

**Minutes of CAST Board meeting held on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022  
at Plymouth CAST Office from 10.30am**

Attendees:	Ruth O'Donovan (RO)	-	Foundation Director (Chair)
	Andy Nicholls (AN)	-	Foundation Director
	Sandy Anderson (SA)	-	Foundation Director
	Jacqui Vaughan (JV)	-	Foundation Director
	Ann Harris (AH)	-	Foundation Director
	Deacon Nick Johnson (NJ)	-	Foundation Director
	Graham Briscoe (GB)	-	Co-opted Director
	Alison Nettleship (ALN)	-	Co-opted Director
In Attendance:	Zoe Batten (ZB)	-	CEO
	Laura Fox (LF)	-	CFO
	Rose Colpus-Fricker (RCF)	-	COO
	Kevin Butlin (KB)	-	DoE
	Helen Brown	-	DSC
	Leah Paiano (LP)	-	Clerk

<b>1. Welcome and Opening Prayer</b>	<b>Decision/Action</b>
Opening prayer by RO	
<b>2. Apologies and Confirmation of Quorum</b>	
Quorum met.	
<b>3. Declaration of Interest</b>	
NJ – wife works for Trust JV – a number of CAST schools being funded by her Trust.	
<b>4. Minutes of previous meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022</b>	
Minutes approved as an accurate record.	Minutes from 20 <sup>th</sup> May 2022 approved
<b>5. Actions</b>	
Status updated on Actions Summary.	
<b>6. Chairs Business</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CAST Email Addresses</b></li> </ul> All Directors to use by new academic year.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Succession Planning</b></li> </ul> DR – resigned due to time restrictions. ALN – welcomed to the Board. Further Directors in the pipeline. Hope to have a full complement in September. Thanks to AH and JV for continuing as Directors. Canon Mark has been delegated the authority to approve Foundation Directors.	

- **Governance Review**

No further contact regarding the review as of today's date. Further email sent this week by LP. ZB will follow this up and will speak to RSC if necessary. Disappointed with lack of progress.

Q. Academy Ambassadors has closed but due to retender. Governance review – generated by us or Regional Director? Commissioned by RSC Team, not compulsory but was part of the focussed support at St Boniface, a good process to undertake.

The RSC haven't lifted the embargo on schools joining the Trust but recognise the improvements that have been made, can welcome Good schools but are in an interim position.

## **7. CEO Update**

- Workforce Data - Is any information available about the pros and cons of a changed day or week shape for students e.g. later sleeping for older teenagers

Robust studies by EEF on Teen Sleep. Data suggests a later start is beneficial, studies in America show improved MH and wellbeing, improved academic progress and reduction in absence. Some pilot schools found a lack of engagement due to people's perception, school transport, parent and teachers concerns, impact on working families, timetable issues on school sports/interschool sports. Resistance in the UK.

Q. The children are considered last. Disappointing. NJ gave an example of a student loving Year 7 but hating Year 8. Not sleeping well has an impact on children, as does a medical condition.

Could possibly pilot a scheme for two weeks to test the theory, perhaps a later start on a particular day during the week.

- Intervention - What is the essence of what a high performing academy offers to an underperforming school and are we in any danger when all our eggs seem to be in one basket?

Best evidence in the Pathways to Excellence report. School offers differ, adopting a more needs-led approach, won't look the same as the needs are different. Two part time SIOs to give a different offer, people from outside the Trust and have credible experience. Greater level of flexibility as offer is brokered.

Still use outside external support to QA work and provide additional capacity. School Improvement needs to consider what is the right thing, at the right time.

Q. Double RI, have to go to a Trust. One of schools in the future and have to move Trust. DfE have strengthened further guidance. If in that position we can discuss the action to take and the capability of the Trust, joined up with the Diocese.

Q. Easier to move a CofE school to another Trust than it is a Catholic school. Unusual for another Trust to take a Catholic school due to the Bishop’s expectations.

Q. Enjoyed the Pathways to Excellence – DSC Catholic Life permeates through it. Include a sentence to link it to the Bishop’s vision. Pathways to Excellence is a new iteration of the Vision for Education document of 2018, ZB had intended to ask Bishop Mark to endorse as per the previous iteration, but then he moved on.

Q. E&S meeting reviewed the offer, concerned as to how replace the SIO. KB was clear on how and would review in due course.

- Duty of Care - Wellbeing fits into this overall requirement and I wonder what the strategy is for achieving this routinely?

Wellbeing Committee is a sub-committee of the H&S Committee. TU reps, excited about this, first Trust to have a Committee with this focus. Want reps from all areas of staffing. Focus on DfE Charter of Wellbeing. SELT agenda item on workload reduction toolkit in due course. Annual wellbeing survey of staff.

- Trust Governance - How long have we waited for a governance review? If it becomes unreasonable, should we be seeking an alternative with some urgency?

Answered in Chair’s Update.

## 7. CEO Report - School Improvement.

As a member of the Education and Std. committee I have the following explained but I feel that there should be an opportunity for the rest of the board to be directly informed.

		2019		2022	
		Trust	National	Trust	National
KS1	Read	75%	75%	67%	68%
	Writing	71%	69%	59%	59%
	Maths	74%	76%	66%	70%

KS2	Read	75%	73%	75%	74%
	Writing	76%	78%	69%	69%
	Maths	78%	79%	63%	71%

- The above table shows that whilst performance in reading and writing has fallen our performance as a trust is still in line with National. However, our performance in Maths has fallen significantly in relation to National. Why is this?

Delighted with KS1 and KS2 results. Disappointed with Maths, gap between Trust and national has closed. High amounts as a Team, huge variance from schools with a variety of reasons. Change of teacher, leader, lack of SATs preparation, focus on Covid recovery.

SI Team need to be clear about Power Maths, mastery approach. DfE recommended scheme. Mixed picture in schools in terms of implementation. Year 6 children that have had Power Maths for a year will not be hindered with SATs preparation alongside it. Highest performing schools have been working on Power Maths for longer. As a Team have looked at school data, generated questions and have started matching weaker schools with stronger schools.

Mixed age classes are difficult but one of the higher achieving schools has a mixed year class for KS2. Cohort specific reasons for lower performance. Challenged the schools to address the data for next year to be in line with national. The SI Team focus will highlight individual school reasons and any generic reasons.

Q. All schools have a Maths leader? Yes and Jo Flower (SIO) leads as Trust leader.

- School's White paper. Under the section "Stronger and Fairer School System" Education Investment areas have been identified- two of which are in the South West - Dorset and Cornwall. In these areas where a school is less than good, a second less than good inspection will result in the Regional Director being expected to intervene and move the school to a strong Trust. We do not have less than good schools in Cornwall but we do in Dorset.

Conversation with RSC regarding capacity. One school that has improved is within an Education Investment Area. 17 schools that are Ofsted live, over five and a half years and legal requirement is five years.

Q. Every other educational setting is in the same position, does Ofsted have the capacity to do this? GB risk management approach and determines which ones are visited.

Q. Hampering ourselves with the KPIs i.e. amount spent on staffing, should we review KPIs in these areas/schools. KPIs don't need to be changed but need to review on case-by-case position. LF confirmed vulnerable schools in Dorset, staffing is at 84% and have reduced the surplus, has been discussed at F&R Committee. Is a continual process.

Need to keep education investment areas in context, will be first schools to focus on. Additional Government funding will go into those areas as it has in Plymouth, to boost quality of education.

SI Team is working in a different way, two new SIO have been given four schools each but a high focus, more intensive approach. A different way of working but have realigned the Team to provide support to vulnerable schools with a greater skill set. KB is also picking up two primary schools.

NJ has visited HT at Wool, local primary schools have reduced their PAN and thought Wool would benefit but this hasn't happened. School moved from Outstanding to RI prior to the pandemic. EHT from September and strong deputies in each school to form an executive team.

Q. Loss of capacity in EHT scenarios? EHT and deputies must focus on different areas, other staff members need to step up. Not a negative, different way of working, gives people the opportunity to lead more and grow own leaders. Builds capacity when done properly and give people the time.

Q. Two deputies are Catholic? One is/one isn't. Fixed term position and discussed with the Diocese.

- Thanks to excellent performance of the schools inspected thus far this year - all Good and two improving from RI to Good, it can be strongly argued that we are a strong Trust, however there is a major risk if we have a second RI in Dorset. What needs to be done to ensure this does not happen? Is it necessary to review the current KPI s to ensure that the necessary support can be provided?
- Staff changes - How do we resolve the obvious change (reduction) in management capacity in schools by the use of Executive Head solutions - for the receiving and sending school? Some solutions seem to be over significant distances - Barnstaple, Tiverton, Axminster?
- Throughout documents we see both Education Standards Manager and School Improvement Officer used. Are we changing to the latter?

Going forward – School Improvement Officer, more indicative of the role.

- Star Learning Nurture Centre - Did the centre achieve the desired outcome for any of the 10 children processed through its work - i.e., they are safely back at their original school and working well?

Against the KPIs, it was successful for the children, in comparison with two other providers (Edison Centres) was a deficient provider. Not possible to bring into line with Edison Centres. Children have been reintegrated into schools, will look at exclusion rates. The wider quality of the offer for those children was not good.

### **Strategic Plan**

#### **7.1**

- In the school improvement section of Pathways to Excellence it states that in low-risk schools 'governance is reviewed through the mandatory cycle in the Schedule of Accountability'. Have you estimated how many schools are likely to be low risk?

Yes, an ongoing process. Measured on the Heat Map school level page. In process of building structure and systems to ascertain how the SoDA and Schedule of Accountability are being used.

Clerking restructure has shown some LGBs think their role is as it was before, despite the training and the paperwork. Governors are valued and are the assurance process for the Board of Directors.

AH and ZB will continue with the training sessions, need to have a form of internal governance review process. Need to create a form of return with direct questions and links to the Link Director role and to hold the Chair to account. That is the role of the Governor.

Triangulation of the data. Q. What attendance? Good and have sent out the documents following the training.

The Link Director role is to hold the Chair to account. The SIO is to hold the HT to account. Need to be aware of the HT using the Link Director visit as an opportunity to voice concerns about Trust decisions and must not become operational.

Q. To be communicated with schools? Part has been shared via revised SoDA and need to share the Link Director protocols.

- In the Trust Dividend what bullet points would have already existed in independent schools (with LA help), what are primarily for the benefit of the MAT and what is new and additional as a result of CAST, that could not be achieved any other way?

This could be replicated by maintained schools, need to sharpen the language to reflect the Trust Dividend. Trying to get the best service for groups of schools for the best amount of money, reducing the workload for HTs who are trained in T&L.

Maintained HTs buy into a SI offer which is not bespoke and does not offer a virtual 24-hour support.

Skilled people dealing with complex issues and providing consistent advice.

Professional development offers within a Trust provides executive headship, HT briefing, Trust leaders, DSL briefings, T&L briefings, networking opportunities, one family of schools and are here for everyone.

ZB happy to further strengthen the wording. Fewer HTs have been HTs in a LA, only within the Trust. Focus on quality of education in school.

Q. % of time that HTs spend on education of children, should we set ourselves a target as a Trust, should be focussing on education of pupils. Find out where we are now and set a target. AN Aligns with Goal 6. GB managers on a diary system to analyse time spent on each activity.

SELT have discussed this and recognise this is what we need to be doing, to give a baseline. Can't set a KPI until we know where we are. Harmonisation, Clerking and other processes will support this and reduce the school workload.

Q. roles and responsibilities of HT includes HR, finance. Need to be cognisant of employing the people on these terms and conditions and is a complex issue, slow approach. Q. Action? Need to find out what our schools are doing. RCF confirmed working with DE to run a survey for HT, DHT, AHT and SendCo to record time spent on teaching and learning. Info from SI Team management reports. Most HTs do not spend enough time on T&L.

- What proportion of our children are baptised Catholic and of those, do we know what proportion practice their faith - and does anything happen in school to promote practice?

Varied picture. Some schools 60% of Catholic children, some as low as 10%. Most important points – in all schools actively promote practice: daily acts of worship, prayer, Gospel Values and virtues, regularly go to Church, observe holy days, attend masses, it is open and invitational to children who are not Catholic and other faiths are promoted and celebrated. Children have opportunity to take first communion, community visits.

HB CES census recently carried out and can bring figures to the next meeting. Christ is centre to everything we do.

OLOTA inspection? Report has confirmed a Good school.

## Wellbeing Paper

### 7.2

- What is the potential cost if every member of staff takes all the days?

ZB to strengthen language within Trust Dividend section.

HB to provide census information on Catholic children within schools.

- How does the Wellbeing day offer translate to schools?

Important to say there isn't a cost, for the employee or line manager to ensure workflows are not impacted. One day per half term. Potentially a cost saving as an investment in staff, saving money in terms of absence. Adhere to the CAST pay scheme, can't provide gifts/rewards to staff but can do this for staff.

Q. Consider days lost? Q. Is it sustainable and not a consistent approach across the Trust. If totalled the number of hours of staff working over their contractual hours, the Trust would significantly suffer. Q. TOIL? No. Q. Can give to every senior leader. Believe in wellbeing days, 2.5 days but across the whole organisation. Would be a substantial amount of money. Main concern not looking at a Trust wide approach. Q. School staff have more holiday. Q. Align schools and the Trust, a bigger divide.

Several key factors – jobs are different, and terms of conditions are different. HTs have ability to give staff TOIL, HTs are encouraged to take dedicated HT time, SIOs can have that discussion with HTs. This is not available to central staff who work above and beyond on a weekly basis. Don't want to have staff burnt out.

Q. Middle ground. Central team supervision? Dedicated supervision and wellbeing time? As a Trust, look at professional development day, how can we support our staff? Reducing 6 days and include pastoral supervision. Schools have professional development days, one set aside for wellbeing and everyone receives this day. Things are planned to support staff such as team building activities.

Consideration has been given to consider the differences between school staff and central team differences in SELT discussions. Q. School staff in discussion? This request came from a SIO given extreme working pattern. Q. Trust wide approach. GB times are changing, days given in the past to carry out other duties. Happy with the proposal recognising staff don't have the school holidays. The Trust can include community involvement in reports.

HB Cautionary note of school holidays, staff work during holidays.

The Board discussed annual leave of central staff. ZB asked for support from the Board for the wellbeing of colleagues.

Q. Separate wellbeing policy? Emotional and Wellbeing Policy. Thinking about how this would affect different groups, what schools get, wellbeing paper and policy would amalgamate but don't want to upset staff groups, so more localised arrangements. AN would support but message should be that exceptional hours should not be worked.

Support the proposal in principle but Directors had reservations about six days and felt three would be more appropriate, one per term. The Board discussed the proposal.

Q. If a member of staff in the Central team required time, can we stipulate a number of days such as three and additional days can be used for certain examples. What other systems are in place?

AN Gesture of goodwill and show of good faith, if too low what is the point. ZB highlighted that the team always works hard, and if calculated hours above many additional staff would be required.

The Board took a vote on the proposal:

6 days approved by 5 Directors  
3 days approved by 2 Directors.

The Board approved 6 days subject to a review in 12 months' time.

GB requested that all staff reply to him within their working hours and not his.

Shouldn't treat the symptoms but tackle the cause. Need to consider the working pattern to look after wellbeing. Main thoughts are of the wider Trust and how does it recognise resistance and what is happening on the ground, recognising having something similar but in a different way. Wellbeing of staff in schools also needs to be considered, to ensure parity.

Central team colleagues are highly skilled, not able to control the volume of work of the Trust, appreciation of the business we are in, the type of Trust we are and 35 settings. Staff are focussed on using their time well.

### Heat Map

8. School Improvement line, Trust level page has moved into green. Really encouraging, acknowledge there is still work to be done, where we are now.

Heat Map relates to current set of goals, further work has been done to tweak language and datasets to put on a new Heat Map, a second iteration in the autumn term.

RCF – Goals 6 and 8. New inclusion of comparison of data now and previous is useful to see incremental progress.

KB – observation from E&S, because an Ofsted grade may change, the Trust may feel differently, and projections come into play.

Q. SEND outcomes are red for projections and Trust level?

Q. Marketing is red and only 5 schools.

SELT will revise the data and AN asked for an update outside of the meeting. Update and resend to all Directors.

The Board approved six wellbeing days for Central staff to be reviewed in 12 months' time.

SELT to review Heat Map data and Directors to receive an update.

LF Pay and non-pay, some schools have a healthy picture. Would be a similar picture for other Trusts. Word of caution around blue for non-pay. Populated on census and pupil numbers this year, projections are what the schools have projected.

Q. White boxes in finance. Different recommendations for primary and secondary.

### **Safeguarding**

9.

Included in CEO report – no questions.

### **RE and Catholic Life**

10.

HB update. Review the schools levy in August, hoping to keep the same. Thanks to Directors and Finance for supporting Life to the Full.

DESF form, Trust is buying into on behalf of schools. The levy reflects pupil numbers, no additional charges for schools, since Jan have provided the CPD calendar and have visited schools. Well received. Element of wellbeing within that. Newsletters, emails and national updates, less involvement with Governors and want to merge with CAST training, respond to requests for school visits, any no shows on reflection days will result in a charge.

Catholic school inspections will be more in line with Ofsted. Happy to liaise with Chair of Governors, will bring in from January. CPDF booklet, Leavers Masses in Plymouth and Poole, CPD well received, main concern is around sustainability and Catholic leadership and how we can make interim into full time, some areas of no RE Leaders, HTs non-Catholic, some need Formation, great potential out there in Catholic leaders, can build on this, Formation offer will help them on their understanding.

AH and ZB meeting regarding governance training. KB to speak to Jeremy Skelton regarding staff and future sustainability of staffing,

Reflection days included Deborah Fisher from Caritas, schools were asked on barriers of pupil development. HB updated the Board on the barriers such as poverty, young carers, low aspiration. Next steps are to discuss this feedback and HB extended the offer to a Director to attend this meeting in September.

Intergenerational relationship project. Finance coming to an end, opened up to more schools. NJ this should be in every school.

HB all credit to everyone in the schools for the work going on.

**Meeting paused at 1pm.**

**Meeting reconvened at 1.25pm.**

AH, ZB and HB to discuss governance training in autumn term (By Dec).

KB and JS to discuss staffing and sustainability.

## **Approval of Annual Budget and 3-Year Forecast**

**11.**

- In arriving at the current budget what assumptions have been made concerning the level of funding to be received from the Government?

LF updated the Board on the budget assumptions and how it compares to other Trusts she works with.

- We top slice our schools at 7.5% for primary and 5% for secondary. The norm seems to be 3 to 5%. However, in Trist this ranges from approx. 3%-11% and is dependent on the size and structure of the Trist and the delivery of central services. We have a healthy reserve. Are you concerned that Ofsted could accuse us of holding too much back and underfunding our schools?

A fair challenge. Reserves don't look excessive, cash in bank is historically better than previous, capital repairs program is not currently affordable and LF is happy to discuss with Ofsted and is within the wider the remit of the Trust.

The question was asked as during an Ofsted inspection, the Trust was accused of starving a school of resource.

7.5 and 5% interesting, full GAG pooling from next year will mean all funding comes to the centre. Need to consider the central resource and the school resource. Any surplus the centre makes goes into the capital fund. Need to consider the right staffing and links to Wellbeing.

Three-year budget has to be submitted to the ESFA.

Schools were able to deliver a surplus, contingency of just under £500 000. Situation within 2-3 year period, more vulnerable schools St Joseph's, NA, Primary and SMC, with St Joseph's and SMC having a deficit, some schools with a better budget in the next two years e.g. OLOTA.

News from DfE on Tuesday evening, STRB review of pay conditions, accepted recommendations increase in teachers on MPS and starting salary from 2023 of £30k. Upper pay scale inflation would be 3%. STRB upper pay scale of 5% and leadership scale. Costed offline add £300 000 to pay bill for next year. Support staff budgeting 2.75%, moved to 5% increased risk of £170 000. Contingency to be eaten up in this. DfE not committed to supporting schools.

Recommendation to Board – continue to submit the budget, hold contingency back and delay some of capital works for next year and can release if DfE support is received.

Q. Main pay grade? The main pay grade is scaled and LF will share. Q. When does it come in? September. Discretionary for academies but wouldn't recommend this action.

Q. Unions difficult about parity? Not accepted, could still ballot members, SoS originally had a two-year plan, challenge could come. Attraction of top-quality graduates and loss of teachers within five years.

Q. Do parishes have a local figure within the budget? It does exist but is small, Diocese will issue grants such as food poverty, some LAs are sensitive to providing ad-hoc grants to all schools. This money would not be GAG pooled.

Capital works – LF requested approval to use £1.4m on top of capital money from DfE, £400 000 allocating to specific projects, £1m to use on capital works. Large capital program and a challenge to engage builders.

Trying to turn around a boiler replacement project in four weeks which is unheard of.

AN F&R have reviewed the budget and the assumptions, recommended for approval.

The Board approved the budget and the £1.4m release of funds.

The Board approved the budget for submission to the ESFA and the release of £1.4m of funds.

## 12. Audit and Risk

### 12.1 Committee Update from Chair of A&R:

Met with Thomas Westcott, external auditors, H&S accidents, reportable incidents.

New incident – allergic reaction to being given the wrong meal, RCF updated the child is stable in hospital and being monitored, second hand report states child is back in school.

Q. How hard with insurers fight for the Trust? Advised to accept full liability and settle out of course.

Q. No RA in place? No.

H&S Executive started visiting schools with regards to asbestos. Serious incident two years ago, (caretaking removed packaging which was making it safe).

GB keeps a log of things that may impact on the risk register – inflation, utility bills, impact on supply chain, continuation of Covid, pupil absence, industrial action.

Q. Data Protection Policy – confirmation of delegation? Want to expand the remit of A&R, to provide assurance to the Board. The Policy Review Schedule is reviewed, and policies are reviewed when they should be. Want to work with RO and SELT to look at hierarchy of the Board policies, Committee and SELT delegation.

Tenders is considered by internal and external audit and check the correct process has been followed. CFO reports to A&R which protects the Board. AN confirmed that approval is sought via F&R, in line with the Finance Policy.

Business Continuity Plan is to receive assurance that it is reviewed.

Tenders are difficult to obtain during the current time, need to evolve and consider options.

LF confirmed seeks approval from F&R and report the transaction to A&R.

12.2 Risk Register Review

Review at A&R meeting. Three minor changes and two new risks: document of all regulatory and compliance areas, difficult to have a list and ensure always up to date. GB is working with audit firms to work across the sector, pension compliance from incumbent payroll provider failing to follow year end obligations of LGPS. Any notification would result in seeking legal costs, tender for new payroll provider from January 2023.

AN was grateful to review the hierarchy of policies.

**13. Education and Standards**

13.1 Committee Update from Chair of E&S - summary has been issued.

- Given that more than half our schools now have an Interim Executive Head solution should the Board be developing a policy statement which looks beyond the duration of the interim solution?

No change in desire of vast majority of schools to have a substantive HT, models in place are for operational reasons or short-term strategic reasons.

6 inspections – all Good, credit to KB, SI Team and schools.

13.2 DoE Insights Summary on Primary Performance Data

Using indicative data from EEF, broadly in line for KS1 and KS2 for reading and writing. Maths has already been discussed and will review at E&S. PP children have performed less well than non-PP, need to understand the gaps and will report to E&S autumn term.

Q. Whole Board view of how CAST stands against national, SEND audit give a Trust picture? In E&S report, gives a Trust picture. LP to share DfE report with the Board.

LP to share DoE report with the Board

Q. Numbers or graphic rep? Narrative. Like % showing national average and CAST averages. Will be reported to next E&S and will then come to the Board.

HB to share outcome of Canonical inspections with AH

Q. Outcome of Canonical inspections, appropriate to send to AH? Yes.

**14. Finance and Resources**

14.1

Committee Update from Chair of F&R - ALN has joined the Committee.

Forecast outturn – all schools bar one returned a surplus. Trust surplus circa £2m. Credit to schools, LF and Team.  
Harmonisation – have recommended approval in principle, subject to JCC feedback. Noted that a huge amount of work from RCF and AP and the Team, thanks given.

£3.2m spend, difficulties in obtaining workmen.

Q. If all schools return surplus, are KPIs relevant. Based on budget, hard work of SBM and additional income.

Q. Do surpluses remain within schools. GAG pooling. 1.5% surplus, some have delivered over that figure, for example wraparound care that has increased over budgeted figures.

## 14.2

### **Management Accounts to June 2022**

Outturn 2.1m of surplus, on track to deliver more than budgeted surplus. Secondaries delivered a significant surplus, planned to spend on MUGA this year, won't happen until next year, £180 000 will be dedicated reserves to be installed in ND, will need to go through tender.

Historically rolled grants e.g. PE grants so schools have been spending extra money as per the grant requirements.

Some risks are support staff inflation from April this year, allocated above 2.75% will need to be matched next year.

## 14.3

### **Harmonisation**

RCF thanked everyone involved in the work, especially AP and the HR Team, and LF and her Team.

RCF talked the Board through the paper. Proposal is to seek to align all support staff on one pay scale, ideally NJC pay scale, from Sept 2021, with consistent bandings.

Pay protection – considerable amount of anxiety of outcome and how they are affected. Discussed at length with F&R and JCC. F&R resolved that pay protection to all contracts adversely affected and indefinitely until their pay catches up to the NJC pay scale.

Manually calculated due to the confidential nature, oncosts for a 5-year period – £507K.

Variation within schools, oncosts will place some schools in deficit and will need to address in further discussions and GAG pooling.

Have included the Orchard Nursery, concerns of financial viability of staffing structure and pension liability. Likely to undertake a full financial investigation. Lack of pay differential between staff and managers.

Timeline is included in the report, standstill over the summer as there is no support available for staff. Final decisions in November time. Careful communication required.

RCF provided an update on the feedback from the JCC meeting.

RCF asked the Board to approve the pay scale in line with the JCC feedback and budget assumptions.

- The Board agreed (Board meeting 6/7/16 action 6.1) that CAST would pay as a minimum the National **Living** wage - currently £9.90 per hour. Please can you confirm that no-one employed by CAST will receive less than the National Living Wage? It is due to be recalculated this September.

RCF – national £9.50 per hour. No-one will be paid less than this. Real living wage, £9.90 per hour is a voluntary amount. The real living wage has not featured in JCC discussions. SA confirmed that the decision was taken in 2016 to pay the living wage and not the minimum wage. AN felt there were two Government figures and collapsed into one figure, real living wage is different to now. SA confirmed not the Government rate. HB confirmed she was a Director at that time and that is her recollection.

AN felt remaining with the NJC pay scale which is the approved pay scale. SA not original decision of the Board.

The Board discussed whether the NJC pay scale or the National Living Wage should be voted on.

Q. Have staff on NMW? RCF confirmed yes. RO should be paying the Real Living Wage.

The Board took a vote on the Harmonisation proposal:

7 Directors approved  
1 Director voted against.

The Board asked RCF to provide impact on any staff being paid less than the Real Living Wage.

RCF to provide impact on any staff being paid less than the Real Living Wage.

## **15. Governance and Management**

### **15.1 Lead Reports**

**15.2 Link Reports** - NJ to provide a report following his school visit

NJ to provide visit report.

### **15.3 Governance Lead Updates**

Training records – really important to have this for the review. NGA training available. Link Roles – updated and AH to discuss with ZB.

### **15.4 Complaint Update**

RCF provided the Board with an update on the complaint. The complaint against the Trust was investigated by an external consultant. Recommendations have been provided as part of this investigation.

- Will the standardisation of websites across the Trust militate against future accusations of secrecy when documents are intended to be in the public domain?

Consistent style will enable key information to be readily accessible but will still rely on the key personnel uploading the relevant documents.

RO thanked RCF for her hard work and support in light of this complaint.

Websites should be the CAST brand. GB confirmed this was referenced at a governance review.

Next steps were provided to the complainant and the timescales have passed.

#### **Clerking Restructure**

15.5

Previously consulting to restructure the role across the Trust aligned to Harmonisation and to include consistent hours per week for all Clerks.

HR consultation, feedback was interesting and revealed a variance in local governance. The restructure is paused to further examine the feedback.

Directors agreed pausing the consultation was the right decision.

#### **Link Director Protocol**

15.6

The Board needs to be linked with and have sight of the Local Boards.

It is a strategic role and must not be operational. Hold the Chair of Governors to account, autumn term visit is for familiarisation. Submit a return. Schools are individual but as a Trust, there are certain systems and procedures to follow, a supportive and clear way of working. Need Directors support as Chairs may have different opinions.

Follow the Schedule of Accountability and look locally. One visit in autumn term, meeting with Chair in spring or summer term either face to face or via Zoom.

- Who is responsible for monitoring the activities of Link Directors? I was recently informed by a Head that they were not sure if they had a link Director - the last time the head had heard from a Link Director, the link Director was Maria Edwards she left the board over three years ago.

Link Directors being allocated to schools, AH and ZB to double check the list. RO to speak with all Directors and ensure that visits are being made.

- The SOD clearly states that the LGB should "Support the directors in the process to appoint the head-teacher and any other relevant post". Why therefore is the chair not consulted when making these type of appointments.

A recruitment process includes the Chair. The Board discussed the scenario.

- Chairs currently feel ignored and isolated from the main board. As part of the protocol should there not be a requirement that the link Director and the chair share their contact details - Telephone No. and email address? This would enable chairs in particular to have a direct line of contact to the board when required.

Appreciate at times there are localised challenges, but not all Chairs feel ignored, had recent feedback from some about how well supported they have been. Introduced new Chairs Forum with RO, AH, ZB and RCF, can respond to feedback and address concerns. CAST email addresses can be shared.

- Is the Link Director the only link between the LCB and the main Board? How is mutual accountability/representation achieved? Will the burden of reporting visits be unreasonable for the Board secretary when even with local contact, the arrangement of visits has proved difficult? Need to use terms consistently in the protocol - Chair of Governors/LGB/Chair of LCB

Other links do happen – training sessions, open forum sessions, AH support, Clerk to collate visit reports and upload to GovernorHub. Q. Protocols suggest Clerk to identify key themes.

Q. Directors asked about the mechanics of the meeting. No need to have the SIO present but need to share visit note afterwards to ensure that they are kept in the loop. Appropriate to contact the HT and arrange the visit. Link Directors will be shared and contact information of Chairs will be provided. Will brief the Chairs on this protocol.

The Board approved the Link Director protocol.

### **Preparing for a visit from Ofsted**

15.7

Detailed notes which have been used for training for Governors.

### **16. Policy Review**

16.1 Curriculum Policy - approved

16.2 Safeguarding Policy

- Values new bullet point - how would we know if this was the case?

AH and LP to check Link Director list and send out to schools.

RO to ensure all link visits are being made.

Link Director protocol approved

If a child is not ready, how would we know? It is regarding the culture within the school, look for signs of dysregulation, behaviour.

- Roles & Responsibilities - how do we the CAST Board ensure the LGB (LCB?) know what the responsibilities are?

School needs in advance of 1<sup>st</sup> September, KB to review. SG Policy approved.

Sex Education (Diocese) – not reviewed, HB confirmed RSC Policy updated. LP to obtain.

Teaching and Learning Policy - approved

16.3 Finance Policy - approved

Health and Safety – P6, wrong name under RO signature. Policy approved subject to name correction.

16.4

16.5 Governor Induction Policy – approved.

16.6

- Should there be a requirement for a briefing by the Chair or other nominee about how the Board works and deal with any questions the incoming person may have, prior to any meeting?

16.7

Good suggestion, should add in.

Governor Visits Policy – updated with KCSiE 2022 statement.

Chair of Govs running record strategy meeting for Chair of Governors.

16.8

Agency and Supply Workers - approved

Allegations Against Staff - approved

Appraisal - approved

16.9

Apprenticeship - approved

16.10

Capability - approved

16.11

Disciplinary - approved

16.12

Early Careers Teachers - approved

16.13

Emotional Health and Wellbeing - approved

16.14

Equal Opportunities - approved

16.15

Grievance - approved

16.16

Pay Policy Teachers - approved

16.17

Recruitment - approved

16.18

Reorganisation and Redundancy - approved

16.19

Salary Overpayments - approved

16.20

Staff Code of Conduct - approved

16.21

Training & CPD - approved

16.22

Data Protection Policy - approved

16.23

Personal Data Breach Handling Procedure – approved

16.24

Data Retention Policy & Schedule - approved

16.25

16.26

16.27

## 17. Enframe/Net Zero

Revisiting Enframe presentation, two recommendations:

Agree working relationship with consultant

Commit upfront of circa £100 000 funding to bid for capital grants and monitoring tools.

LP to obtain RSC Policy from HB for reference

LP to update strategy meeting

Q. £100 000 includes the cost of consultant, total amount. RCF confirmed. From unspent capital budget.

Q. Resourcing, program of works. RCF confirmed Paul Stewart would be the lead on it. £100 000 is an initial investment, will benefit from additional finding and staffing.

Q. Working groups are the same people, can we commit to this. Benefit of a consultant on board, off the shelf support, one of the Board strategic goals.

Q. How form working groups and not overload staff.

SELT discussion on how to create working groups. Need to start and make investment for grants, limited until the grants come through.

Q. Will the grants pay for people and resources? No, think it would be restricted to resources. NJ worried about staff being overworked but wholeheartedly supports this.

The Board approved the two recommendations to engage consultant and release £100 000 of funding.

Update to be provided at December Board meeting.

The Board approved engagement of consultant and release of £100 000 funding

**18. Meeting Dates 2022/23**

Meeting dates were approved.

SA and NJ absent for September Board meeting  
SA absent for October Board meeting  
ALN unavailable for F&R 07/07/2023

Meeting dates approved for 22/23

**19. Board Management Plan 2022/23**

GB highlighted the A&R plan was not populated but on checking the spreadsheet needed expanded to view.

**20. Close**

Meeting closed at 15.55

**Future Board Meeting Dates**

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