

## 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 3<sup>rd</sup> December 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)  
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)

### Action

AT/85/20

#### Opening prayer

The meeting opened with the Trust prayer led by Mr Daly.

AT/86/20

#### Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

AT/87/20

#### Correspondence

The following correspondence had been received:

##### ➤ [Letter from St Patrick's School, Mansfield](#)

Mr Daly presented a letter of thanks received from St Patrick's Mansfield via Governor Services. Mr McGeachie described that staff at the school had felt much safer following the safety measures that had been put in place by the Trust, which had included an improved remote access system. Mr Daly thanked Mr Burrough for all his work at the school.

AT/88/20

#### 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/89/20

#### Minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020 having been circulated on Trust Governor, were AGREED and CONFIRMED by the Chair.

### **Matters Arising**

**AT/81/20** – Mrs Munro had requested a change to the date of the Directors’ Self-Review Meeting. Mr Daly had liaised with the Diocese however, at late notice, the meeting date could not be changed.

Ms Dryden expressed that she had been concerned that as the Lead Director for Safeguarding she would have liked to have seen the ESFA letter prior to this meeting. However, she was pleased to report that the Trust now had a written process in place to manage this in future.

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

**AT/90/20**

### **Reports and Minutes of Sub Committee Meetings**

#### **➤ Standards**

The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November 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 Mrs Kemple had attended the meeting to provide a focus on Chaplaincy and Catholic Life. Mrs Dales had described the work of the Assessment Steering Group and the Curriculum Steering Groups. Safeguarding had been discussed with reference to the use of CPOMS across the Trust.

Mrs Recchia was delighted by the Trust schools’ attendance levels of 95.9% and congratulated the Trust Team and the schools on this achievement.

Congratulations were also due to Blessed Robert Widmerpool who had been appointed to participate in the Teach First Mentoring programme, and to Christ the King who had been appointed to an established Leadership Programme. Areas of concern had related to Parish engagement but were reflective of the times and Covid19 restrictions.

There were no further Directors’ questions.

#### **➤ HR & Pay**

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 were received, having been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

Ms Dryden presented the minutes and described that the Teachers’ Pay Progressions had been the focus of the meeting. This had gone very smoothly with only one query raised.

**Q. The Directors enquired whether there would be any pay appeals.**

**A.** Ms Dryden advised that there may be one, but this was likely to be resolved by the Trust before it escalated.

#### **➤ Audit & Risk**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 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 as follows: Smith Cooper had presented a very positive Audit Report; the Trust was in a strong position moving forward. The Directors congratulated Mr Moore and his Team for all their hard work in achieving this. There was some debt relating to VAT recovery that was still outstanding. Mr Moore and the Finance Team had agreed to make a final attempt to recover this. Internal Audit was discussed in the light of new regulations and had been put out to tender. The Directors had suggested that the Assurance Mapping process put forward by Mr Stevenson was adopted, which included work on Cyber Security and Payroll. Mr McGeachie had covered the Risk Register and reported on Staff Working from Home and high attendance levels in schools. There had been minor GDPR Breaches and an increase in SARS requests. The Audit & Risk

Committee believed it would be prudent to continue with Smith Cooper for the next 2 years, as permitted under their contract. Mr Stevenson explained that there would now be a continual assurance mapping process, rather than one solely based on Audits; Cyber Security would also be looked at. Mr Daly advised that at the Members' Meeting it had been made clear that the Members appointed the Auditors but that this would be based upon the Directors' recommendations.

The Directors **AGREED** with this process.

**DECISION**

#### ➤ **Finance & Estates**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020 were received, having been previously circulated on Trust Governor. Mr Daly presented the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020, which had comprised a single item agenda to recommend a Cleaning Contractor for the Trust. The recommendation to the Board was to proceed with this process: The Directors **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that Mr Moore could proceed with the process. (Note: Mr Stevenson had abstained from the vote due to conflict of interest).

**DECISION**

#### **Q. The Directors queried what plans were in place for the existing cleaning staff in schools.**

**A.** Mr Moore explained that the existing cleaning staff would be transferring over to NCC under TUPE. Mr Daly clarified that the £50,000 liability related to pension insurance liability that was a condition built in to the contract.

Mr Daly also presented the minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020. He highlighted the key points of the minutes with particular reference to the extremely hard work of Mr Moore and the Finance Team. Mr Daly described that the meeting had focussed on the Committee Work plan, and noted that some of the ESFA deadlines had been changed but Mr Moore and his Team were working to the original ESFA dates. Mr Moore presented the Financial Statements, with which the Directors had been very happy. A Cycle to Work Scheme had been discussed and approved for progression. Mr Daly further explained that progress against KPIs was positive. Mr Burrough had updated the committee on Catering and Nursery Projects. The Directors thanked Mr Moore and the Finance Team for their exceptional work.

#### **Q. The Directors queried why there was a £1000 limit per bike in the cycle to work scheme.**

**A.** Mr Moore advised that this was to enable the inclusion of electric bikes and to minimise the risk to the Trust. Mr Daly clarified that the Trust would initially purchase the bikes and then the employee paid back the cost. Mr Stevenson described that NCC had a similar scheme in place with a limit of £1500 per bike.

#### **Q. The Directors enquired whether a third party would run the scheme**

**A.** Mr Moore explained that Sodexo would be running the scheme on behalf of the Trust.

**AT/91/20**

#### **Legal & Regulatory**

##### ➤ **Written Resolutions**

Mrs Rich re-capped the process for Written Resolutions, which she explained, were exercised where decision had to be taken outside of a meeting. She thanked the Directors for their email responses.

Mrs Rich explained that for any future Resolutions, Mrs Scott would initially email Directors, enclosing copies of any documents for consideration. The Directors' emailed

responses should then be sent to Mr Daly ensuring that all the other Directors were also copied in to the reply. Hard copies of the Written Resolutions also needed to be sent to Mrs Rich at the Trust and retained on record.

**AT/92/20**

### **Annual Members' Meeting Feedback**

Mr Daly provided a verbal report on the Annual Members' Meeting that had taken place on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

He thanked Mrs Recchia and Ms Dryden, Mr McGeachie and the Team for joining the meeting. Mr Daly described that the meeting had gone well and he had subsequently received 2 very positive emails from the Bishop and Fr Simon Gillespie thanking the Trust for all their work and commending the current state of affairs at Our Lady of Lourdes. The meeting agenda had covered Catholic Life, Staffing and Internal Scrutiny, Finance & Estates and HR and the meeting questions had been circulated in advance to the Directors.

The Directors commended Mr McGeachie and the Central Team on the meeting outcome.

**AT/93/20**

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

There were no updates for this meeting.

**AT/94/20**

### **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 presented a report from Mrs Kemple who was now working 3 days per week as Trust Lead Lay Chaplain. In the report, Mrs Kemple described how the Trust had worked hard to provide opportunities for young people to encounter God during lockdown. IT had been utilised to enable the students to carry on as normal, so far as possible. Liturgical Celebrations had taken place and the offer of developing young people spiritually had been able to continue even though they were not able to meet up in person.

#### **Q. The Directors enquired whether there had been any issues relating to the delivery of Lay Chaplaincy across the Hubs.**

**A.** Mr McGeachie identified that one Lay Chaplain for Faith in Action had been absent for 4 weeks due to Covid related symptoms which had caused a delay. There had also been a general delay in getting Faith in Action started across the Diocese. Mrs Kemple would be progressing this in the new year.

#### **Q. The Directors queried whether the Trust Inset Day was taking place on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021.**

**A.** Mr McGeachie advised that it was and that David Wells would be delivering staff training on the Inset day. The Directors would be invited to join the session.

#### **➤ Safeguarding**

Mr McGeachie thanked Ms Dryden and Mrs Dales for leading Safeguarding across the Trust and for their Safeguarding report. Mr McGeachie described that when a school bubble closed due to Covid19, it was usually for 2 weeks, so it was therefore important to have systems and processes in place to Safeguard children in the bubble. Another area of focus had been the mental health of staff and students; mental health and wellbeing would therefore be kept on the agenda. Mrs Dales now had overarching access to all schools CPOMS accounts, was able to report across the Trust, and identify any areas of concerns.

Most staff had completed Hayes Safeguarding training.

Mr McGeachie was pleased to report on the effective processes and procedures that had been put in place to avoid anything being overlooked.

Ms Dryden **REQUESTED** that Mrs Dales attended the Board Meeting at least once per year to provide a Safeguarding Update to Directors. Mr McGeachie recommended that this could be at the first meeting of year when the new KCSIE was adopted. Mrs Dales would then be able to provide an update on any changes.

**MD**

The Directors thanked the Trust and Leads in schools for excellent work on Safeguarding.

#### ➤ **Exceptions Reports**

Mr McGeachie presented his Exceptions Report for December 2020, which had been circulated on Trust Governor. The report focused on the following areas of exception:

**Catholic Life**

**Governance**

**Standards**

**HR & Staffing**

**Finance**

**Organisational Development**

#### ➤ **COVID-19 update**

Mr McGeachie presented his report and focused on the following areas. He noted that the Pandemic was having far-reaching impact in schools and their communities.

##### **Risk Assessments**

The measures and hard work in schools meant that the Trust had been able to keep schools open. Mr McGeachie reported that he had been very impressed with the Trust Headteachers' management of Risk Assessments. He had visited all schools to observe Risk Assessments in action and schools had been very appreciative of the visits.

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

CEV Staff were currently working from home under the new Tier 3 measures, which were to be reviewed after Christmas.

All anxious staff had returned to work.

##### **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.

##### **Provision during lockdown**

Online Lessons had been developed and were much more accessible for students. Staff were also more confident with the online learning.

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

Data was reported and fully discussed.

##### **Provision for pupils who test positive or are self-isolating**

All schools had developed their live streaming capacity since the start of the academic year.

When a bubble was closed, learning could still be led by live sessions from the teacher.

Where some pupils were at home but others in the class were at school, those at home had been able to remotely access key lessons in the majority of schools.

##### **School attendance**

School attendance had been around 95% since half term. This was significantly higher than Nottingham City, County and National averages.

## Recovery Curriculum

Schools had a good understanding of gaps and were putting in measures to address these.

### **Q. The Directors questioned whether there was any update on summer exams.**

A. Mr McGeachie explained that a DfE statement was due to be released later that day. Exams would not be cancelled in England although GCSEs and A Levels would be delayed. However, more reassurance for young people was needed.

### **Q. The Directors queried whether the impact of the amount of online lessons for some students would be taken in to account by examiners.**

A. Mr McGeachie advised that some young people might have received a larger volume of online lessons, which could affect their exams but there was no official guidance yet.

### **Q. The Directors enquired whether any schools were not able to deliver online teaching.**

A. Mr McGeachie explained that some were struggling due to location i.e. where a community did not have reliable and regular access to technology. However, the Trust were researching the areas where this was a problem and investigating how they could address this.

Mr Daly thanked Mr McGeachie and all the Trust team for their continued excellent work supporting schools at this time.

AT/95/20

## Governance Update

### ➤ Evaluation of LGBs and LGB Feedback to the Board

Mr McGeachie described that he had identified that the Trust Directors did not currently have a comprehensive overview of all LGB Minutes. To resolve this, he and Mrs Rich had conducted a sift of all the most recent LGB minutes to look at areas including attendance and challenge, with a view that at the next Chairs' Symposium further questions would be asked of LGBs. This exercise would then be triangulated by requiring the Chairs to self-evaluate their LGBs and by asking Headteachers about the effectiveness, balance and rigour of the LGB.

Mr McGeachie presented his Evaluation Report of LGBs and their Feedback to the Trust, previously circulated on Trust Governor. He explained that 8 schools did not have a parish priest on their LGB. Achieving a Parish Priest on each LGB was an aim for the Trust. Mr McGeachie reported that the Effectiveness of Chairs had been assessed based on attendance at Chairs Symposium alongside challenge. Succession Planning for Chairs was identified as an area that required further work. Governor Training had also been researched. Mrs Rich advised there was further work to be done in relation to Governor training.

### **Q. Mr McGeachie enquired whether the Directors required any further detail and whether they felt assured that they now had an overview of the LGBs.**

A. Mrs Recchia felt that the Directors needed to research what the barriers were to the uptake of training amongst governors. Mr Daly requested that this be revisited following the Chairs' Symposium.

### **Q. The Directors enquired what methods the other CMATs employed to address governor issues.**

A. Mr McGeachie advised that OLoL had a good number of governors and supportive LGBs compared to the other Trusts.

### **Q. The Directors commented that since Parish Priests were no longer permitted to be Chairs they had become less engaged with joining LGBs. They enquired whether Mr Giorgio might write to Priests to encourage them to become involved.**

A. Mr McGeachie highlighted that Parish Priests often supported schools extremely well but were not members of the LGB. He suggested that the Trust would approach these Priests and invite them to join the LGBs.

The Directors recognised that due to their increasing parochial commitments and the fact

Directors

that Parish Priests were no longer eligible to be LGB Chairs, some Parish Priests were having difficulty joining LGBs. Fr O'Donoghue recommended that being part of an LGB was an excellent opportunity for a Priests' development.

➤ **Feedback to the Trust:**

Mr McGeachie described that LGBs were able to send feedback to the Trust in an allocated section of their minutes. Then the Trust then sifted through the minutes and filtered these comments to pin point any issues that could be dealt with by the Trust and to identify those that needed to be taken forward to the Directors.

Mr McGeachie suggested that he would bring an updated LGB report to the second Board meeting of each term. The Directors **AGREED** to this action.

**DECISION/  
JWM**

**AT/96/20**

**Finance Director's Report  
CONFIDENTIAL - ITEM REDACTED**

**AT/97/20**

**Directors' Self-Review Feedback Meeting  
CONFIDENTIAL – ITEM REDACTED**

**AT/98/20**

**Director Visits to Schools**  
On hold due to Covid-19 restrictions.

**AT/99/20**

**Policies**

From the Trust Central Team:

Mr McGeachie described that an increase in PAN in secondary schools was necessary due to the increased demand for places, which also gave rise to an opportunity to improve the finances of the schools. A temporary PAN increase had been introduced in the previous year, which the Trust was now seeking to make permanent.

- **Admissions - Secondary Schools PAN Increase**
- **Primary School Admission Arrangements 2022-23**
- **Secondary School Admission Arrangements 2022-23**

The Directors **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to adopt the 3 policies.

**DECISION**

From the HR & Pay Committee:

- **Code of Conduct for Employees**

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

**DECISION**

From the Audit & Risk Committee:

- **CCTV Policy**

**DECISION**

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

From the Finance & Estates Committee:

- **Modern Slavery Statement - November 2020**
- **Environmental Policy**
- **Company Vehicle Policy**

The Directors **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to adopt the 3 policies.

**DECISION**

**AT/100/20**

**Other Matters**

There were none for this meeting.

**AT/101/20**

**Date of Next Meeting**

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

- **Monday 8th February 2021 – time of this meeting to be advised.**
- **Wednesday 31st March 2021**
- **Thursday 27th May 2021**
- **Thursday 22nd July 2021**

**AT/102/20**

**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 & Outcome of the Cleaning Contract remained confidential.

**AT/103/20**

**Closing Prayer**

The meeting closed with a prayer led by Fr Michael O'Donoghue.

**The meeting closed at 4.00pm**

Signed:.....(Chair)

Date:.....