

Q. Numbers exclude oncosts? Back to SELT and then F&R. 23/24 pay ward for NJC to be included, LGA £1925 but subject to TU ballots.

Q. Difference is £45 000, only got 6 apprentices. Q Is that the £45 000? It would be oncosts.

Q. TIP – Goal 5 is different to CEO report which reference the Pathways document, can we discuss at the Board Strategy Day.

Q. Estates wording on the Strategic Goals, couldn't find the SG for each Committee or the policies. TIP was written in 2020, three-year plan and wording is against the original document.

The Board discussed the £1m (Strategic Goal 5) to be reinvested in our schools annually is an aim and not "mandated".

SA left the meeting at 11.56am

7. Heat Map

Q. Heat Map and comparative data - when we refer to % performance in a school compared to the Trust (and nationally), how do we calculate the Trust percentage? Is it based on the average of all the percentages submitted, or the total number of pupils in the Trust, which seems more logical? This relates to recognising context, especially in small schools where a shortfall of 1 in a class group of 5, will put a school below Trust and national averages. When looking at school performance, the Team will RAG rate school against national average and graded. % of schools is then calculated based on those standards. Consistent methodology is being applied, can track incremental gains using the last column.

The Heat Map reflects the absolute, and variance can arise when professional judgements are applied. The Team are the skilled professionals and build the assessment of each school.

Q. Produce actual Canonical data? The SIO Team should search for the judgements, HB will provide the data to KB.

HB to provide inspection data to KB

Q. Originally had trend arrows, why not included? Added the column regarding incremental improvements at the end, replaced the arrows with the data.

ZB apologised for data error, which has since been corrected. Show Heat Map in conjunction with other datasets and will be electronic, times when there are human errors. LP to ensure the updated Heat Map is on GovernorHub. Stop paper copies being sent out, in line with the Strategic Goals, bring up at meetings on the screen, minimises human error and have to aggregate the top sheet, review the new model.

LP to ensure correct version is available

Q. Legibility, difficult to view on a screen, difficult on paper also.

Area	May 2022				Dec 2022					
	Now		Will be		Now		Will be		No	
	R.I	Inad.	R.I	Inad.	R.I	Inad.	R.I	Inad.	R.I	Inad.
Cast Canonical	2	1	2	-	5	-	1	-	5	
Ofsted	9	-	8	-	6	-	2	-	8	
Cast Ofsted	20	-	9	-	17	1	1	-	14	
Governance	20	1	9	-	15	-	8	-	13	
PP vs Non-PP	23	8	26	5	24	8	19	1	26	
Send	31	1	32	-	29	1	11	1	33	
All vs All Nat	20	1	16	2	19	3	8	2	16	
Catholic Lead.	13	1	13	1	11	1	11	1	14	

Note In the May 2023 report the summary sheet has a couple of errors:
 Dec 22: Ofsted judgement progressing toward should be 6 not 7 (according to the detailed school sheet)
 PP outcomes vs non-PP progressing towards should be 24.
 May 23 PP outcomes vs non-PP not established should be 2 not 0, outstanding should be 0 not 2.

There has been a dramatic improvement in the forecast for July 2025 is this a genuine belief?

8. Safeguarding

KB provided an update to the Board.

Notified of a SG parental complaint to Ofsted, referred to the LA. OLOTA, allegation is that parent has contacted school at 2.45pm to say elder child is not able to collect, to hold child at the school, 3.30pm rang Mum is child with you, school doesn't know where child is, rushes home from work, made own way home, climbed in the garden and through an unsecured window. SIO is investigating today; report will be provided. HT response confirms it has happened.

KB reporting previously about a complaint to the RD before Christmas, same school but was spurious and without truth.

Q. How old was the child? The complaint does not confirm this but will be in the SIO report.

Notified this week by SBC, Plymouth City Council have received a complaint about the school regarding Year 7 student. Mother is complaining about racial abuse and has been psychologically harmed and is requesting an in- year move. Complaint also states wish to advise us the Police are involved, and an internal whistleblowing has gone to Plymouth. Response drafted and reviewed, is robust, ongoing work to prevent such occurrences happening. The LA was supportive in fulfilling their duties.

Meeting in July, new SG Policy once KCSiE is updated, in light of this there will be a change in the Policy as it doesn't deal with the possible occurrence of SG referrals or process for school staff with children in schools, to ensure the children have the ability to disclose. Need to ensure staff member is protected and staff dealing with it are protected.

Member of staff approached HT and disclosed son has been convicted of revenge porn with 13-year-old girl. No disqualification by association, employment status is not under threat, drawn up a RA, issuing a letter to include paragraph of the EYFS which reminds the member of staff their duty to disclose any past or future conviction, second copy will be signed. Positive SG culture where the member of staff felt able to disclose that information to their HT.

9. RE and Catholic Life

HB thanked RCF for her invite. Prayer and Liturgy will be published. CSI collective decision to suspend inspections for this term, up to date, lot of schools are Ofsted due, CSI requires changes, to give schools a breather. One school offered to be a pilot, Buckfast, full inspection and will share the outcome. Will have to increase numbers next term.

New RED has been published, new model curriculum, Come and See will no longer exist. Don't buy into Come and See, download resources, publishers have approved this action. Add to CAST portal.

Clifton Diocese to publish own scheme of work, EYFS and Year 3, school to release some teachers to work on this curriculum over the next two years, impact on supply. Own in-house scheme of work, collaboratively working with another Diocese.

Include in the package of CPD, training sessions for Chairs and RE Leads on the types of questions during CSI inspections.

Ofsted inspector asked to speak to someone from the Diocese, didn't need to, but made us realise we are diverse in our schools. How is gender reflected in the curriculum, what are the answers around diversity, protected character of a faith school but the dignity of a person is central to everything. Piece of work between the Diocese and CAST.

Reflection days taking place and all Directors are invited. Three Leavers' Masses across the Diocese but transport costs are an issue. HB to share the dates with LP. ZB confirmed the Trust will be represented at the Plymouth day. A celebration across the schools.

Come and See resources to be added to the Portal

HB to share reflection dates with LP

10. Diocesan SLA

ZB provided the background on the Diocesan Levy, a contribution to the Diocesan supporting services.

SELT have reviewed, HB and Team have reviewed. This better reflects the needs of the schools and the service that Helen and the Team provides, and this is a good quality service.

ZB is happy with the document, it reflects the service provided and asked for approval.

Q. Signed by the CEO, if Board approved should RO sign? ZB and RO co-sign. The Board approved the SLA.

The Diocesan SLA was approved

11. Net Zero Update

RCF provided an update – continue to work with EnFrame to develop an Action Plan and Policy to work towards Trust Strategic Goal 9 and embedding of Laudato Si.

RCF outlined the four workstreams for the Board and the associated timescales.

Q. Timeline of each workstream into overarching action plan? Timeline as of now, main policy won't start once document is approved.

Q. See the action plan for each workstream? Will see that information.

The Board felt this was positive and taking place.

12. Education and Standards

Minutes are provided along with KB's report.

Discussed projections for Year 2 and Year 6. Understood them to be aspirational. Projections are absolute, current judgements by professionals.

Q. Where are we on the journey for schools when children are changing gender? Christ at the centre, the dignity of the individual is always at the centre of everything we do.

Q. Where it is happening, being catered for? All schools are attentive and sensitive, supporting children and families. The Board has been assured that schools are dealing on a case-by-case basis.

KB highlighted recent inspections challenging on same-sex marriage, children master the understanding acceptance and equality.

**The meeting paused at 12.48.
The meeting reconvened at 13.13.**

The secondary data projections for both schools are weak and we are concerned. There are some improvements. ND is continuing to decline. There is an LCB meeting next week. This is from the school's lack of data awareness. Understand the difficulties in ND, data/interventions are not being targeted correctly. A data specialist from St Edwards is being brought in, will take time, staff can teach effectively with the right support. ND four-year period ends this summer for Ofsted

inspections, data is weak from 2022. Implications for the school and students. Graded as RI by the Trust.

KB provided an outline of the current SBC data and what will have to be provided in response to the RD letter discussed earlier in the meeting. There is already a cultural change in ND, there will be a lag between changes and outcomes. The inspection was a positive report and recognises the huge improvements made but children are still not making progress.

Q. Can't change the past, is there an understanding of how we have reached this position? A complex situation, some things have been outside of the school and Trust's control such as the pandemic, leadership stretch when schools amalgamated, SELT are aware of the reasons and are focussing on this. The new leadership structure aligns with the Trust and the needs of the schools.

Q. Has the executive leadership contributed to the decline at ND? Slowed the improvement. The leadership solution has changed the school from 2020.

The Board discussed the potential reasons for a school having difficulties and will revisit at the Strategy Day.

13. Finance and Resources

13.1 AN provided an update, the minutes are provided, and drew out key points.

KMB and Team working on the budget, reviewed the 5-year budget and assumptions, looking difficult from Year 2 onwards due to uncertainties around costs, target for £1m is looking to be difficult due to increased costs and falling pupil numbers. Ongoing problems with cleaning contract and how close to breach of contract but RCF has detailed actions.

Management Accounts to March 2023

Provided along with KMB's summary. Looking at being in line with budget for this year, additional money set aside for capital works as will benefit in the long run. Most schools returning a surplus, Harmonisation has been a financial challenge along with staff sickness and as a result KMB will be investigating a staff absence insurance scheme. Remain in a strong financial position for this year.

KMB left the meeting at 1.40pm

14. Audit and Risk

GB confirmed the previous minutes were reviewed at last Board meeting.

14.1 Operational H&S meeting - should the minutes come to the Board? Strong H&S Committee. The Board discussed the minutes.

Real wax candles were highlighted. Incoming students from another school, don't receive the paperwork at the time the child arrives or before. This arose as a Link Director question.

The Board agreed the Health and Safety Committee minutes to be included as information in the Board pack. Wellbeing is discussed and picked up in RCF's report. Ofsted inspection support in light if a HT taking her own life.

GB has requested access to other Committee papers and Directors approved this.

H&S
Committee
minutes to
be
included in
the Board
pack

GB to be
given
Committee
access

Risk Register Review

Not covered

15. Governance and Management

15.1 Link Director Reports

10 reports received. LP created summary of the issues raised. Need to review how to identify areas of focus. AH and LP to review the Link Director reports

Q. How often and what period to review. AH and LP will review.

15.2 Lead Director Reports

SG, Stat Grants and RE and Catholic Life.

Stat Grants refer back to E&S but will loop back into a discussion already held.

15.3 Governance Lead Update

Transition to a non-operational role, working out how to manage the next phase. Mini-SoDA and beginning to follow it, do we need a Board Lead on Governance or pick up by the Chair? The review will support this. No information on governance this term.

Q. Link Director Visits - these seem quite variable in style and content and some schools have not featured. One from St Joseph's Newton Abbot looks to be old and signed off on a date before the visit? Is the template used by Steve Hole one that we should all be using? RCF confirmed the template being used is correct but then leads to a preferred style.

16. Policy Review

16.1 Draft Intimate Care Policy

KB highlighted the slight wording change to last meeting. Approved.

Intimate Care Policy was approved

16.2 SEND Policy

Defer to July Board meeting – KB explained the policy is being reviewed so all associated policies align.

Q. Send earlier than Board pack. KB will do that.

Policies to be sent out prior to 7-day timescales

16.3 Exclusions Policy

Policy was originally approved by the Board, changes reflected to guidelines in 2022. The risk is the same as is the will to avoid exclusions. HTs report to LCBs and KB reports to E&S. Numbers are higher than we want, also number of SEND children in this data. Trust SEND Lead is reviewing exclusions across the Trust starting with schools with lowest numbers of exclusions.

Guidance from July 2022 was summarised for HTs but the Policy wasn't updated. SEND Lead has a focus for exclusions and pupils at risk of exclusions, strategic oversight through E&S.

Q. Concern that removing a child from Catholic education and the faith around them, appeal panel reinstate a child, but the Board can refuse. It is a legal requirement in all state schools.

Q. CAST employs staff, want child back to the school, how can we? Protection as Board of Directors to have the HT line managed by SIOs, highly unlikely that a HT would overturn the panel decision. Example given was the Policy being followed. The Policy works operationally in schools and has been accepted by LAs and is compliant with Ofsted and is effective.

The Catholic ethos will permeate all decisions made. The Board approved the Policy.

Exclusions Policy was approved

16.4 Collective Worship Policy

Q. Appendix to include a specific prayer event such as Easter, Mother’s Day, related to a specific person? HB felt this was something that could be added to the Liturgical calendar. Digital Ordo from NJ for each school and is added to the Portal.

The Collective Worship Policy was approved

Q. Can Directors access? Not via the Portal as for staff only. LP to add to GovernorHub.

LP to add the Ordo to GovHub

Policy approved. HB and ZB will update the Policy as and when relevant resources become available.

Q. Board Strategy Day pack? Resources for some agenda items and is being worked on currently, try to send out seven days in advance. Heat Map will be a live document on the day.

LP to provide an agenda and map for the Strategy Day

Q. Timings of the day and a map to be included with the agenda. LP to provide.

Meeting closed at 2.15pm

Future Board Meeting Dates

All meetings to commence at 10.30am at The CAST Offices, Plymouth.

Friday	21 st July 2023	10.30am
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