

STA Board Minutes 07/03/2019

 Cossington
  Thursday, March 7, 2019
  4pm
  Chair: Sarah Noon
  Clerk: Jennifer Barnacle

FINAL: The minutes are confirmed and locked.

Please ensure that all documents have been read prior to the meeting and any pertinent questions brought to the meeting.

Governors Attending: >Terry Smith, Phillip Bateman, Brian Underwood, Mary Delahunty, Sarah Noon, Christopher Reynolds, Fr John Daley

Governors Apologies: >Michael Cummins, Ann Chukwudebe

Non-Governors Attending: >Jennifer Barnacle, Neil Lockyer, Martin Fitzwilliam, Antoinette Bouwens, Ruth Hurcombe, Mike Hobbs

Non-Governors Apologies: >Mary Robson,

Agenda Item 1 **Welcome and introductions**

MINUTE The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

Agenda Item 2 **Opening Prayer**

MINUTE The meeting started with a prayer.

Agenda Item 3 **Minutes of last meeting and conflicts of interests and business and pecuniary interests**

MINUTE The minutes of the last meeting were approved.
There were no declarations of interest related to this meeting.

Agenda Item 4 **Correspondence**

MINUTE The Clerk stated that the Admissions Policy 2020-21 had been circulated to the Board by email and comments responded to. It was adopted by written provision on 28 February 2019.




DECISION Adopt Admissions Policy 2020-21




Agenda Item 5 **Legal and Regulatory**

MINUTE There have been no changes to the Chairs at any of the schools.
Head teachers have been appointed at St Pauls and Christ the King to commence in September 2019. An advertisement for a new head teacher at Bishop Ellis has been placed.
A primary school has indicated that it no longer wishes to employ the services of its clerk and the Board fully supported the decision. The school will advise the clerk accordingly.

Agenda Item 6 **Diocesan Director of Education**

MINUTE The CEO reported that the Diocese and the CEO's of the 4 Trusts are working on Talent Development, identifying and developing future leaders in schools. This will ensure good staff development and help with succession planning. Consideration is being given to establishing a Diocesan Wide Leadership Academy.

Agenda Item 7	 Safeguarding
MINUTE	<p>The Finance Committee had approved the appointment of a Safeguarding Director. This is a three day a week role and will include supervision and support for staff dealing with difficult situations. It will be an internal advertisement in the first instance and shortlisting takes place on 13 March.</p> <p>The Board noted that one primary school has been asked to be a witness in a pending court custodial case (26/3). The Trust is supporting the head with documentation and procedures.</p>
Agenda Item 8	 Standards Report
MINUTE	<p>The Board considered the minutes of the Committee held on 28 February. and they were approved by the committee members.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Committee had reviewed school's performance and standards in detail, particularly if they had been identified as 'Red' or pink schools. Strategies in place to deal with individual issues had been discussed. 2. RE teaching had been discussed and had been identified as a weakness in a number of primary schools. There was a need for 4-6 good pieces of work each term and work continues to ensure that schools know what constitutes good work. 3. Two schools have developed action plans following recent DCI inspections. The Board asked that the LGB's review these and send a report to the Board on how monitoring of progress and impact is being done. 4. Evidence of how effective the Introduction to Catholic Education course is required. LGB's to be instructed to look at the people who have undertaken it and report on the impact of it to the Board. 5. The 'Leadership Ready' toolkit had been reviewed and discussed. It looks at inspection, safeguarding, website and curriculum readiness and is used to identify gaps. It looks at the evidence in place and seeks to minimise the risk of not being ready for inspections. It is currently being used for 'RED' schools and any due an inspection. The Board asked that Governance readiness be added to the toolkit. 6. New roles for school improvement had been agreed subject to financial approval: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three primary School Improvement head teachers to work in other schools for one or two days per week. They would have a specific focus and remit and work in partnership with the existing head. They would be accountable to DPS, who would decide where they are needed and what focus will be. They would be fixed term appointments for three years with a review in year 3. The roles would also assist with succession planning and staff progression. • Two subject directors at secondary level for Maths and Science. These subjects need additional support across all secondaries, and it was agreed that 2 days were needed in each subject. They would support middle management. If there is any spare capacity, they could have some primary input. • A safeguarding director post.
ACTION	<p>LGB's to send report to Board. School to be informed. DPS</p> <p>Add Governance ready to the toolkit. DPS</p> <p>Ask LGBs to evaluate effectiveness of Introduction of Catholic Education course and report back to Board. DPS</p>
Agenda Item 9	 HR and staffing report
MINUTE	<p>The minutes of the meeting on 28 January along with the report from The HR director were reviewed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The minutes were approved. It was noted that the meeting had not been quorate and that subsequent approval of job descriptions for the new roles had been done electronically. 2. Staffing issues at schools had been reviewed in detail. 3. The amount of issues due to stress (both home and work stress) had been discussed along with support that is being offered. Work is ongoing to look at workload, planning, marking and feedback. 4. A recruitment and retainment strategy is being developed. 5. The CEO is working on building a Flexible, Agile and Resilient workforce, to explore and implement creative resourcing strategies to recruit, retain and motivate and care for a highly efficient and valued workforce as his strand of the Diocesan wide strategy.

	6. A Leave of Absence policy is being developed for the Trust. It was noted that reducing leave of absence would result in funding being available to put a support package in place for staff. It was noted that any packages put in place must be across all 4 CMATs.
7.	
Agenda Item 10	 Finance Director Report
MINUTE	<p>The minutes of the meeting dated 28 February and the Finance Directors report were reviewed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The minutes were approved. 2. Much work has been undertaken to get a clearer picture of finances and the backlog is being cleared rapidly. It is on target to be up to date by 31 March 2019. 3. The accounts had been reviewed and the ongoing issues with PS Financial were noted, although some progress had been made. 4. Meetings have been held with school heads to discuss budgets. It was clear from feedback from LGB's that clarity of financial information remains a concern and the CEO will issue an update to schools. 5. The committee had considered the financial implications of the new posts and had looked at potential financial risks for the Trust, some of which have since been reduced and additional income confirmed. It had agreed that although budgets were tight the posts were essential and had approved them. 6. Ideally it would be good to have director roles for all the core subjects, but this is not affordable, and science and maths have been identified as having the greatest need across the secondary schools.
CHALLENGE	Would it be beneficial to have similar director roles for English and RE? Response at 6
Agenda Item 11	 Estates
MINUTE	<p>The Estates report had been considered at the Finance and Estates Committee.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. School Priorities had been noted. 2. Around 50% of schools had identified what they wished to spend their one-off capital funding on. 3. Work continues on streamlining contracts and on identifying savings.
4.	
Agenda Item 12	 Feedback from LGBs
MINUTE	<p>The feedback from the Lent term LGB's was reviewed in detail and responses are noted on the report.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finance is a concern for many schools. CEO to write to all schools to outline the latest information and acknowledge concerns. 2. Some feedback is relevant to all schools and a response will be issued to all schools. 3. Some feedback is specific to a school and will be answered individually by the Lead Clerk. 4. Some schools had uploaded their minutes late and their feedback is not included. These will be approached individually. <p>It was noted that the Diocese will be running a Governors day on 29 June and this may help to address some concerns.</p> <p>The Clerk made the Board aware of an issue regarding DBS checks at after school clubs which the Chairs and Head had sought legal advice on from Mike Cummins. The CEO will respond as a matter of urgency.</p>

ACTION	Respond to feedback with finance email, generic email and specific emails. CEO/Clerk Respond to school re DBS legal advice. CEO
Agenda Item 13	▶ Meeting schedule 2019-20
MINUTE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feedback from Directors, the Executive team, LGBs (particularly Chairs) and the Lead Clerk have all recognised the need to rework the timing of meetings for next year for a variety of reasons including the close proximity of some rounds of meetings this year rendering certain standing items redundant; the need to have certain meetings at certain times for operational reasons (e.g. financial sign off or returns); the need to position LGB meetings appropriately in terms of both the school year and the CMAT cycle. 2. The format this year was set by the Diocese and has been useful as a learning experience but there is a need to streamline the schedule so that meetings can be more effective. Any changes would need Diocesan approval. 3. The reduction in meetings would allow directors to do more focused work outside of the meeting and to then report back to the Board. 4. The proposed timetable was looked at in conjunction with the Academies Financial Handbook guidance on meetings and it was noted that there would need to be a strong case for less than 6 Board meetings a year. 5. Some concerns were expressed about the long gaps between meetings (e.g. April to September) and it was agreed that an additional Finance meeting should be added in June. Management accounts will be sent monthly to the Finance Committee. 6. It was noted that additional meetings could be called as necessary. Consideration should be given to adding an additional Board meeting in September.
ACTION	The proposal will be reworked for discussion with Diocese.NL
Agenda Item 14	▶ Next Meeting
MINUTE	<p>The next meeting is 4 April 2019.</p> <p>The HR Committee and Finance Committee scheduled for 27 March will be cancelled, as it was agreed that they are too close to the last round of meetings and for finance they would fall at an extremely busy time. More detailed reports will be submitted to the Board meeting on 4 April instead.</p>
Agenda Item 15	▶ Director Only item
MINUTE	<p>The executive team left the meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The two DPS's and the Finance Director have completed their probationary period and had a mid-term review. It was agreed that they should be informed that they have passed their probationary period. 2. The CEO has also passed his probationary period and will be informed. CU had met with Diocese and external advisor to discuss progress. 3. The importance of using Trust Governor to read papers before meetings, record attendance and to keep details of training etc up to date was emphasised. Directors stated that they required further training on Trust Governor. 4. It was acknowledged that it has been difficult to challenge in this first year but that going forward there should be more challenges and directors should work in their specialised areas, ego, health and safety, safeguarding, SEND, Chaplaincy and Catholic Life, GDPR. Finances in particular needs to be more up to date to allow challenges. 5. Governance at LGB level needs to be improved. They may require more guidance or be asked for specific report. SEND Report will be asked for in P1 and PP impact spending report in P2. 6. Consideration to be given to increasing membership of committees to 4.
ACTION	<p>Arrange training on TG for directors. Clerk</p> <p>Inform staff of probation period pass. Chair</p>

	Consider changes to committee numbers. Continue work on increasing effectiveness of LGBs
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Agenda Item 16	 Closing Prayer
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MINUTE	The meeting closed with a prayer.
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Governor Agreed Actions set during this meeting: 0
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STA Trust Board *dated:* 07/03/2019
Minutes approved by Jennifer Barnacle