

## MINUTES OF MEETING

Company Number: 07743523



**Meeting title:** Meeting of the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust Executive Committee

**Date and time:** Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 2:00pm

**Location:** Microsoft Teams

### Membership

'A' denotes absence

Mr Ken Daly (Chair)  
Mr Nigel Stevenson  
Mr Tim Harding  
Ms Sue Dryden (Vice Chair)  
A Fr Michael O'Donoghue  
Fr John Kyne  
Mrs Susan Munro  
Mrs Anne Recchia

### In attendance

Mr James McGeachie (CEO)  
Mr D Moore (Trust Finance Director)  
Mrs M Robson (Trust HR Director)  
Mrs K Rich (Company Secretary)  
Mrs V Scott (Clerk to the Executive Committee)  
Mr Peter Giorgio (NRCDES Director of Education)

### Action

**AT/69/20**

#### Opening prayer

Mr Daly welcomed Fr John Kyne to his first Executive Board meeting. The meeting opened with the Trust prayer led by Mr Daly.

**AT/70/20**

#### Apologies for absence

Fr O'Donoghue was absent without apologies. There were no further apologies for absence.

**AT/71/20**

#### Correspondence

The following correspondence had been received:

➤ **ESFA Letter – Eileen Milner – August 2020**

Mr McGeachie explained that the letter had been discussed at the Audit & Risk Committee meeting and related to changes in deadlines for submissions. He highlighted that the Trust had been able to follow the usual schedule for deadlines and had not required the extensions.

➤ **ESFA Letter – Safeguarding complaint (Holy Cross) – August 2020**

Mr McGeachie explained that this was an escalated parental complaint. He **FULLY EXPLAINED** to the Directors the circumstances surrounding the complaint. The ESFA had contacted the Trust to advise that no further action was required.

➤ **Companies House Letter – Written Resolution – Articles of Association – August 2020**

Mrs Rich explained that Browne Jacobson were liaising with Neil Weightman on matters pertaining to this letter.

**Q. A Director questioned why the word “Trust” had been replaced with “Company” in the Articles of Association.**

**A.** Mrs Rich advised this had been due to an error. Mrs Munro added that this was an error across the 4 CMATs.

**AT/72/20**

**Conflicts of interests and business & pecuniary interests**

Mr Stevenson declared that he is a Director at Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) and Finance Director for the NCC pension scheme. There were no other declarations, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

**AT/73/20**

**Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020 having been circulated on Trust Governor, were AGREED and CONFIRMED by the Chair.

**Matters Arising**

AT/59/20 – Mrs Munro explained that Mr Giorgio had not yet contacted her with details of other organisations. However, she understood that the organisation chosen had been selected from a guidance Framework.

At/61/20 – Mr McGeachie confirmed that he had circulated the Second Lockdown Plan. Mr Stevenson confirmed that he had shared Local Authority guidance.

All other matters were completed or to be dealt with in the Agenda.

**AT/74/20**

**Reports and Minutes of Sub Committee Meetings**

➤ **Standards**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020 were received, having been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

Mrs Recchia presented the minutes and updated the Directors on key points. She highlighted that school data had been discussed along with Centre Assessed Grades for GCSE and A Levels.

**Q. A Director enquired whether the Standards Committee had sight of the Plan for the spend of the Catch Up funding,**

**A.** Mr McGeachie advised that they had and that the impact of the spend would also be reported back to the Committee.

➤ **HR & Pay**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 were received, having been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

Ms Dryden presented the minutes and asked Directors to note that Mrs Maxwell would be leaving the Trust at the end of the year. Mr McGeachie explained that the Trust had appointed Mrs Gemma Tovey from the St Ralph Sherwin Trust to replace Mrs Maxwell. Mr Stevenson highlighted that the Committee had recognised all the excellent work that the HR Team had undertaken supporting Trust schools.

➤ **Audit & Risk**

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020 were received, having been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

Mrs Munro presented the minutes of the meeting. She highlighted the key points of the minutes with particular reference to the fact that the Trust are no longer able to use the

same firm as Internal and External Auditors. Mr Moore was therefore in the process of appointing new auditors.

Carbon Energy Report – Mr Moore and the Finance Team were in process of drafting an Environment Strategy.

Mr Moore sought Director approval for the write-off of £31,000 of legacy debt. The Directors **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to APPROVED** this action.

Mrs Munro noted that the level of Subject Access Requests (SARs) had increased but there had been no spike in Safeguarding cases compared to the previous year.

**DECISION**

➤ **Finance & Estates**

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020 were received, having been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

Mr Stevenson presented the minutes of the meeting. He highlighted the key points of the minutes with particular reference to the extremely hard work of Mr Moore and the Finance Team.

**AT/75/20**

**Legal & Regulatory**

➤ **Statutory reporting (Companies House – annual Confirmation Statement submitted)**

Mrs Rich confirmed that this had been filed on time by 27<sup>th</sup> September 2020

➤ **Resignations and appointments**

Mrs Rich advised that Mr Tim Harding had resigned from the Trust Executive Committee and Fr John Kyne had joined as a new Director.

**Q. A Director queried whether Companies House had been informed of the change.**

**A.** Mrs Rich advised that this had been completed.

**Q. A Director enquired whether the HR Committee were required to elect a Vice Chair.**

**A.** Mr Daly advised that the Vice Chair would be elected at the next Committee meeting.

Mrs Munro highlighted that this was also the case for Audit & Risk Committee.

➤ **Code of Conduct for Directors and Governors – for Signature by Directors/TG Profile**

The Directors **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to APPROVE** the document.

➤ **Updated Scheme of Delegation – for Board approval and adoption**

The Directors **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to APPROVE** the document.

➤ **Trust Chair Role Descriptor – for information purposes – CMAT Chairs to sign-off at Nov meeting**

Mr Daly **AGREED** this would be signed off at the November meeting.

➤ **Board approval of newly elected LGB Chairs**

- Mr David Attewell – Elected as new Chair of Governors at St Teresa’s Catholic Primary School Sept 2020 (for Board Approval)
- Mrs Sharon Smith – Elected as new Chair of Governors at The Becket School Sept 2020 (for Board Approval)

The Directors **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to APPROVE** the appointments.

AT/76/20

### **Diocesan Director of Education Update**

There were no updates for this meeting.

AT/77/20

### **Report from the Chief Executive Officer**

Mr Daly thanked Mr McGeachie for his comprehensive reports, which had been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

#### **➤ Chaplaincy & Catholic Life**

Mr McGeachie explained that Mrs Kemple was now working 3 days per week, which provided her with more time to invest in Chaplaincy. An area of focus for her was to ensure that Catholic Life was upheld in the light of Covid-19 measures.

She was also focussing on the De La Salle primary schools who had not been previously supported and on the Hub proposal to put forward a Lay Chaplain Apprenticeship offer, with a start date of September 2021.

Mrs Kemple had attended RSE Diocesan training to further support schools with resources. She would also be meeting with all Headteachers before the October half term to introduce the Lead Lay Chaplain role and to offer Lay Chaplain support. Catholic Life focus currently included Marian celebrations: October was the month of the Rosary. Each school would record part of a Decade of the Rosary, which would then become a video resource enabling everyone to 'pray the rosary with Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT'. Forthcoming events included the celebration of Our Lady of Lourdes day on Thursday 11th February. Mrs Kemple will prepare resources for the feast day - differentiated for Primary and Secondary schools in line with Trust survey feedback. Mr Maher would be delivering DCI training for all Lay Chaplains.

#### **Q. A Director questioned how the Trust planned to work with Parishes for Holy Communion and Confession.**

**A.** Mr McGeachie explained that the schools' usual processes remained in place although there had been some delay to those taking Holy Communion. Fr John Kyne explained that for those who had completed the programme to date, first Communion had taken place. However, he expected an increase in numbers in the new year.

#### **➤ Strategy Review**

Mr McGeachie presented the Trust Strategic Review for 2020. He identified that a SWOT analysis of each area had taken place. He explained that the Review had been informed by key data from a number of sources that were also outlined in his report.

**Priority area 1: Development of the Catholic identity and ethos** – Mr McGeachie explained that many strengths had been identified in the Trust. One of the OLoL schools had been the first to achieve outstanding at DCI. Weakness was identified in the De La Salle Hub that was lacking a Lay Chaplain. In addition, the Lead Lay Chaplain had not had enough time to conduct her role effectively. This had now been remedied.

**Priority area 2: Development of Governance** – Mr McGeachie identified the expertise of the Trust board as a strength. LGBs had observed the significant support of the Trust for its schools. Increased educational expertise was required for the Executive Committee and Mr Daly advised that a possible new Director had been identified for the Board.

#### **Q. A Director queried why former colleagues had left the Board.**

**A.** Mr Daly advised this had been mainly due to business and personal commitments. Mrs Recchia noted that the LGB Chairs' feedback with regard to the Trust Board had become much more positive during the pandemic.

**Priority area 3: Standards and Outcomes** – Mr McGeachie explained that the Trust would be comparing this year's data against that of 2019 as there had been no KS2 SATs and no exams for GCSEs and A Levels. Weaknesses included Disadvantaged Pupils and Post 16 Outcomes. However, plans were in place to mitigate these areas over time.

**Priority area 4: Development of Trust Staff** – 14 out of 15 leadership vacancies had been filled in the first recruitment round and 2 successful Executive Headteacher models had

been completed. Weaknesses included the delay in implementation of the HR portal and recruitment modules; also, the recruitment authorisation process had been identified as too slow.

**Q. A Director enquired about the impact of Covid on Performance and Development Reviews and whether staff were able to undertake training.**

**A.** Mr McGeachie advised that interim reviews had been submitted before Lockdown; however many targets set in these had become unachievable due to Lockdown and Covid-19. The Trust had found that more people were attending training on Teams and the uptake for this had increased.

Mr McGeachie explained that he had been making pastoral visits to schools and had noted Headteachers' comments highlighting the positives that had emerged from Covid adaptations.

**Priority areas 5: Finance & business support** – Mr McGeachie explained that 17 out of the 21 schools were in line with their Trust forecast budget. Overall, there was £68,000 Trust surplus vs the initial forecast of a £124,000 deficit. There had been strong feedback from Headteachers on all elements of the finance offer. Another positive strength was the use of Reserves to support COVID-19 recovery planning (£500,000 had been allocated to this). Weaknesses had included the impact of Software failure and reduced Lettings income. Threats included real-term spending cuts.

**Priority areas 6: Organisational development** – There were high pupil numbers for entry in 19 out of 21 schools. There had been strong feedback from Headteachers with regard to the IT and Estates services. In addition, the Trust had developed excellent H&S, Risk Assessment, and strong Communications and support for Headteachers during Lockdown. Funding was also in place to create a Nursery Provision at 3 Trust primary schools.

➤ **Trust Strategic Plan/KPIs/Exceptions**

Mr McGeachie presented the Trusts' Strategic Plan for 2020-23 and the Trust Strategic Plan Exceptions Report for October 2020. He explained he had adjusted KPIs and timelines and added comments to provide Covid context.

He identified that a review of current progress vs expected progress towards achieving the objectives of the Strategic Plan had identified areas of Risk.

**Q. A Director questioned what form of Monitoring for RE would be in place, since DCI inspections were not taking place.**

**A.** Mr McGeachie explained that the Directors of Performance and Standards (DPS) were carrying out internal scrutiny and checking school standards. He reported that he was confident in the Trust Headteachers and DPS, who were also supported by Mr David Quinn, from the Diocese.

**Q. A Director queried what the Central Team "agile working pilot" was.**

**A.** Mr McGeachie advised that this was a pilot looking at opportunities to work from home. This had not yet commenced.

**Q. A Director enquired whether there had been any issues relating to pupils not being able to access lessons due to family pressures on equipment.**

**A.** Mr McGeachie advised that there had been. However, there was funding available to provide devices for those meeting the Disadvantaged criteria. The Trust had therefore undertaken work to establish how far this was an issue across Trust schools.

Mr Stevenson suggested that contingency planning was required. Mr McGeachie advised that protocols were in place for remote learning.

➤ **Central Services Review**

Mr McGeachie presented the results of the Trust Survey of Central Services. He shared the feedback from the Admin staff, Headteachers, Lay Chaplains and Chairs, which had been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

Mr Stevenson commended the Trust on their statistics, which reflected good

performance. Mr McGeachie advised that OLoL was the only Trust to have reviewed Central Services this year.

### ➤ **COVID-19 update**

Mr McGeachie presented his report which focused on the Full Reopening of Schools:

#### **Full Reopening of Schools**

From 1 September 2020, the Trust had worked with schools to update existing Risk Assessments (RAs) to cover the full opening of schools for all pupils from September. Consultations had taken place with Trade Unions (TUs) and with staff. TUs were very complimentary about the RAs, support provided for staff, purchase of visors for all primary staff and the clear guidance about face coverings in secondary schools.

Staff training had been put in place during staff meetings in July and there had been an additional H&S closure day on 1 September. All schools had reopened as planned during w/c 31 August.

Risk assessments were reviewed on days 1, 3 and 5 and then on a weekly basis.

Risk assessments were monitored for the Trust by the DPS and Director of Estates and Facilities. Schools have updated their Risk Assessments as required and submitted these to the Trust for approval. Regular reports have been submitted to the Board, as the employer.

#### **High priority/anxious staff:**

The Trust had worked hard to ensure these staff felt confident to return to school. Individual risk assessments have been completed for vulnerable staff and anxious staff. The Trust had extended its support to include BAME staff and staff with disabilities and completed risk assessments where needed. A reintegration plan was put in place for vulnerable and anxious staff ahead of the full opening of schools in September. Welfare meetings were held with staff at the end of the Pentecost term and were supported by the HR team where needed. As a result, a very small number of medically vulnerable staff had not returned. All the anxious staff had returned.

#### **Quarantine**

The Trust reported a very small number of staff who had pre-existing holidays booked to countries that then appeared on the quarantine list.

#### **Pregnant staff in the third trimester**

The Trust had taken the decision, in line with guidance, that pregnant staff in the third Trimester should work from home.

#### **Positive COVID-19 test results**

There had been 10 positive staff tests and 17 positive pupil tests. Of the 10 staff – 4 had recovered and returned and 5 pupils had recovered and returned to school.

One member of the Central Team has tested positive.

Schools have followed DfE and PHE advice following each positive test.

So far, only one bubble has had to close (reception at OLPS). In the other schools, direct contacts have been identified and asked to isolate thanks to close adherence to the Measures outlined in the RAs.

#### **School attendance**

w/c 7<sup>th</sup> September: attendance was good, with most schools averaging well above 90% and most at 95%.

w/c 14<sup>th</sup> September: attendance dropped across most schools as a result of increasing numbers of pupils self-isolating with symptoms or living with someone with symptoms. Most schools were recording attendance at or around 90% with 6 schools below 90%

w/c 21<sup>st</sup> September: attendance improved to above 90% for most schools and many returned to at or around 95%

w/c 28<sup>th</sup> September: attendance remained steady at or around 95% for most schools.

w/c 5<sup>th</sup> October: attendance remained steady at or around 95% for most schools.

**Q. A Director questioned whether there were any schools where attendance was a particular issue.**

**A.** Mr McGeachie advised that this had been a problem at St Joseph's Ollerton due to a significant number of traveller community pupils. However, the attendance was still in line with national averages.

**Q. A Director enquired about early mock exams and questioned whether students were confident in years 11 and 13.**

**A.** Mr McGeachie advised that formal mock exams were likely to become very important due to implied impact on Centre Assessed Grades. However, the first set of Trust mocks would not count towards Centre Assessed Grades.

On behalf of the Directors, Mr Daly thanked Mr Burrough, Mr Maher and Mrs Dales for all their hard work.

➤ **Risk Register**

Mr McGeachie highlighted the Coronavirus Risk Report. He **FULLY** explained the methods used to calculate risk. The report showed a comparison of risk levels over time.

Safeguarding had been set as high risk, but due to policies and procedures that Mrs Dales had put in place, and having children in school, this risk had fallen.

Most other areas of risk were set at medium.

**Q. A Director advised that it was anticipated that COVID19 would impact again during mid to end of November 2020. She enquired whether there was a contingency plan at the Trust for this.**

**A.** Mr McGeachie advised that there was contingency planning in place. Schools already had provision in place for remote learning and extra staffing.

**Q. A Director questioned whether Supply Teachers were available.**

**A.** Mr McGeachie advised that the Trust had deals in place with major supply agencies; however, there would be financial impact on school budgets related to extra cover.

Mr Daly thanked Mr McGeachie and all the Trust team.

**AT/78/20**

**Finance Director's Report** (CONFIDENTIAL)

➤ **Forecast Outturn Report**

Mr Moore presented the Forecast Outturn to date.

**AT/79/20**

**Director Visits to Schools**

On hold due to Covid-19 restrictions.

**AT/80/20**

**Policies**

**Complaints Procedure – for adoption by Board**

Mrs Rich explained that the previous policy had related to parents and carers only but there had since been a key change with the addition that the public may now raise complaints.

**Q. A Director queried whether these were then placed on school websites.**

**A.** Mrs Rich advised that they were.

The Directors **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to adopt the policy.

**DECISION**

**From the Standards Committee:**

➤ **British Values & Our Catholic Ethos Policy**

➤ **Attendance Policy**

The Directors **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to adopt the 2 policies.

**DECISION**

**From the Audit & Risk Committee:**

- **GDPR Data Protection Impact Assessment**
- **Freedom of Information Publication Scheme**
- **Health & Safety Policy**
- **Asbestos Policy**

The Directors **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to adopt the 4 policies.

**DECISION**

**From the Finance & Estates Committee:**

- **Expenses Policy for Directors and Governors**
- **Estates Policy**
- **Minibus Policy**
- **Educational Visits Policy**

The Directors **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to adopt the 4 policies

**DECISION**

- **Company Vehicle Policy** – on hold

**AT/81/20**

**Other Matters**

➤ **Pay Awards**

Mr Daly thanked the Directors for their approval by email of the papers that he had circulated on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020. These comprised as follows:

- HR Director's Report to the Trust Board – Advent 1 Pay Awards
- Appendix A – NRCDES CMAT Pay Scales 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020
- Confidential HR Director's Report to the Trust Board – Advent 1 2020
- Appendix A – Pay Policy for Chief Executive Officers – Revised 2020
- Appendix B – CEO Pay Scales 2020
- Appendix C – NRCDES CMAT Pay Scales 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020

The Directors **CONFIRMED** that they had **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to **APPROVE** all the documents as listed above.

**DECISION**

- **Annual Self Evaluation of Director's effectiveness and review of Trust Board impact**  
**Q. A Director RECOMMENDED moving the meeting in view of the pandemic and to allow Mr McGeachie and the Trust team to rest. This is not an essential, business critical exercise.**

**A.** Mr Daly **AGREED** to request this via Mr Weightman and report the outcome to all.

The Directors **AGREED** with this request being made.

Mrs Recchia **REQUESTED** that any written feedback should be made available for consideration by the Directors ahead of any meeting.

**KD  
DECISION  
KD**

- **Trust and Academy Website Compliance Assurance Report – summary analysis/report local issues** - for information purposes

**Q. Fr Kyne questioned when a report on the Fire at St Joseph's Shirebrook would be received.**

**A.** Mr McGeachie explained that this would be via the Finance & Estates Committee. He **FULLY** explained to the Directors the circumstances surrounding this incident.

**AT/82/20**

**Date of Next Meeting**

NB: There will be a Directors CMAT Self-Assessment Feedback Meeting (following Directors' questionnaires) on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 6:00pm on Teams.

**NOTE**



Board meetings follow the OLoL 2020-21 Schedule and will take place at 2:00pm on the following dates:

- **Thursday 3rd December**
- **Monday 8th February 2021**
- **Wednesday 31st March 2021**
- **Thursday 27th May 2021**
- **Thursday 22nd July 2021**

**AT/83/20      Determination of confidentiality of business**

The Committee considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed confidential. It was agreed that items concerning Finance remained confidential.

**AT/68/20      Closing Prayer**

The meeting closed with a prayer led by Fr John Kyne

**The meeting closed at 3.56pm**

Signed:.....(Chair)      Date:.....

**ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING:**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>BY WHOM</b>
<b>AT/81/20</b>	<b>Annual Self Evaluation of Director's effectiveness and review of Trust Board impact</b> Mr Daly AGREED to request this via Mr Weightman and report the outcome to all.	<b>KD</b>
	A Director REQUESTED that any written feedback should be made available for consideration by the Directors ahead of any meeting.	<b>KD</b>