

MINUTES OF MEETING – PUBLIC VIEW

Company Number: 07743523

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

Date and time: Wednesday 24th May 2023 at 2.00 pm

Location: The Lawn, Lincoln

Membership

'A' denotes absence

'LA' denotes late arrival

A

Foundation Directors:

Mr Nigel Stevenson (Chair)

Ms Sue Dryden (Co-Vice Chair)

Fr John Kyne (JK)

Mrs Anne Recchia (AR)

Mrs Ann Neale (AN)

Mrs Linda Heaver (Co-Vice-Chair)

Mr Graham Green (GG)

Mrs Jennifer Johnson (JJ)

Mr Gerard Cadwallader (GC)

Fr Alex Adkins (AA)

In attendance

Mr James McGeachie (CEO)

Mrs M Dales (Deputy CEO)

Mr D Moore (Trust COO)

Mrs M Robson (Trust HR Director)

Mrs K Rich (Co- Company Secretary)

Mrs V Scott (Clerk to the Executive)

Action

EC/39/23

Welcome & Introductions

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting.

Apologies for absence

There apologies for absence were received and noted from Ms Dryden (unwell).

The Directors **RESOLVED** to accept the apologies.

RESOLUTION

EC/40/23

Opening prayer

The meeting opened with the Trust prayer led by The Chair.

EC/41/23

Conflicts of interests and business & pecuniary interests

The Chair declared that he is a Director at Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) and Finance Director for the NCC pension scheme. Mrs Neale declared that two members of her family are employed at Trust schools.

EC/42/23

Correspondence

There was no correspondence for this meeting.

EC/43/23

Minutes of the previous meetings held on Wednesday 30th March 2023

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 30th March 2023 having been circulated on Trust Governor were **AGREED** and **CONFIRMED** by the Chair.

➤ **Matters Arising**

- **Catering Report** – Mr Moore confirmed he had now met with Aspens and a report would be presented to the next meeting of the Finance & Estates Committee.
- **SWAY** – KR confirmed that this was now circulated to all governors.

All other matters were complete or to be dealt with in the agenda.

It was

RESOLVED to accept the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

RESOLUTION

EC/44/23

Reports and Minutes of Sub Committee Meetings

➤ **HR & Pay**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 27th April 2023 were received, having been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

The Committee Chair explained that the HR & Pay Committee had focused on strike action, meeting dates, TA role descriptions, and the Staff Healthcare Platform.

➤ **Catholic Life and Mission**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 4th May 2023 were received, having been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

The Committee Chair explained that the Catholic Life & Mission Committee had focused on high-risk schools of concern, Chaplaincy recruitment and the Catholic Life KPIs.

➤ **Standards**

The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 5th May 2023 were received, having been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

The Committee Chair explained that the Standards Committee had focused on a Trust Safeguarding Lead, schools causing concern, KPIs were explored, and implementation action plans were tabled.

➤ **Finance & Estates Committee**

The minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 10th May 2023 and an Extraordinary meeting held on Monday 22nd May were received, having been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

The Committee Chair explained that the main items identified for the Board's attention related to the budget and budget action plan and plan for the Estates Maintenance Team.

➤ **Audit & Risk Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 17th May 2023 were received, having been previously circulated on Trust Governor.

The Committee Chair explained that the Audit & Risk Committee had focused on Internal Scrutiny, Assurance Mapping and Building Maintenance where there was a backlog of paperwork to be addressed.

There were no further Directors' questions.

The Directors

RESOLVED to accept the minutes as true and accurate record of the Sub-Committee meetings.

RESOLUTION

The Chair thanked the Committees for their work.

EC/45/23

Legal & Regulatory

➤ LGB Chairs - update **[CONFIDENTIAL ITEM]**

KR explained that the latest LGB minutes were in the process of being analysed. She would report further at the next meeting.

➤ Review of Scheme of Delegation

KR & The Chair confirmed that there were no changes to the Scheme of Delegation for the year ahead.

EC/46/23

Chairman's Business

➤ Chairs' Symposium feedback from meeting Wednesday 17th May

The Chair thanked KR for organising the Chairs' Symposium, and the Directors who had attended. The focus has been on the Trust Strategy, School Development Plans and Performance & Standards.

The Chair proposed that Directors joined Breakout rooms to introduce themselves. The Directors **entered into a debate** relating to this proposal. It was

RESOLVED to defer this item for a further 12 months.

RESOLUTION

KR confirmed that she had written to governors to request their input on any ideas they would like included in a symposium.

Date of Next Symposium: Tuesday 20th June 2023 focussing on Stakeholder Engagement and Admissions Numbers (Marketing & Maximising Numbers for Future Years)

➤ CMAT Chairs' Meeting – Feedback to the Board

The Chair reported that the CMAT Chairs' meeting had taken place in person on 26th April 2023. Matters discussed had included the Diocesan Environmental Framework, Church Marketplace and Exit Interviews for Headteachers.

The NRCDES Director of Education was working on Foundation Director training and The Chair encouraged Directors to enrol on future training.

Q. A Director enquired whether a new training provider was delivering the training.

A. The Chair reported that the provider details had not yet been released.

Q. A Director queried whether the Directors had any opportunity to input into the topics covered at the Directors' Retreat.

A. The Chair recommended that Directors contact him with any ideas for refresher topics or training.

➤ Members' letter

The Chair advised that his feedback to the Members had been to make the Board and CMAT aware of specific issues they would like addressed by the following meeting.

The Chair advised that one Member will be attending an OLoL Board meeting on a future date to be decided.

EC/47/23

Governance

The following documents were presented:

- Update on Review of Governance
- LGB Agenda & Meeting Format Questionnaire Feedback

➤ Update on Review of Governance

KR explained that she and the CEO would be meeting with Mr Mark Blois after half term. Pen-portraits for the Directors had been provided to Mr Blois.

Q. The Chair questioned whether it was good practise to have the pen portraits on the Trust web page.

A. KR advised that the Members had theirs listed. The Directors **agreed** that they would be happy to have their individual pen portraits on the website.

➤ **LGB Agenda & Meeting Format Questionnaire Feedback - update**

KR reported that she had met with LH to finalise the LGB agenda templates. These would be circulated to the CEO and the Deputy CEO for their input before being more widely shared with the Board for final approval. KR confirmed that this would also be shared at the Headteacher Hub to remind Heads of the importance of adhering to the agenda format.

➤ **LGB Effectiveness - Lent Term**

LH advised that submission of governor questions to Headteachers in advance of an LGB meeting was strongly recommended. The Chair suggested that an LGB Chair at the Symposium who employed this practise could share this example of best practise. KR confirmed that new governor applications were being processed currently, however Lincolnshire committees remained low and an action plan would be proposed for these schools.

Weaker areas of challenge at LGB meetings remained: Safeguarding and Catholic Life.

➤ **Approval of 2023-24 Board and Sub-committee meeting schedule**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule.

The Chair thanked KR for her report.

RESOLUTION

EC/48/23

HR Director's update

The following document was presented:

- HR Director's Report- May 2023

Mrs Robson provided updates on the following areas of focus:

➤ **Teacher Industrial action**

Mrs Robson shared that the numbers of staff striking had been declining in total, however the NEU, NAHT, NEUWT and UNSION were all balloting for further strikes. Next strikes were likely to be coordinated action in September 2023 across all unions. However, the NEU could still strike in the current academic year. The Teachers' Pay award had been suggested at 6.5%.

Q. The Chair enquired whether non-teaching staff would strike.

A. Mrs Robson advised that the only notification of this had been received from UNISON, who were out to ballot until July.

Q. The Chair queried whether pay awards were likely to be settled by 1st September.

A. Mrs Robson advised that this was highly unlikely.

The Directors **noted** the current position regarding teacher strike action.

➤ **Review of HR Committees and Diocesan Strategic HR Committee**

Mrs Robson confirmed that the proposal from the Diocese was that all CMAT HR meetings were aligned and that there were three scheduled HR Committees each year

(excluding discreet Pay Committees). These would take place within a two-week window in the second half of each term and prior to Board meetings. Any urgent items would be considered either by an extra meeting or via written resolution.

To be noted was that a further review of the Pay Committees would need to be undertaken as part of a forthcoming review of Performance Management and performance related pay.

The Directors

RESOLVED to ratify the changes to the HR Committee with effect from the academic year 2023/4.

RESOLUTION

➤ **CEOs Performance Review**

The Chair confirmed to Directors that the CEOs half-year Performance Review had taken place and that he continued to progress the Trust's priorities as per the strategic plan. The CEO will be reviewing the operating environment in time for the Board's review of the strategic plan in September/October.

The Chair thanked Mrs Robson for her report.

EC/49/23

Report from the Chief Executive Officer

The following documents were tabled:

- CEO's Report – March 2023
- Trust Strategic Plan - KPIs/ monitoring/staff feedback
- Chaplaincy & Catholic Life
- Ofsted & CSI Inspections
- Exceptions
- DfE Trust Quality Descriptions

CEO's Report

- **Inspections** (Confidential)

The CEO explained that there had been 4 **Ofsted** inspections across the Trust.

CSI Inspection had taken place at 3 schools.

➤ **Trust Strategic Plan - KPIs Overview**

The CEO presented the Trust Strategic KPIs and explained progress against targets. There were no reds and nothing was declining.

Q. A Director questioned whether risk at Ofsted was high at one school (name redacted) due to the deferral on inspection.

A. The CEO described how the risk now had now been significantly reduced. The Trust was strongly supporting the school.

Q. A Director enquired when the Ofsted inspection had been deferred to.

A. The CEO explained that this was not yet known, however the Deputy CEO assured that it was unlikely to be within the current academic year.

➤ **Chaplaincy & Catholic Life Report**

The CEO explained that the Chaplaincy & Catholic Life Report had been presented previously to the Catholic Life Committee and focussed on key progress made towards the Chaplaincy Strategy priorities.

AA explained that the subject of relationship between schools and priests had arisen at the Clergy Conference.

Parish Booklet – AN explained that the Chaplains were rewriting the Parish Booklet. AA advised that Fr Simon Gillsepie had returned this to Chaplaincy in January 2023. LH recommended that the booklet be in place by September 2023. GC highlighted that Parishes had expanded hugely and this had increased Priests' workload. The CEO agreed to discuss the Parish Booklet with Mr Baptist.

➤ **Trust Strategic Plan - KPIs/ monitoring/ staff feedback**

The CEO presented staff feedback on the Strategic Plan and ambition.

One Director was disappointed by the lack of responses received from secondary schools. The CEO advised 25% of responses were secondary.

Q. A Director queried whether non-Catholic staff might not feel confident in replying or think that the survey did not really apply to them.

The CEO agreed that this was a possibility. He advised that significant work had been undertaken with staff on this area.

➤ **Sector Landscape**

The CEO explained that this was a new section to his reported, added to provide insight for the Directors on potential wider sector matters.

JWM

Regulation of the Academies sector

The DfE had published a number of documents linked to its desire to strengthen regulation of the Academies Sector and these included Trust Quality Descriptions, which were used to define a good Trust for the purposes of being awarded a school to look after. This identified 5 pillars of excellence. The Chair and the CEO were keen to allocate more time in a meeting to review the descriptors, since the descriptions contained measures for the Board, CEO or both to focus on.

Q. A Director questioned whether CMATs could be required to take-on a non-Catholic school.

A. The CEO advised that the Trust Articles prevented this; however, an alternative area of concern could be whether a school could be removed from a Catholic MAT.

Q. A Director queried who would ultimately make such decisions.

A. The CEO explained that this would fall to Regional Directors and the Secretary for State; however, the Diocese would also have an influence voice in any decision-making process.

Q. A Director questioned whether the Trust central operations could be Ofsted inspected.

A. The CEO advised Ofsted could conduct a MAT Summary Evaluation following their inspection of a group of schools. However, there was no direct inspection of Trusts.

Trade Unions

The CEO highlighted that the potential coordinated Union action would make it difficult to keep schools open. The Directors **noted** this caution.

National Birth Rates

The CEO advised that nationally birth rates were declining which in turn affected pupil numbers.

Q. A Director enquired whether there were Catholic children in the Trust without school places.

A. AN confirmed that there were.

➤ **Teacher Recruitment**

The CEO reported that the annual national TRN (Teacher Recruitment Number) had not been achieved; shortage subjects remained maths, science and computing.

➤ **SEND**

The Directors **entered a discussion** surrounding students with EHCPs (Educational Health Care Plan) and funding, which did not cover the full amount of TA assistance that such students required.

The Chair explained that Nottinghamshire was one of the lowest SEND funded LAs. The CEO reminded Directors that OLoL schools delivered extremely good SEND care and as such were often approached to take children with EHCPs etc. One school (name redacted) had been highly commended by an external body to the CEO for their provision.

The Chair thanked the CEO for his reports.

EC/50/23

Chief Operating Officer's Report (CONFIDENTIAL - item redacted)

The following documents were tabled:

- Board Members' Monthly Finance Pack – May 2023
- Approval of Maintenance Team Expansion Proposal

Mr Moore explained that he had developed a report to address the current budgetary issues discussed in depth at the two Finance & Estates Committee meetings in May. Mr Moore shared his reports at the meeting.

The Directors asked a number of questions that were **fully responded** to by the COO.

(3.56pm – MR left the meeting due to a business commitment at 4.00pm)

(4.00pm – the Deputy CEO left the meeting to attend an Ofsted feedback meeting)

➤ **Maintenance Team Proposal**

The Directors received a proposal from the COO .

The Directors

RESOLVED to agree the proposal.

RESOLUTION

The Chair thanked the COO for his report.

EC/51/23

Safeguarding

The following documents were tabled:

- Safeguarding Report – May 2023
- Safeguarding Action Plan – May 2023

➤ **Safeguarding Report & Safeguarding Action Plan**

The Deputy CEO explained that her report was now delivered in 2 sections: risk and strategic development.

The Directors entered in to a **full discussion** of the Safeguarding Reprot.

The Chair thanked the Deputy CEO for her report.

EC/52/23

Director Visits to Schools

➤ **Director Visits to Schools Programme updates (verbal) and Link Director Visits Update LGBs (verbal)**

KR reported that the current programme was running through Pentecost 2. Phase 1 would recommence in September and include Lincs schools.

GC commended the Director Visits programme as a valuable exercise.

The Chair thanked Directors for their support and visits.

EC/53/23

Other Matters

➤ **Expenses Claims for Directors**

KR reminded Directors that CMAT Chair approval & relevant receipts were required for any expenses claims.

Q. A Director enquired whether it was possible to claim for electric cars.

A. AN agreed to share an email from the COO on this matter explaining the process for doing so.

Q. A Director queried whether a hard copy receipt was required.

A. The COO advised that supporting documentation could be hard copy or a scan/photo.

➤ **DPS Recruitment Announcement**

The CEO advised that a new DPS had been appointed to replace Mr Maher, who had resigned his position and would be taking up role as Headteacher at De Lisle Academy in September 2023.

AT/54/23

Policies

- **Directly to the Board:**

the CEO explained that the Trust was required to undertake an Equalities Review and to produce an Equalities Objectives, which was then added to the policy:

- Equalities Policy Statement
- Equalities Policy Statement Review

- **From the HR & Pay Committee**
- Pay Policy for CEOs
- Performance Review Policy and Procedure for CEOs and other Executive Post holders

- **From the Audit & Risk Committee**
- Educational Visits Policy
- Educational Visits Guidance
- IT Security Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Risk Management Procedure

The Directors

RESOLVED to APPROVE all the above policies.

RESOLUTION

EC/55/23

Date of Next Meeting

Board meetings follow the OLoL 2022-23 Schedule and will take place on the following dates:

- **Wednesday 19th July 2023 – Loxley House, Notts.** (Mark Blois attending)

EC/56/23

Determination of confidentiality of business

The Committee considered whether anything discussed during the meeting should be deemed confidential. It was

RESOLVED those items concerning the **Finance & Estates review; Finance reports; Ofsted Inspections**

all **REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL** and excluded from any minutes to be made available for public inspection.

The Chair thanked all Directors.

EC/57/23

Closing Prayer

The meeting closed with a prayer led by Fr John Kyne

The meeting closed at 4.28pm

Signed:.....(Chair)

Date:.....