

**Minutes of CAST Board meeting held on Friday 20th May 2022  
at Plymouth CAST Office from 9.30am**

Attendees:	Ruth O'Donovan (RO)	-	Foundation Director (Chair)
	Andy Nicholls (AN)	-	Foundation Director
	Sandy Anderson (SA)	-	Foundation Director
	Ann Harris (AH)	-	Foundation Director
	Deacon Nick Johnson (NJ)	-	Foundation Director
	Graham Briscoe (GB)	-	Co-opted Director
	Les Robins (LR)	-	Co-opted Director
In Attendance:	Zoe Batten (ZB)	-	CEO
	Laura Fox (LF)	-	CFO
	Rose Colpus-Fricker (RCF)	-	COO
	Kevin Butlin (KB)	-	Director of Education and Standards
	Paul Stewart	-	Premises and Procurement Manager
	Helen Brown	-	DSC
	Leah Paiano (LP)	-	Clerk

John Edwards gave the Board background information on his company before giving his presentation using the slides, explaining that it is about behaviour change. COP 27 is happening in Egypt in November and is a good time to launch the Plymouth CAST plan.

GB arrived at 9.48am.  
HB arrived at 9.57am.

PS gave an update on how to launch this with schools with annual monitoring, and reporting on progress. The DfE are interested in working with Plymouth CAST from the start of this journey, with the potential for Plymouth CAST to be a trailblazer for other MATs.

Q - cost was £90 000 - £100 000, what does that cover? Start on all different workstreams - policies, tools to collect data and people with specialist skills.

Q - doesn't cover the cost of anything uncovered? Procurement, understanding what you do. Don't think much will be uncovered due to PS work carried out.

Q - happy with facilities management, buildings, purchasing, DfE column but no reference to ESFA carbon reporting. Included in the report. 1.9% erroneous figure - measuring energy consumption, not a baseline. Average 1.8-2.8%, not a measure of how well but a measure of poor buildings. Need to have your own data to track.

Q - no discussion of the expense of building this into the curriculum. DfE short term goals and funding but need to wait for their update. Natural History GCSE 2025 - need to watch. Massive impact for the younger generation and need to find the solutions. If money was no object it could be net zero by 2030. Check out TED podcasts, MEARSCK shipping example. DfE doesn't have the data, by having own data could bring funding with it.

Q - what do we need to do to get to 2030/35. How can we achieve this in 8 years when big companies are taking longer? Supply chains are longer and more energy intensive, fundamentally changing behaviours and buildings. Boilers are a big issue, replacing old with a new gas boiler would halve the impact. In next 5 or 6 years there will be alternatives to gas or the Govt will give money to swap out to heat pumps etc.

Q - 47% procurement savings - where did it come from? Catering contract requirements to understand carbon content and reduce content. Example of a secondary school that is totally vegan. Cleaning companies must monitor chemicals and waste, and work to reduce it. Transporting diluted chemicals, dilute on site. Recycled paper in photocopiers. IT in standby mode. Laptops plugged in at all times. Wifi on all night.

- What is the definition of NetZero?

Whatever carbon you are emitting, removing the same amount. Will always be approx 5-10%. Everything we do has an impact and we need to lessen that impact. Carbon awareness training, every school having someone who has undertaken that training.

- What is the impact of human beings in all settings as they are not mentioned?

Set the vision and win the hearts and minds of school leaders. Can engage children. Needs coordinating, shared common framework. Schools will have outreach in the community.

Q - £100 000 investment, can't commit without knowing we would get funding. Plan needs to be broken down into minimal cost actions and then actions when funding is certain. You can pick which areas you want to focus on. If serious, you need to find the funding. Energy contracts end in 2024, actions taken now will save on gas and electricity bills in the future. If trying to hit 2030, need to find that money. Support this but schools have budgets that can't fund SEND.

- 3.1 (Project and Budget Plan) Is it conceivable we can get a graduate employee plus work placement staff for £25k inc on costs.

The Board agreed to have a period of reflection and to take this up in the July meeting.

RO thanked JE for his presentation and time. SA flagged that if keen to do this we are waiting until July to make a decision. LF started some targeted benchmarking work as clearly identified direct payback. Initial plans have been drawn up as can't apply for funding without it, an amount of money has been set to the budget. £12k has been spent already.

JE and PS left the meeting - 10.40am.

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer	Decision/Action
<p>Opening prayer by RO. RO welcomed Helen Brown to the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>2. Apologies and Confirmation of Quorum</b></p>	
<p>JV - work commitment. No apologies received from DR. Quorum met.</p>	
<p><b>3. Declaration of Interest</b></p>	
<p>NJ declared he is married to a member of staff.</p>	
<p><b>4. Minutes of previous meetings: 10th March 2022 (confidential meeting) and 11th March 2022.</b></p>	<p>The minutes of the meetings 10th March and 11th March were approved.</p>
<p><b>10th March</b> - minutes approved. <b>11th March</b> - minutes approved.</p>	
<p>Safeguarding Reference to two reviews but five different schools listed...can we have an explanation and improved future clarity?</p>	
<p>RO minutes listed two SG reviews and an update on incidents.  KB provided an update on reviews and incidents that have happened across the Trust.</p>	
<p><b>5. Action Summary</b></p>	
<p>Status updated on Actions Summary.</p>	

## 6. Chairs Business

RO updated the Board on the new Director following their interview and asked the Board to ratify her appointment as a Co-opted Director. Experience in finance, then went into education, CEO of a small MAT. Board approved. LP to share CV. Mentor to be appointed.

Governance Review Day - NGA review of Governance to improve effectiveness. Consultant is very experienced. 13th June.

Board Strategy Day - 21st June. Revisit strategic goals and to meet as a Board and Change Program. Mark Ducker report to be included. NJ gave apologies for this meeting. Venue - TBC but looking at Buckfast Abbey.

Board ratified Alison Nettleship's appointment as Co-opted Director

LP to share CV.

## 7. CEO Update

- SEND. In 2020 at Our Lady's a child was permanently excluded. This child was placed within a specialist provision. Under these new regulations will it now be possible for a transfer to be managed?

ZB explained Managed Moves is a tool that can be used where appropriate. Enhanced protections around these children.

- CEO Report SEND - government Green Papers are discussion documents and are usually followed by a White Paper before becoming a Bill and getting parliamentary time. How likely are these aspirations given that?

Very likely. Nation SEND review highlights serious systemic weaknesses. Children's needs either not met or only met in part during the pandemic. Highly likely as system is failing children nationwide. Every agency is accountable. Provision is not available for primary aged children. Paperwork is a massive barrier. Place Based Strategy in Plymouth, St Boniface suffers as excess places. LA strategy in Plymouth, planning to passport SEND funding to schools so they can source own AP.

- Are any of the 55 LAs where outcomes are considered weak in our Diocese
- DfE Consultation -again, how likely is it to be implemented, do we have any of the 55 LAs in our catchment and what would it mean of us in terms of individual school Ofsted judgements?

DfE announced education investment areas (EIA). Plymouth was previously identified. Cornwall is identified, as is Dorset. Expect LAs to work with Trusts to formulate a plan. Hold MATs to account. This is a way of creating system capacity and pooling of expertise to tackle stubborn regional challenges. Backed by additional funding.

- The intent to use intervention powers where a school has had two successive less than Good inspections has been strengthened, although not mandatory. How will the DfE reconcile this move with the current Memorandum of Understanding with The Catholic Church?

Termination warning notice could be passed to individual schools but with a clear action plan, targets and timescales.

Termination is very different, Trusts are being set up to accommodate failing and rebrokered schools. Every school to be part of a strong MAT by 2030.

HB meeting yesterday between DSC and RSCs. Connection with the Diocese and Trust before action taken.

Trust then has to prove to Regional Directors (previous RSC) capacity to move to Good by a set timescale. School teams and Trust working hard, schools are on the cusp of Good, improved so much. Give confidence that the model works.

- What would be the impact if the NFF were implemented in full in our schools?

Second consultation before formula is in place. Need to know outcome first. Provision for falling rolls will be important. Anticipate a benefit but levelling up could see sparsity removed. Certain LAs take more than others. Cornwall took decision that sparsity would be allocated on previous year's allocation. Supplementary grants from Sept 23, teacher pay and pension in certain areas to be included in NFF.

- Do all our schools already met the 32.5 hr. per week requirement?

Sept 2022 to be published on websites. Will be auditing schools. Entire of school day include lunch and break but also extra curricular, not breakfast/AS clubs. Extra provision stopped due to the pandemic to focus on the school day. Need to audit schools across the summer term to be in place for September. Majority of schools will meet this.

#### **Agenda Item 7 - COO**

- Website refresh - is it policy that eventually all schools will use e-schools framework and if so, is it a discussion or a plan which will be completed when?

Not policy currently, discussion to see offer and price for the Trust. Cost would necessitate a procurement exercise. Two thirds of schools across the Trust. HTs had various opinions on eschools service. Suggestion of managed service to relieve burden on school staff to be considered. Looking to standardise website navigation routes, staged project but looking to implement next financial year.

Q - schools individuality. Family of CAST schools but with individual identity. Strengthen unity. Supports ESM monitoring for example.

- Harmonisation. How many people are affected by this?

682 support staff. Just under 150 contracts will have pay protection applied.

- Payroll I can't see whether EPM has responded to any of our notifications?

No. Contract management meeting 26th May, hold to account for failings and lack of communication.

- Catholic recruitment -Exec Head recruitment for Margaret Clitherow and Priory – There were no non- catholic applicants yet under the heading "RC appointed" it states No?

- Catholic Recruitment Exec HT Nov 21 - How is it possible for one applicant for the post, who was Catholic lead to an appointment of a non-Catholic?

Applicant not appointed - SMC and Priory. Interim appointment with approval of Diocese. 82 families have looked at the school since being in post. Additional column to show not appointed.

- Catering. When considering a catering contractor, do we ask the children whether the food they are being offered is enjoyable? Are contractors invited to 'pilot' a menu?

Appointed a contractor. Data activity was to ask schools on their merits, menu and take up. During the tender, some tenders included a pilot menu but was not taken up due to the second lockdown. Meeting with contractor, looking at KPIs and can include take up of meals. What happens when schools don't have kitchens. Contractor can arrange transportation. How many schools? 12 schools, central hub of Devon and Torbay. Uncontracted arrangements meant poor service and quality.

#### **Agenda Item 7 - DoE**

- SEND – Of all the pupils who have been excluded in CAST recently 95% are SEND pupils. I queried this at the Ed. Stds. Meeting and it was confirmed that this is not out of line with national statistics. However I have since discovered that the percentage of pupils that are excluded that are SEND pupils is 66%. Neither percentage is acceptable but CAST does seem to be out of line?

112 exclusions since Sept to today, 23 are SEND. 13 children. Know the children and the challenges, too many. 1000 children are SEND and 13 children have received exclusions. Schools, ESM and SEND Lead all work with the children. LA acknowledges half of those children should be in AP but no capacity. Doing everything we possibly can. SEND Lead is critical. Driving forward for all schools to become Trauma Informed Schools, every teacher in every school. 17 schools have not had any exclusions since September.

We have challenging pupils in Plymouth that specialist providers do not have capacity to deal. Pilot to use senior administrator from Our Lady's to work on a school by school basis to complete paperwork to support SENDCo when pupils don't have access to EHCPs.

Q - Schools can't do this on their own, wraparound with families, employment, housing etc? EIA link - Dorset and Cornwall, coordination of services to be multi agencies. Team around Family, coordinates support and external agencies. Centralising admin function of SEND and expertise of SENDCo means weight is taken off HTs, looking at doing the same for Child Protection.

- Will the SEND audit outcomes be reported to the Board and can we see an assessment of CAST SEND provision against the national SEND review and green paper proposals.

SEND Lead report has been shared with KB this week. E&S at the next meeting. Will be compared to the green paper.

- What criteria is used to give access to the CAST leadership programme? Is the training attracting teachers who have Headship potential? Are leaders talent spotting and encouraging teachers to join the training? Leadership beneath SLT, those in school with capability to lead program in school, not DHT or AHT. Someone who has the ability to lead school improvement within their schools. HTs are talent spotting.  
Q - run alongside Formation training for a joined up approach. Head of RE, DHT and HT level are reserved posts. HB A strong leader needs to be a strong Catholic. Formation is a key part. KB Support of the Diocese for leadership challenges has been exceptional. NJ Schools should look to local clerical support and support from others in school who are Catholic.

## 8. Heat Map Overview and Projections

- The Heat Map- the standards set for governance need reviewing since, as it stands, governance is unlikely to move out of red. When is a review timetabled to happen?

Data in Heat Map is current data. The standards for amber measures a lot of different strands. Need to understand it would change the dataset from previous. ZB to review the standards.

Q - do inspectors look at this. Inspectors wouldn't but SELT and Directors do and shows the focus areas.

Q - Governance process and practice. Process is green, practice is red.

The Board discussed the structures and systems of the Board and the LGB, along with compliance.

NJ - what is the link between a child in school and the Chair of the Board.

HB suggested meeting with ZB and AH to discuss supporting Governance.

- Pleased to see the 2025 projections included but surprised to see little improvement in the status of PP outcomes, SEND outcomes or pupil numbers. Does this indicate that our strategies for improvement need further development or are the projections not yet developed?

Projections are accurate but movement of SEND and PP is a more challenging thing to do. The Trust goal is extremely aspirational, we are measuring PP and SEND outcomes against all other pupils nationally.

Q - PP aspirational - but Heat Map shows only three schools improving by 2025.

Q Difference between not established and working towards. Movement from the red to amber. KB will review this.

Pupil numbers - increase the RAG rating for identified schools, strategies need further development, built into the SEF to take forward.

ZB will review the standards and ranges for Governance.

ZB and AH to meet with HB to discuss Governance.

KB to review difference between not established and working towards.

## 9. Safeguarding

Covered in Point 4.

**10. RE and Catholic Life**

HB introduced herself and her experience. She works as a team with Jeremy Skelton and Canon Mark O’Keefe. She has a passion for Catholic education, Christ is at the centre of everything. Positive meeting with ZB and KB. Formation and succession planning is key for the future.

Q - Review of the role? Work collectively and yes, happy to consider this. The CES is looking to update their approach.  
 Q - every school should have a copy of the Diocese Ordo, help non-Catholic teachers, link to every day within the Church. Lectionaries in school also. HB will follow up on Ordos being gifted to every school. HB to share conference dates with RO and invited the Board to attend.

The Board discussed the impact of Collective Worship on the curriculum.

HB to investigate an Ordo for each school and to share conference dates.

**11. Audit and Risk**

RCF explained the Risk Register, updating the Board on the changes within the Exception report.

GB has had meetings with Bishop Fleming regarding compliance going forward. LF suggested liaising with Thomas Westcott on what is required.

GB has met with Thomas Westcott in his capacity as Chair.

Meeting paused at 12.55pm

Meeting reconvened 1.15pm

HB gave her apologies for the remainder of the meeting.

**12. Education and Standards**

Q - Boys maths projections. KB checked the figures within his report and will clarify the information.

SA has provided KB with a report on Statutory Grants and will share with the Board.

KB to check maths projection figures.

SA to share Stat Grants report with all.

**13. Finance and Resources**

AN provided the Board with an update.

- Accounts. YTD income is £1427k better than budget after 7 months yet income for the full year is only forecast to be £727k better than budget? Total expenditure is currently £304k less than that budgeted yet the forecast for the year is forecast to be £727k more than budget? It looks like the surplus will be of the order of £1m better than stated?

Work has been carried out and figures are more up to date. April management accounts have been uploaded to GovernorHub yesterday and LF will share the link after this meeting.

LF to share GovernorHub link to April management accounts.

LF provided the Board with budget update figures and areas to note.

Key dates - final primary places 20/05 and resignation cut off for teachers 31/05.

- The centralisation of financial decision making is leading schools to believe that finances are driving decision making. Changes to the KPI to include 'indirect staffing' IT, cleaners etc. and still budget 78% on staffing makes sense as part of central tidying up. However, the rigidity with which the 78% is applied means that Headteachers who have the reserve, and more, are unable to use any remaining budget creatively and may end up spending money on resources because that is all they are allowed to do. Where schools have the 78% and the reserve can they not be given some freedom to spend the remaining budget in the way that best suits the school? In such cases have we considered that the Business Manager could approve, without it coming to central services? This would improve the pace of decision-making and give Headteachers an increased sense of control.

Staffing is % of income, FNtI identified this. LF explained to the Board how the staffing and outsourcing contracts are recorded. All schools are recorded consistently now. Board has authorised GAG pooling position so HTs will not have a budget to manage. Some schools have more resources than others.

Q - spoken to HTs and highlighted budgets and lengthy decisions which cause frustration. Conversations around budgets are difficult. There is a process to follow. The delay comes when there is a disagreement, decision making is delegated to SBMs. There is resistance from the schools to align with the KPIs.

The Board discussed the points raised by HTs and the merits of GAG pooling.

#### **14. Governance and Management**

- The NGA paper 'MAT Governance: the future is local' promotes engagement between the LGB and the Trust which requires that LGBs are 'recipients of information about how the school is managed', have a mechanism for 'channelling the views of the school' and 'offer challenge to the Trust'. It states that engagement means 'finding an approach to centralisation that still involves an element of support and challenge'. Would it be a good idea to set up a working party, which includes local governors, to look at how we might achieve this state of engagement?

Q - looking to review SoDA. This would have to be considered in line with GAG pooling.

The protocol for Link Director needs reviewing to ensure strategic visits are taking place in line with the protocol. ZB will give this consideration.

ZB to consider Link Director role and strategic visits.

LGB training sessions. LGBs can raise questions via the Clerk, Ask the Board contact, receive feedback on paperwork updates, agendas for LGBs including questions for the Board, Chairs' Forum going forward.

Governance paper sets out the challenges. Need to consider a name change as Local Governing Board is not their remit.

Q - can we do that in line with our Articles? Next steps? Work through actions, work with HB, engaged with parishes. NJ suggested speaking in every Church on Education Sunday and talk about school leadership, in September.

Clerking at local level and if fit for purpose. Community engagement to include CAST update in parish newsletters twice yearly? Q parishes with schools only or not. Useful to include for **all** parishes. St Mary's, Poole holds emails for all families and would increase CAST awareness.

- 15. Close**  
Meeting closed at 14.18

### **Future Board Meeting Dates**

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

Friday 22nd July 2022