

TA Board Minutes 08/07/2024

▶ Cossington ▶ Monday, July 8, 2024 ▶ 4pm ▶ Chair: Sarah Noon ▶ Clerk: Jennifer Barnacle

FINAL: The minutes are confirmed and locked.

Additional papers to be added shortly

Governors Attending:	>Maria Jane, Jo Anderson, Immaculate Wilson-Mbah, Brian Underwood, Sarah Noon, David Hall, Mary Mihovilovic, Terry Smith, Raphael Imoni
Governors Apologies:	>Justin Morgan,
Non Governors Attending:	>Neil Lockyer, Antoinette Bouwens, Jennifer Barnacle, Mary Robson, Ruth Hurcombe, Ruth Elmore, Mike Hobbs
Non Governors Apologies:	>Tom Shannon, Marcella Gillespie

Agenda Item 1

▶ **Opening Prayer**

MINUTE The meeting opened with a prayer.

Agenda Item 2

▶ **Minutes and matters arising**

MINUTE The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

MINUTE The actions arising relating to the committees held since the last Board meeting are noted and listed on the agenda as an aide memoire for the Executive Team. An update should be provided to the Clerk for inclusion on the next Board meeting agenda.

ACTION Executive Team to provide update re actions arising from committees to Clerk in advance of September Board meeting.

Agenda Item 3

▶ **Declarations of business interests**

MINUTE There were no declarations of interest for the purpose of this meeting.

Agenda Item 4

▶ **Legal, Governance and Correspondance**

Membership of committees 2024-25

Audit and Risk: SN , TS, BU, DH
Catholic Life: RI, SN, IWM MJ, JA
HR: SN, MM, IWM and BU
Standards: BU, SN, MJ, JA
Finance: TS, SN, DH, JM
Estates: SN,TS, MJ
Pay Review: BU ,TS, JM

Link Directors 2024-25

Safeguarding - BU
SEND- MJ
Primary Standards - BU
H&S and Secondary Standards link directors to be appointed

Approval of Nominated Chairs and Vice Chairs and Note composition of LGBs

Deferred to A1

Ratification of Trust Restructure protocol

The paper was noted. As agreed at the March Board the restructuring process stages have been linked to the restructuring and redundancy policy. The protocol was ratified. It was requested that an extra column be added to show date that each step completed and who was involved in the decision. One form to be kept for each restructure.

Since the last Board meeting the Estates Committee have authorised the following:

Approval to appoint TaylorMade Heating Services to replace boiler at CTK Junior site £150k March 2024
Approval to appoint Cassie and Sons to repair belltower at St Josephs MH , under a single tender due to their scaffolding already being in place and the specialised nature of the work. £20k March 2024
Committee approved appointment of Perfect Pipework Ltd for STM heating (£369k) April 2024
Committee approved appointment of Drainscan Ltd for St Martins Drainage (£66.5) April 2024
Committee approved appointment of GD Building Services for St Martins Toilets (£215k) May 2024
Committee approved appointment of AT Services Ltd for CTK boilers infant site (£184k) May 2024

Since the last Board meeting the Board approved the following by email:

Approved the action plan for the removal of the TLR at St Winefreds (May 2024)

Since the last Board meeting the restructure panel approved the following by email/in person:

Approval of rationale for restructuring at St Pauls (March 2024)
Approval of the revised structure for Bishop Ellis School was approved, and it was agreed to move to the

MINUTE

	<p>implementation stage. (May 2024) Permission to begin work on packs ready for consultation in respect of proposed restructures re Finance / IT/ St Patricks. (July 2024)</p>
ACTION	<p>Approval of Nominated Chairs and Vice Chairs and Note composition of LGBs deferred to A1 H&S and Secondary Standards link directors to be appointed in A1 Requested that an extra column be added to Trust restructure protocol to show date that each step completed and who was involved in the decision.NL Confirm JM willing to sit on Finance and Pay review. Confirmed</p>
DECISION	<p>Ratification of Trust Restructure protocol</p> <p>Since the last Board meeting the Estates Committee have authorised the following:</p> <p>Approval to appoint TaylorMade Heating Services to replace boiler at CTK Junior site £150k March 2024 Approval to appoint Cassie and Sons to repair belltower at St Josephs MH , under a single tender due to their scaffolding already being in place and the specialised nature of the work. £20k March 2024 Committee approved appointment of Perfect Pipework Ltd for STM heating (£369k) April 2024 Committee approved appointment of Drainscan Ltd for St Martins Drainage (£66.5) April 2024 Committee approved appointment of GD Building Services for St Martins Toilets (£215k) May 2024 Committee approved appointment of AT Services Ltd for CTK boilers infant site (£184k) May 2024</p> <p>Since the last Board meeting the Board approved the following by email:</p> <p>Approved the action plan for the removal of the TLR at St Winefreds (May 2024)</p> <p>Since the last Board meeting the restructure panel approved the following by email/in person:</p> <p>Approval of rationale for restructuring at St Pauls (March 2024) Approval of the revised structure for Bishop Ellis School was approved, and it was agreed to move to the implementation stage. (May 2024) Permission to begin work on packs ready for consultation in respect of proposed restructures re Finance / IT/ St Patricks. (July 2024)</p>
Agenda Item 5	<p>▶ Approval of budget</p>
MINUTE	<p>The Finance Committee had considered a budget at their committee meeting in June 2024. It indicated substantial deficits in the next three years. This is mainly due to falling pupil numbers, underfunded SEND, underfunded teacher and support staff pay increases and subsidies being provided for catering operations.</p> <p>The committee had asked the Finance Director to identify potential recovery actions to address this and to produce an alternative budget for this meeting.</p> <p>MH presented both budgets. The alternative budget assumes no savings in 2024-25 , savings being made in staffing in 2025-26 and 2026-27 , energy savings due to LED lighting in both years, additional pupils in 2026-27 and a support staff regrading restructure in 2026-27. With these changes in place the budget would indicate a small surplus by 2026-27 and prevent a cumulative deficit position being shown.</p>

It should be noted that this is a high level recovery plan and that there is much uncertainty in the budgets . There could be alternative ways identified to make savings or funding could change. The Executive Team will continue to look at recovery plans further to establish which actions can be implemented and when and what impact they will have. It was acknowledged that some decisions that may need to be taken will be very challenging for schools to accept.

School Resource Management Advisors (offered by ESFA) involvement is being considered and early contact has been made to look at how the process might work. We may want to consider deciding on priority schools for SRMA to focus on rather than asking them to look at all schools.

A discussion took place regarding which budget to submit to ESFA and whether it was better to submit a budget showing the significant deficit and the scale of the challenges being faced or the revised budget which indicates where savings might be made if recovery action is taken.

It was agreed to submit the revised budget which continues to show a downward trend and to highlight that this budget would only be achieved if a recovery plan was put in action and that the recovery plan will significantly impact on schools. It should be stressed that the recovery strategies and assumptions used in the budget are at present just high level suggestions and in reality savings might come from alternative means.

It was noted that there will potentially be some funding / pay increase announcements over the coming few weeks and if so these will be incorporated into the budget along with the latest financial position. A revised budget will then be sent to the Board for approval on 2/8/24 with a view to submitting on 9/8/24. The Clerk will coordinate the approval.

MH stated that interest is maximised where possible, but we must remain mindful of cashflow. It was noted that it is likely that the interest received will fall in coming years as cash balances are reducing and interest rates are likely to go down.

Retirements of senior staff are only included if there is some certainty.

No contingencies are included in the budgets. The reserves are treated effectively as a contingency fund.

ACTION A final revised budget will be sent to the Board for approval on 2/8/24 with a view to submitting on 9/8/24. The Clerk will coordinate the approval.

DECISION It was agreed to submit the revised budget which continues to show a downward trend and to highlight that this budget would only be achieved if a recovery plan was put in action and that the recovery plan will significantly impact on schools.

CHALLENGE	Do we maximise our investment interest ? Are retirements of senior staff included in forecasts? Are there any contingencies in the budget?
Agenda Item 6	▶ Finance Directors report inc Management Accounts and feedback from committee
MINUTE	<p>The report was noted.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ESFA continue to require any Related Party Transactions to be declared in advance of taking place. Related Party Transactions that need declaring are those where there is a link to a Board Director or a Member. These are listed in the Finance Directors report . Where we do declare the transaction, the Board need to be satisfied that certain conditions are met and these conditions are detailed in the Finance Directors report. The Board reviewed these and agreed to the related party transactions and that the conditions outlined have been met for each transaction. It was noted that there are no changes to last year. 2. The Board was asked to approve the 2024/25 NRCDES contribution of £15.00 per pupil (approximately £129,000). SN stated that this must remain on hold as the contribution amount is still under discussion. MH stated that a payment could not be authorised until the amount has been approved and SN will raise this with the Diocese. Post meeting note:Diocese stated that there has been no increase in the rate per pupil for a number of years. The Board therefore approved the 2024/25 increase of 50p per pupil, and deferred the decision on the 2025/26 increase until the appropriate conversations with NRCDES have taken place. 3. The HR and Audit and Risk Committees have reviewed a proposal for the Trust to take out sickness absence insurance with employee wellbeing services included. The Committee’s agreed for the Trust to obtain quotes/tenders for insurance. The intention is to bring a formal proposal and recommendation to the September 2024 Board Meeting. 4. May management accounts were noted. 5. Neither internal nor external audit have noted anything material this year that would warrant a significant change in the financial procedures policy. A slight amendment to the policy regarding when the Trust will make a ‘faster payment’ due to an employee’s pay being incorrect will be brought to the September Board meeting for consideration. 6. The three year Microsoft license will expire in a months time. Two quotes have been received - £69,332 from Phoenix and £67, 549 from Softcat. We have a long standing relationship with Phoenix. It was agreed that Phoenix should be approached to see if they can match or better the Softcat quote and if they can we will stay with them. If not, Softcat should be used. Post meeting note : Phoenix came back with quote for £67,484 and contract placed with them.
ACTION	Phoenix should be approached to see if they can match or better the Softcat quote. AB
DECISION	It was agreed re Microsoft Licences that Phoenix should be approached to see if they can match or better the Softcat quote and if they can we will stay with them. If not, Softcat should be used. Post meeting note : Phoenix came back with quote for £67,484 and contract placed with them

The Board approved the 2024/25 increase of 50p per pupil, and deferred the decision on the 2025/26 increase until the appropriate conversations with NRCDES have taken place.

**Agenda Item
7**

▶ Feedback from recent committee meetings (HR/Catholic Life/ Estates/ Audit &Risk/ restructure panel)

HR Committee

- The menopause policy and the Safer recruitment policy had been reviewed and were recommended for approval. The Board approved the policies.
- Sickness absence insurance was discussed and it was agreed that quotes should be obtained. The potential loss of Medicash was noted and this will require careful communication with staff as a loss of a benefit.
- Thanks were expressed to the HR Team for their hard work on a large workload.

Restructure Panels

- St Patricks - Agreement to put business case together
- IT - Agreement to put business case together. Will require consultation with unions and individuals. Individuals will be offered 1-1 . Restructure panel will then consider the outcome of the consultation period.
- Finance team - MR confirmed that restructure process must be followed for the introduction of an additional post. Business case to be put together.
- St Pauls - out for consultation.
- St Winefredes - removal of TLR confirmed and no appeal yet received.
- Bishop Ellis - removal of TLR confirmed and no appeal yet received. Dismissal Hearing held for 3 staff. Staff did not attend and notice has been served. Appeal window still open.

Catholic Life Committee

- Young Leadership Programme vision discussed. LGB chairs to be made aware of programme.
- Lourdes trip discussed. Consideration being given to if it can be rolled out to primary schools.
- All schools currently have some chaplaincy provision. From October 2024 all will have chaplaincy provision via the Chaplaincy Hubs, except for two secondary schools which have their own chaplains. TS/NL looking at options at how the chaplaincy hub model may work going forward and this will be presented to the next Board meeting.
- Considerable work has been undertaken on Jubilee Year planning.
- Laudato Si take up has been good but there have been some technical issues with uploading to websites. 12 schools have achieved full certification.
- The CSI inspection results for the year were noted and were very pleasing with all being good and many outstanding features. De Lisle report is awaited.

MINUTE

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors had been sent dates of Chaplains meetings and are encouraged to attend a meeting in the year . <p>Estates Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YMD Boon had presented their school condition surveys and these feed into a five year Strategic Estates Plan. LGB's will receive a summary of findings but will be informed that they will not be able to change priorities. AB to inform schools of how much will be spent at schools at the A1 meeting. • An update on ongoing projects was received. <p>Audit & Risk Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness absence insurance discussed and agreed that quotes should be obtained. Some concerns raised about the quality of data available re staff absence and on which quotes will be based. • External auditors have confirmed that they will not rely on internal audit work undertaken.
ACTION	AB to inform schools of how much capital expenditure will be spent at schools for the A1 meeting.
DECISION	The menopause policy and the Safer recruitment policy were approved.

Agenda Item 8  **Standards update**

MINUTE	<p>The Standards Committee in April had received reports from the Educational Psychologist and from the Attendance and Behaviour Lead. The Safeguarding Director had detailed how the profile of Harmful Sexual Behaviour is being raised. Performance standards and priorities had been reviewed.</p> <p>The Directors of Performance and Standards presented their report and the following was noted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good progress has been made on improving attendance. In particular, there has been a reduction in persistent absenteeism. 2. Suspensions have reduced year-on-year , but there are a small number of schools where there has been an increase in suspensions. These tend to be where there are complex social emotional mental health issues. some schools have seen a significant decline in suspensions as a result of having good plans in place and embedded and/or good pastoral support. 3. This year there have been 7 CSI inspections and 2 Ofsted inspections. Results have been pleasing and the inspections have been a positive experience overall. Next year 3 schools are due both a CSI and an Ofsted inspection and these schools will be well supported to deal with the associated workload. 4. Phonics results were noted. Some schools results have decreased and others have increased and it was acknowledged that results are very cohort specific. The DPS will continue to monitor through the school reviews what is put in place for those pupils who do not pass the test. 5. The Board received an update on priorities at individual primary schools. 6. Secondary school tracking was noted. There had been a great deal of immersion and revision work undertaken in the schools and the pupils were well prepared for their exams. All 4 schools were positive about how the exam period had gone.
---------------	--

7. A level tracking was noted. There is no way of tracking progress as previously these students had inflated grades due to Covid.
8. Secondary School priorities were noted.
9. The Professional Development School Improvement Plan 2024-25 was noted. It includes a focus on writing across all schools, new assessment criteria being introduced and the introduction of the STA Certificate in SEN Support for TA's. This qualification is already getting some interest and staff are applying for it. It will be piloted in 2024-25 and it is hoped that it will help with retention.

**Agenda Item
9**

▶ CMAT Summary Evaluation

NL presented the report and the following was noted:-

The Executive Team have evaluated what has been done to date and stated that there has been 3 phases:

- Start Up (2018-20) where policies and procedures and values were set up.
- Pandemic (2020-22) Adapting to new ways of working
- Embedding and Refining 2022-24. Focus on curriculum development, common language for learning, increasing alignment, improving outcomes and life chances.

The next phase will be Pursuing Excellence (2024-27) with the aim to deliver a world class education.

The following has been achieved to date:

- Strong / very strong outcomes & life chances for our young people:
- Progress the strongest in the diocese, amongst the strongest in the East Midlands & highly competitive nationally
- Attendance is above/significantly above national average in our schools
- Suspensions in the Trust have reduced from a total of 365 in 2022-23 to 325 in 2023-24.
- Chaplaincy hub model fully staffed for the start of 2024-25 for the first time; 'Living Laudato Si' established in all schools building on the Eco Roadmap; first CMAT Lourdes pilgrimage established.
- All Ofsted/CSI gradings good or better
- Although under very significant pressure, well-managed finances with reserves intact and a high standard of ICFP across the CMAT
- Very strong Health & Safety audit feedback during 2024 (RPA).
- Capital & estates 5-year plan established.
- Cross-CMAT services very well-established including fulltime Safeguarding Director and Educational Psychologist, and part time SEND lead, Behaviour & Attendance lead and Early Years lead.
- Positive feedback through annual Headteacher survey, and half-termly pulse surveys of staff. Strong, inclusive and Supportive Culture across the CMAT

MINUTE

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We run one of the most successful Teaching School Hubs in the country, and have built an effective SEND & Inclusion Hub partnership with a local special school (Birchwood). Governance remains an area for development in terms of recruitment, consistency and, in some cases, effectiveness <p>The Executive Team will be putting 10 facilitating plans together in different areas and progress will be monitored at appropriate committee meetings. These plans will help determine the priorities for 2024-25 and for the longer three year plan. These will be presented to the Board in September for discussion. In addition, work continues on the vision. It will take some time to put together and agree the three year plan and 2024-25 will be seen as an interim year in which work continues and the one year facilitating plans are delivered.</p>
CHALLENGE	How will the Board be involved in setting the strategic 3 year plan?
Agenda Item 10	▶ Planning for 2024-25 CMAT priorities
MINUTE	See item 9
Agenda Item 11	▶ Teaching School Hub
MINUTE	<p>SN, MJ and TS had visited the school recently and the DPS thanked the directors for their attendance. Directors stated that they hoped to be engaging more with the Hub going forward.</p> <p>A new Director of the Hub will be in place from September, Robin Shakespeare. He is currently working as a deputy Director for a short period to facilitate the handover.</p> <p>The DfE have changed the funding formula for NPQ's and this will mean less free places available. Most places will be unfunded.</p> <p>Teacher training has been a major success. 14 have completed the course and most have secured long term employment already. Recruitment has started for the 2024-25 intake and there have been 27 applications so far.</p> <p>The Knowledge Hub has been very successful and cohort 5 are being recruited to the Early Leadership Programme. It was noted that the Knowledge Hub must be self sustaining and efforts are being made to secure additional funding longer term.</p>
Agenda Item 12	▶ Policies

MINUTE	Approval of policies will be deferred until September 2024 to allow time to review fully. The revised staff code of conduct was noted and approved. Date of review to change to July 2025. It was noted that signed copies are obtained from all staff members at school level.
ACTION	Approval of policies will be deferred until September 2024 to allow time to review fully. Change date of review on code of conduct to July 2025.
DECISION	The revised staff code of conduct was noted and approved. Date of review to change to July 2025.

Agenda Item 13	▶ 2024-25 Meeting dates
-----------------------	--------------------------------

MINUTE	<p>It was agreed to limit the Board meeting on 23/9/24 to 4pm -7pm. Consideration to be given to one more Standards committee. November HR and Finance committees to be rearranged. IWM stated she only has availability on a Monday and Clerk will assess dates to see if this can be incorporated. Pay review date to be set (early November)</p> <p>Board:</p> <p>23/9/23 (4pm- 7pm) Trust Board day</p> <p>16/12/24 (4pm-7pm)</p> <p>19/3/25 (4pm-7pm)</p> <p>8/7/25 (4pm-7pm)</p> <p>Committee meetings:</p> <p>HR: (2pm-4pm)</p> <p>5/11/24 To be rearranged</p> <p>25/2/25</p> <p>24/6/25</p> <p>Catholic Life (1.30pm- 3.30pm)</p> <p>4/11/24</p> <p>24/2/25</p> <p>23/6/25</p>
---------------	--

Standards(2pm-4pm):

3/2/25

8/5/25

Finance (4pm-6pm)

5/11/24 **To be rearranged**

27/2/25 (1.30 to 3.30)

30/4/25

17/6/25

Audit and Risk (4pm -6pm)

28/11/24

27/2/25

19/6/25

Estates (4pm -6pm)

4/11/24

13/2/25

25/6/25

ACTION

Consideration to be given to one more Standards committee.
November HR and Finance committees to be rearranged.
IWM stated she only has availability on a Monday and Clerk will assess dates to see if this can be incorporated.

Agenda Item 14

▶ **Director only item**

MINUTE

A confidential minute is kept by Clerk.

Governor Agreed Actions set during this meeting: 0

Minutes approved by Jennifer Barnacle
