



**Minutes of the St Teresa of Calcutta MAC Board Meeting held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 1.00pm at St Joseph's House, Warwick Road, Birmingham**

**Present:** Frances McGarry, Foundation Director, Chair  
Mary A Mills, Foundation Director (MM)  
Mary Higgins, Foundation Director (MH)  
Andrew Kennedy, Foundation Director (AK)  
Christopher Price, Foundation Director (CP)  
David Whale, Co-Opted Director, (DW)  
Sean Devlin, Foundation Director (SD) Vice Chair  
Andrew Cullinane, Foundation Director (AC)  
Janet Tibbits, Foundation Director (JT)

**In Attendance:** Professor Paul Ryan, CEO – *Attended virtually until 14.15*  
Collette Burge, CFO  
Gerardine Lawson-Lotarew, Assist Governance Manager (GP)  
Liz Walker, PA to the CSEL (LW)

**Opening Prayer**

**STM066/110724 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. No apologies had been received. It was noted the CEO had been called to a BDES meeting after the calling notice and papers had been distributed to the Board. It was therefore agreed the CEO would attend virtually and aspects of the agenda were moved so that attendance was accommodated for his responses before leaving.

**STM067/110724 Declarations of Interest**

DW declared an interest in Michael Duffy Partnership Limited. There had been one change to MH's declarations which had been noted and the register of pecuniary interests would be updated. **ACTION: GP**

**STM068/110724 Urgent Additional Items**

No urgent additional items were tabled.

**STM069/110724 Membership**

The Chair welcomed JT as a foundation director to the board and JT would serve a term of office from 02.05.2024 until 01.05.2028. There being no questions it was

**Resolved:** *JT was welcomed to the Board as a foundation director.*

**STM070/110724 Minutes of the previous Trust Board meeting held on 128<sup>th</sup> April 2024 – Circulated prior to the meeting**

The minutes from the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024 were reviewed and no amendments were made. It was

**Resolved:** *the minutes were approved to be signed by the Chair and retained by the MAC*

**Actions:**

STM027/071223 The Rosary Safeguarding Report – Closed  
STM058/180424 CSEL Report – Closed  
STM061/180424 RSE Policy on agenda for 11.7.24 – Closed  
STM067/110724 BDES Monitoring – Closed  
STM067/110724 Declarations – Outstanding declaration received. – Closed  
STM073/110724 Meeting dates. – Closed

**STM071/110724 Chairs Urgent Actions**

None reported.

**STM072/110724 Receive Committee Minutes – Circulated prior to the meeting**

The draft minutes were presented and noted.

**STM073/110724 CEO Report – Papers circulated prior to the meeting**

The Chair accepted the report had been read by all and most of this had been discussed and dealt with within the standards committee meeting. Therefore, the Chair was requesting the board review the report and look strategically at what the board need to do. Most issues were included on the agenda, but the Chair enquired if any of the Chairs of the committees wanted to bring anything else to the board that was not already included on the agenda today. No other issues were raised.

***The Chair highlighted the appointment of the new Education Secretary and hoped this would bring some stability. The new Education Secretary had spoken of barriers to learning and it was good to see someone so knowledgeable in the post. The Education Secretary had sent an initial letter to schools and the Chair sought clarification if there were there any things the MAC needed to be looking at.*** The CEO highlighted the institute of fiscal studies and increase in resources on defence and the NHS, education would flatline so there would be challenges.

***The Chair reiterated if there was anything the MAC needed to do or look at for the future.*** The CEO suggested SEN pupils and the role of the new inclusion officer.

***The Chair requested clarification what was not being done already that should be done.*** The CEO said there was nothing.

A Director highlighted the sixth form and changes to curriculum. The Chair also raised provision of free places for level 3 education, apprenticeship placements and T Levels this would be helpful to the MAC pupils. So, the action would be to keep a watching brief on all developments and bring these to the attention of the board. The Chair agreed it had been helpful to have the dates of all the inspections in the report.

***The Chair confirmed safeguarding had been reviewed at the standards committee and was there anything the CEO wanted to add to this subject.*** The CEO confirmed there was nothing further.

***Parent Survey - The Chair clarified the parent survey had been reviewed at the standards committee and the question from this was how would the MAC ensure schools had responded to the points raised by parents?*** The CEO confirmed the MAC wanted two parent forums and this had been included in the newsletter. The CEO also wished to exercise a health warning on the survey with the low level of response.

***The Chair acknowledged the SSIL (Strategic School Improvement Lead) had provided the percentages for the board which had been helpful, however in future could the board have these percentages for all surveys as this year it was only in Holy Souls and Archbishop Ilsley that significant numbers responded*** **ACTION: CEO**

A Director acknowledged the survey was conducted annually and with different demographics each term. The CEO reported the next survey would be the pupil survey. ***A Director noted the pupil survey would be in the autumn so the staff survey would be in the spring and the parents in the summer. A Director sought clarity whether this was the correct order in surveying year 7 just as they had come into the schools. A discussion followed and the CEO was tasked to look at the schedule.*** **ACTION: CEO**

The Chair was pleased to hear the newsletter would feature this and the board would need the detail of how each of the schools respond to parents. Schools should show how they are reaching out to parents and the board would come back to ask this question again.

Sixth Form Provision - ***A Director raised the issue of the combined sixth form provision and the diocese had indicated this could not go ahead. So, the Director sought clarification from the CEO if this was not feasible and if not, should the MAC put any further resources into this.*** The CEO felt it was not feasible to move teachers and pupils between sites. The Chair reminded members the aspiration of the Board and the BDES was to offer MAC wide excellent post 16 Catholic Education. This was reflected in documents and discussions at previous meetings giving timelines and dates for a joint offer of Holy Trinity and Archbishop Ilsley combined. The CEO was asked to lead the initiative and test the feasibility of a MAC Sixth Form, involving both secondaries and supported across all our schools. Following further discussion, it was agreed not to rule out anything until the project plan was available. Any joint offer would need to be done with full co-operation and properly planned. A Director opined that the MAC could not have a combined sixth form on the basis no one could move.

***A Director sought clarification on when the feasibility study would be presented.*** The Chair agreed the feasibility study needed to be completed and the proposal would only work if people on the ground wanted it to work and that involves working with the two head teachers at the schools.

HR & Payroll - ***The Chair referred to the payroll and HR provision and enquired if the transition had gone smoothly.*** The CFO was confident the transition would be fine. There had been some delay as Birmingham City Council had made all staff leavers, so the staff had to be put back onto the payroll system and the issues rectified with HMRC. The first pay would be the end of August. The MAC had access to the portal, and everything was correct just the errors with the end dates of employment.

***A Director extended thanks to the MAC Finance team for all the work done with this. The Director sought clarification if there was someone on site during the summer in case anything did go wrong with the pay.*** The CFO confirmed there were members of the team working during the holidays.

The CFO reported there were thirteen HR cases across the MAC and Neo People were on the cases where they would be involved.

School Profiles – ***The Chair reported these had been reviewed at the standards committee and sought confirmation if there had been anything received back from the head***

**teachers.** The CEO said the response had been positive and the only change the SSIL had put through was dates for the meetings with the Chairs of the local governing bodies who would be involved. The Chair thanked the SSIL for the work completed.

The Chair referred to the oversight of Archbishop IIsley and acknowledged there were no papers, but the board had seen the document produced by the SSIL at the standards committee. There had been a discussion with the SLT at Archbishop IIsley and the Chair was pleased there had been good progress creating teamwork that needed to be rebuilt. Attendance, behaviour, teaching and learning and safeguarding all had a plan led by the SSIL and supported by SLT. The next stage was for the standards committee to keep a watching brief on this with the SLT member in charge who leads monitoring.

**SEN** – The new Inclusion lead would be starting in September and working with the SENCO at Archbishop IIsley to support the development and implementation of improvement plans. The foundation and building blocks for improvement were in place and with a change of role for the new deputy head teacher this was going well. The standards committee would keep a closer oversight on this. **SD suggested the standards committee needed to meet before November. It was agreed the meeting dates would be reviewed to accommodate this.**  
**ACTION: GP/CP**

The CEO reported attending the local governing board meeting at Archbishop IIsley on 10<sup>th</sup> July and the CEO had spoken about the support from Holy Trinity and the local governing board had been appreciative. The challenges were discussed and taken on board by all.

**A Director suggested the board should start looking at exit interviews for schools.** The Chair acknowledged it was appropriate when staff left to have exit interviews and the MAC should produce a standard form that could be completed which can be named or anonymous, from this trend could be identified.

**A Director queried whether there was time to do this for those staff leaving on 31.8.24, but the Director accepted staff could not be forced to complete these, but having the option of remaining anonymous would help.** There being no further questions it was

**Resolved:** the CEO Report was received and accepted.

**STM074/110724 Archbishop IIsley Intervention**

This was briefly discussed under STM073/110724, and the CEO had fed back confidentially to Directors about the original proposal for support from Holy Trinity.

**STM075/110724 Finance – Proposals included in the CEO Report**

**Budget 2024-2025** - The CFO reported the budget for 24-25 had been tabled at the Resources Committee meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Two schools were forecasting an in year deficit but they still had reserves to carry forward to absorb the deficit. The Trust was also in deficit due to the two new posts. Archbishop IIsley was forecasting an in-year surplus with reserves of £531k at the end of the year which was below target so this needed to be built.

Holy Trinity had an in-year surplus of £74k, with costs for refurbishment work at £250k.

Holy Souls had a deficit following a reduction from two form to one form entry but the school had reserves to cover this for 24/25 but the MAC would monitor staffing levels with a possibility

of a recruitment freeze.

**A Director sought clarification if the recruitment freeze would be for the MAC or just the school?** The CFO confirmed schools could recruit on a like for like basis but not Holy Souls. The CFO proposed that any recruitment should be signed off by the CEO and the CFO.

The Chair acknowledged it was necessary, but a recruitment freeze would not be sufficient. The Chair highlighted that a request was made some time to monitor the situation if the school changed from a two-form entry and the response to the board was pupil recruitment would happen, but it had not. The MAC do need to look at the structure for a two-form entry and whether it was suitable for a one form. Look at all posts, teaching periods and non-contact time. The MAC need to revisit the structures in all schools with falling rolls as a recruitment freeze alone would be detrimental if you then lost critical posts. There being no further questions it was

**Resolved:** the temporary recruitment freeze was approved but the board wanted a strategic plan that addressed the falling rolls. **ACTION: CEO**

**A Director enquired if there were any schools in the MAC moving from a two form to a one form entry?** It was confirmed there were none currently. The Chair highlighted the incoming schools and suggested there may be a possibility amongst these as well as one form entry schools where numbers were not secure.

A Director suggested that parents need to know their children are going to receive a good education from the schools. A Director added that there were statutory timelines that needed to be followed so a strategic plan would be needed as soon as possible.

The CEO suggested some of this was about the mix of staff in schools with some schools having 84% staffing costs which was related to how long staff had been at the school and the level of pay. Inroads had been made into staffing costs and they had reduced particularly at Archbishop Illesley.

**A Director sought clarification if there was any model of what a school structure should look like?** It was acknowledged there were curriculum and staffing models. The Chair suggested that outcomes were not always related to salary and any restructure would need to look at roles and responsibilities of staff in school, so look at schools where structure had worked. The Chair referred to the budget presented and noted the difference in how schools budget, for example, spending on staff training. Archbishop Illesley, which is a large school, spend £5k on training, Holy Souls £5k, Holy Trinity £12k, St Chads £5k and the MAC £14k. This variance in recording makes it difficult for the board to have oversight.

The CFO reported that £14k was for the National College which all schools accessed and the £5k was based on historical spend and subscription figures which came from the schools. The Chair proposed the MAC need to strategically look at a more systematic use of budget headings across all schools so that the Board can better fulfil its duty of oversight. **ACTION: CEO**

**Referring to the small deficit in the Central Team budget the Chair acknowledged the MAC needed the new Inclusion Lead in post which was planned for this year. The MAC knew this post was coming was this not budgeted.** The CFO confirmed the reserves were £44k and the deficit was £42k so it was **included in the budget**. The CEO confirmed there were no other roles planned until the onboarding of the seven schools. The Chair

reiterated that any change to the planned budget is an unexpected cost and it must come from the reserves, and this should be tabled at the resources committee. The CEO confirmed this was already done and authority sought for the spend.

The Chair clarified that that virements should be agreed monthly It was critical the board had scrutiny and financial oversight. The CFO confirmed the transactions put in by schools was overseen when the management accounts were completed, and the accounts were then checked by DW who had oversight. DW confirmed this was in relation to the 'abnormals'. The accounts commentary was improving every month so there was a note of this.

A Director reminded all that the board was not operational, so the board needed to trust the operational managers. DW clarified the issue was the surplus what was small, and it was difficult balancing act.

The Chair acknowledged the clarification and thanked the CFO and team for their work in preparing and presenting the budget and monthly accounts. *(The CEO had to leave, at this point)*

Discussions resumed regarding the falling birth rate and the subsequent impact on secondaries: the need for a strategic plan that addressed this over a 3 to 5 year period: staffing structures and an estates strategy fit for the future. **A Director enquired how long the Board should be allowed for this piece of work to be completed.** The Chair confirmed it was raised some time ago when the Board considered what support was required to achieve this and did the MAC executive team have the capacity to complete this.

Directors engaged in a discussion about the need for a working group with some external support. It was a significant piece of work, but a starting point needed to be established from a model and then what was needed to achieve this. It was manageable and needed to be a five-year view not static. The proposal was therefore to establish a sub-group to help shape this. The starting point is what was required for the needs of the children and follow on from there. Pupil teacher ratio, who and what schools need had changed over the years. The new schools joining could see a model of what the MAC is working towards. There being no further questions it was

**Agreed:** *a working group to be established and identify from the CFO and CEO what was needed to support them. Work to be done on a strategic model and this would be brought to the board.*

The CFO suggested the work should start on primary schools and what they should look like, there was a five-year budget, and forecasting was based on existing income from the ESFA.

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Director acknowledged this but what was behind this, it would be appropriate to start again, from a blank page and identify what it would look like. The CFO confirmed the MAC was looking at integrated curriculum planning and pupil ratio which was based against ESFA guidance. The Chair was grateful for this and agreed it would show what worked financially and the MAC had the information to make comparisons that could be applied across the schools. Also, what would produce the better results and how do you know a model of good is good.

The CFO reported that St Joseph's had an in-year deficit at year 2 with low recruitment numbers but work was being done to try and increase pupil numbers. Two workshops held with the University of Derby and they are writing a marketing strategy for the MAC. Work

would be completed at the school during the summer to make visible improvements.

**A Director sought clarification when the strategy would be presented to the board?** LW confirmed this was already under discussion.

**The Chair enquired if the strategies were known and could the board have this strategy on the agenda for the next meeting with a report in advance to the board.** **ACTION: CEO**

**The Chair requested that when the MAC engaged with an external provider the board needed to see this in the CEO report with the remit and the outcomes.** **ACTION: CEO**

**A Director enquired if there were any strategies about bringing in external funding?** The CFO reported Archbishop Ilsley had a lettings programme. Holy Trinity was reluctant to let premises and was not in a position where they needed to.

**A Director enquired about grants.** LW reported that the SSIL was aware of a service that provided bids for grants so the details would be made available. The Director suggested it would be appropriate to review what was available.

**The Chair enquired what the lettings income from Archbishop Ilsley was being spent on?** The CFO reported the budget was tight so part of this was on building projects for next year. There being no further questions it was

**Resolved:** the 2024-2025 budget was approved.

**Audit Service Plan** – No comments received

**STM076/110724 Trust Board Self Evaluation – Verbal Update**

**Succession Planning** - The Chair referred to succession planning of the board and suggested it would be good to see any nominations for the position of Chair in September. The Chair was available to speak to anyone interested in the role.

**Review Meeting dates and Business Schedule** - The Chair agreed this matter would be deferred pending a review of the number of meetings and aligning the meeting schedule for 2024-2025 with availability of Directors and others. The committee meetings would be arranged to ensure sufficient time is available between these and board meetings.

**Risk Assessment (Register)** – The Chair noted this was not included in the papers and would be deferred to the first board meeting of the new academic year. The updated risk register would need to be tabled at the resources committee as well as maintaining the live document on GovernorHub. Any changes should be highlighted for the committee/board.

**ACTION:CEO/CFO**

**STM077/110724 Review Policies – Circulated prior to the meeting**

**Attendance Policy** – The policy was reviewed, and no questions were raised. It was

**Resolved:** the attendance policy was approved.

**Vexatious Complaints - A Director enquired if these could be reported anonymously?**

The Chair responded that by the nature of the complaint being vexatious the MAC would know who it was. There being no further questions it was

**Resolved:** *the vexatious complaints policy was approved.*

**Low Level Concerns Policy - The Chair noted the policy referred to the code of conduct which the MAC did not have.** In response LW confirmed the MAC had established protocols which was in draft and with the trade unions. The head teachers had seen this. The Chair thanked LW and highlighted the code of conduct would require fine tuning. There being no further questions it was

**Resolved:** *the low-level concerns policy was approved.*

**RSE Policy – (Approved at Standards Committee)** - No further comments or questions were received it was

**Resolved:** *the RSE policy was approved.*

**Capability Policy** – No questions were raised. It was

**Resolved:** *the capability policy was approved.*

**Scheme of Delegation** – The Chair reported the BDES had collated responses and issued the revised version which was to be personalised by the MAC. **A Director highlighted the Directors had a right to attend local governing board meetings which may not be quorate. There was also an issue with voting, but this needed to be verified with the BDES.** There being no further questions it was

**Resolved:** *the scheme of delegation was approved and adopted.*

Directors discussed local governing boards constitutions and the number of employees on these boards who were foundation governors. This would be discussed further with the local governing boards.

**STM078/110724 BDES Monitoring Visit – Verbal Update**

Purchase Orders - The CFO reported the auditors had been in on Tuesday and Wednesday and looking at year end. A directive had been sent to all schools and there has been an increase in use of purchase orders but also a significant increase in invoices with 5000 between six schools. The Rosary had just recruited a Bursar to invoices were being processed here at the MAC. No one was processing the finance paperwork at Holy Souls.

**STM079/180424 Directors Training and Visits – Verbal Update**

**Safeguarding Training** – The GP highlighted that all director’s training should be recorded but importantly the safeguarding training must be recorded annually. The GP requested that any training undertaken was confirmed to the GP for the director’s training records to be updated. There also needed to be a way of identifying what training had been commissioned for directors through the MAC and any training completed notified to the GP to update GovernorHub. **ACTION: CEO**

**STM080/180424 Any Other Business**

**Confidential Item not for publication**

**STM081/110724 Date and Time of next meeting – Circulated prior to the meeting**

This was provisionally agreed for week commencing 9<sup>th</sup> September but would be confirmed.



The terms of reference for the board were discussed in the light of the changes to the meetings structure and fewer board meetings. Any changes in responsibilities delegated to the committees would need to be reflected in the terms of reference in the autumn term.

There being no further business for discussion the meeting closed at 15.20

Closing Prayer

**Chairs Signature:** ..... **Date:** .....

### BOARD ACTIONS LOG 2023-2024

STM027/071223	The Rosary Safeguarding Report	Training - The CSEL confirmed this was available and the Chair requested the instructions on how to access this information was shared with Directors as well as which areas of training these providers covered.	18.04.24 Link for National College training to be sent to Director Note Closed.	LW	NEW
		18.04.2024 CSEL and CFO to explore what a MAC deal would look like for using Father Hudson's across all schools		CSEL/CFO	Carry forward
STM042/010224	Strategic Plan	The Chair confirmed that there should be one updated integrated plan that contained all strategies, timelines and expected completion date and this should be tabled at the next Board meeting.		CSEL GP	Carry forward
		A Director suggested that there should be a presentation of the plan with the sub strategies.		CSEL	Carry forward
		The CSEL confirmed the updated version of the plan which contained the sub-strategies would be sent to the GP. If there were still any gaps or anything was not clear this could be addressed. The Chair highlighted that the Board had not seen any timelines for impact yet.		CSEL	Carry forward
STMO61/180424	Policies	<b>A Director raised a query from item 9 (Companion) and sought clarification whether HR were involved at this stage.</b> Directors discussed the matter, and it was agreed that this should be amended to include that HR should be involved.	Can LW confirm that the policy is now amended?	CSEL	New
STMO73/110724	CEO Report	<b>Parent Survey - The Chair acknowledged the SSIL had provided the percentages for the board which had been helpful, however in ( please change to reflect the rewording in the main document) A Director noted the pupil survey would be in the autumn so the staff survey would be in the spring and the parents in the summer.</b> A Director sought clarity whether this was the correct order in surveying year 7 just as they had come into the schools. A discussion followed and the CEO was tasked to look at the schedule.		CEO	New
STMO73/110724	Finance	The CFO reported that £14k was for the National College which all schools access and the £5k was based on historical spend and subscription figures come from the schools. The Chair proposed the MAC need to strategically look at how it is overseeing and how it is recorded, what are schools spending. So, look at how schools integrate and bring together school methods of recording spend to allow the MAC to make reasonable decisions on oversight.		CEO	New
		<b>A Director sought clarification when the maketing strategy would Be presented to the board?</b> LW confirmed this was already under discussion. <b>The Chair enquired if the strategies were known and</b>			

		<i>could the board have this strategy on the agenda for the next meeting with a report in advance to the board.</i>		
STM076/110724	Risk Assessment	<b>Risk Assessment (Register)</b> – The Chair noted this was not included in the papers and would be deferred to the first board meeting of the new academic year. The updated risk register would need to be tabled at the resources committee as well as maintaining the live document on GovernorHub. Any changes should be highlighted for the committee/board.		CEO/CFO New
STM079/180424	<b>Directors Training and Visits</b>	The GP requested that any training undertaken was confirmed to the GP for the director's training records to be updated. There also needed to be a way of identifying what training had been commissioned for directors through the MAC and any training completed notified to the GP to update GovernorHub.		CEO New