

INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL CLERKING SERVICES

The Board of Directors of St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust

Minutes of a virtual meeting of the Board of Directors
held on 15 July 2021 at 5.00pm

PRESENT: Mr P Fearnley, in the Chair,
Mr C Cuthill, Mr M Davidson, Ms R Dex, Mr M Gallagher, Reverend W Massie,
Mr J Sargeant, Mrs A Ward,

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr G Fitzpatrick, Chief Executive Officer
Mrs K Siedle, Chief Operating Officer, Primary
Mrs M Stead, Head of School Designate
Mrs S Teasdale, Chief Finance Officer

CLERK TO THE DIRECTORS: Mrs M Gibson, Independent Professional Clerking Services

627 OPENING PRAYER. Reverend Massie opened the meeting with a prayer.

628 APOLOGIES. Apologies for absence were received from Mr Davison.

Directors noted that Mr Davison would reach the end of his term of office on 31 August 2021 and he did not intend to seek re-appointment. Thanks were conveyed for his long association with St Mary's College and the Trust.

RESOLVED: that consent be given to the absence of the above-named Director.

629 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS. No declarations were submitted in addition to those already registered.

630 REPORTS FROM ACADEMY LEADERS.

Directors formally welcomed Mrs Stead to the meeting.

Mrs Stead reported that she had worked at St Mary's College over the previous four weeks and was looking forward to the start of the new academic year. She drew Directors' attention to areas of priority on which she would focus:

- Ofsted preparation – Directors were reminded that Section 5 and Section 48 inspections were imminent. In preparation, there would be increased focus on the quality of teaching and learning, and further development of the curriculum to provide a consistent approach to meet the needs of students within the local context.
- A revised learning cycle would be introduced; this would provide autonomy for teachers whilst focussing on key expectations of learning. Detailed curriculum plans would be developed; these would differ by subject.
- Assessment – six assessments would be conducted each year; reports to parents would be issued three times (currently four) and reports for KS3 would align with primary descriptors to reflect a through school approach.
- Section 48 inspection – the school was fully prepared for an inspection; work would continue with the chaplaincy team to ensure they continued to move forward. A PSHE lead had been appointed who would work closely with others to develop the RSE policy. Listening groups would be established; these would meet throughout the autumn term.

Directors asked if revisions had been made to policies to ensure compliance with the updated KCSIE guidance. In response, Mrs Stead advised that policies had been updated and she planned to meet with Mr Painter (LA Safeguarding Lead) and Mr Turner, to conduct an audit on 14 September 2021; this would confirm compliance with amended guidance.

Primary update – Mrs Siedle.

- Safeguarding – the LA would provide strategic safeguarding support to the Trust; an audit would be conducted at St Mary’s College followed by the primary schools. The process would be intensive and rigorous to ensure compliance.
- Permanent Heads of School had been appointed at St Richards (Mrs Cook) and St Charles (Mrs Woodmansey).
- Mrs Olsen had conducted a SEND review at the primary schools. This had identified opportunities for teaching and learning improvement which could be shared across the schools.
- Mr Perry would support development of a through school data system; this would provide robust data for all age groups.

Directors asked if policies had been reviewed to reflect recent publicity relating to peer on peer abuse. In response, Mrs Stead advised that the detail of this had been included in the updated KCSiE guidance and amendments had been made as reported earlier. She explained that a survey was underway for students in Years 7, 9, 10 and 12; this had been approved by the diocesan advisor to ensure it met all expectations. In addition, staff had received a presentation on how to deal with disclosures and suspicions; this had been circulated electronically to all staff. Listening groups had been set up and age-appropriate posters had been ordered. Areas identified from the survey would be supported as required.

Directors commended the robust plans in place; they sought clarification in relation to the involvement of the new Year 7 students. In response, it was explained they would be invited to complete the survey in the first weeks of the autumn term; this would be followed by a whole school re-survey in October 2021. In addition, PSHE sessions and staff training would be arranged; these would include identification of a safe place and person for students to refer to.

Directors questioned attendance statistics presented and asked how pupils who had been sent home due to Covid, had been recorded. In response, it was explained that Covid related absence was reported with X; this was not considered to be absence. Attendance information had been presented without the X population; this was consistent across primary schools nationally. Directors commended the attendance statistics pointing out that this demonstrated the confidence parents and students had in staff to keep them safe.

Directors sought clarification on arrangements for the chaplaincy team following resignation of a key member of staff. In response, the CEO referred to recent changes in the leadership structure for St Mary’s College and advised that temporary arrangements had been agreed until the end of December 2021, after which the situation would be reviewed and adjusted if necessary. He added that appointment of a graduate intern would enhance the team and extend chaplaincy provision to support students with issues following absence from school.

In terms of chaplaincy support for the primary schools, Mrs Siedle reported that a draft strategic plan / programme had been circulated to staff for comment and suggestions. Mrs Stead added that she had met with the chaplaincy lead to discuss key areas of focus and how they would be addressed.

The Vantage Teaching School Hub

A report was presented which outlined the current position for the implementation of the Vantage Teaching School Hub.

Directors commended the initial success particularly the level of partnerships developed.

631 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

632 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES. There were no matters arising.

633 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the following meetings be received for information:

Strategic Committee meeting held on 15 April 2021
Finance, Audit and Capital Assets Committee meetings held on 6 May
and 8 July 2021.
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Committee meeting held on 8
June 2021.
Human Resources Committee meeting held on 1 July 2021.

634 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

Policies for Review (minute 623 of the Finance, Audit and Capital Assets Committee refers).

Directors confirmed they were satisfied with revisions made to the policies presented at the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the charging and community use policies be approved, as presented at the meeting on 8 July 2021.

635 WRITTEN RESOLUTION. Directors were asked to approve actions agreed by the Admissions Committee via written resolution.

RESOLVED: that the written resolution be approved.

636 2021/22 BUDGET. The CFO drew attention to the proposed 2021/22 budget which had been recommended for approval by the Finance Audit and Capital Assets Committee. The following key points were highlighted:

- the end of year position for 2020/21 was slightly improved with £137,000 surplus;
- the committee was monitoring the financial position of the primary schools very closely; they were aware of the reasons for the current position and plans to improve the situation;
- additional income had been received for the Vantage Teaching School Hub, the expansion of St Mary's College and increased numbers in the Sixth Form;
- assumptions used for the budget setting process, which had been circulated for information, had been cautious and realistic.

In response to comments and questions, the CFO confirmed that once the audit had been completed and the position finalised, the accounts would be published on the Trust website; in addition, the information was available to the public via Companies House.

The Chair drew attention to the minutes of the Finance, Audit and Capital Assets Committee meeting held on 8 July 2021 which detailed the level of scrutiny and questioning presented; he asked Directors to support the recommendation of the committee to approve the budget.

RESOLVED: that the recommendation of the Finance, Audit and Capital Assets Committee to approve the 2021/2022 budget be unanimously supported.

637 TRUST GOVERNANCE. Directors received minutes of Cluster Board meetings for information.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the following meetings be received for information:

Cluster 1: 25 March 2021

Cluster 2: 11 March 2021

Cluster 3: 17 March and 22 June 2021

638 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS.

RESOLVED: that dates and times of meetings be confirmed as follows:

Autumn - 2021

Strategic - 16 September 2021 at 5.00pm

Finance, Audit and Capital Assets - 14 October & 2 December 2021 at 5.00pm

Human Resources - 18 November 2021(may need additional to complete PM reviews) at 1.30pm

Board - 30 September & 9 December 2021 at 5.00pm

Spring 2022

Strategic - 13 January 2022 at 5.00pm

Finance, Audit and Capital Assets - 20 January & 17 March 2022 at 5.00pm

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning - 1 March 2022 at 2.30pm

Human Resources - 10 March 2022 at 1.30pm

Board - 24 March 2022 at 5.00pm

Summer 2022

Strategic - 28 April 2022 at 5.00pm

Finance, Audit and Capital Assets - 12 May & 7 July 2022 at 5.00pm

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning - 7 June 2022 (may add late meeting to receive primary outcomes) at 2.30pm

Human Resources - 30 June 2022 at 1.30pm

Board - 14 July 2022 at 5.00pm

ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS.

639 ST RICHARD'S MONITORING VISIT.

Directors requested an update following the recent monitoring visit. In response, Mrs Siedle advised that the visit had been very thorough and had challenged those involved. The inspector had indicated that it could be up to two years before the school was visited again; the implications of this in terms of promotion and marketing the school would be considered in the autumn term.

Directors expressed disappointment that positive comments received from the inspector were not reflected in the official judgement the school currently held.

Mrs Stead was thanked for her attendance and left the meeting.

640 CHAIR'S THANKS. The Chair conveyed thanks to Directors, senior leaders and all staff for their support and drive through a very challenging year.

.....
Signature of Chair

INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL CLERKING SERVICES

The St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust

Minutes of a virtual meeting of the Board of Directors
held on 15 July 2021 at 5.00pm

PART B - NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Confidential items covered by the Articles of Association

641 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

642 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES. There were no matters arising.

643 MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the special meeting held on 14 May 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

644 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

RESOLVED: i) that the minutes of the following meetings be received, for information:

Strategic Committee meeting held on 15 April 2021.

Finance, Audit and Capital Assets Committee meeting held on 6 May 2021.

Human Resources Committee meeting held on 1 July 2021

ii) that the minutes of the Selection Panel meetings held on 7, 10 12,14 and 21 May 2021 be confirmed as correct records and the Chairs be authorised to sign.

.....
signature of Chair