

## Spiritan Education Trust

### Minutes of the 185<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors Meeting, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2019

#### Directors Attending

Mr. Gary Abrahamian  
Ms. Mary Fulton  
Mr. Pat Kitterick (Chairperson)  
Ms. Caroline Lundy  
Dr. Tom Whelan CSSp  
Mr. Ronan White  
Mr. Rory Guinan (new Director)

#### Apologies

Mr. Brendan Dillon  
Sr. Eithne Woulfe

#### In Attendance

Mr. Ronan Barry, Faith & Mission Officer  
Mr Tom Jackson, Company Secretary, Finance Officer  
Ms Sheila Lanney, Administration Officer (Recording Secretary)  
Mr Tom Sheridan, Executive Officer

#### 1. Prayer

Ronan Barry led the opening prayer.

#### 2. Preliminaries

- (a) Apologies – Mr. Brendan Dillon and Sr. Eithne Woulfe.
- (b) Declaration of Conflict of Interest – None was declared.
- (c) Other matters: The Chair welcomed Mr Rory Guinan as new Director. Rory spoke about his background as a student in a Spiritan school, his professional background, his commitment to the education mission and his desire to contribute to the work of the Board.

#### 3. Minutes of the 184<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

- (a) Amendments:
  - i. Attendance: Mr Ronan Barry was not present
  - ii. Finance Matters: The final sentence on Licence Fees/Administration Fees, referring to Templeogue College, will be amended to read 'a licence fee of €5 per student'. The amended minute will be duly signed off by the Chairman and Secretary.
- (b) Matters arising (not included in this Agenda)  
*Item 3(b), bullet 5:* The Chair reported on a meeting with Garry Lyons of the Property and Finance Office regarding the outcome of deliberations by the PLT/Members on the position of the Junior Schools. A letter to the Chair from the Members was imminent, enclosing a report from Mason Hayes & Curran and proposing a joint approach to the issue across the SET family. The Chair proposed to examine the MHC report with the Executive in the first instance,

followed by discussion at the November BoD meeting to coincide with the attendance of the Members, and possibly MHC.

On a related matter, the Chair informed the Board of the 3 nominees of the Congregation - Garry Lyons, Peter Conaty and Dick Olin - to sit on the proposed joint group to consider the long-term property lease arrangements between the Congregation and SET.

*Item 5: Finance*

- *Licence Fee/Administration Fees from Schools:* Demands issued in September and payments are lodged or expected. There has been no response from Templeogue College to the Boards decision to seek a licence fee of €5 per student.
- *New Register of Beneficial Ownership:* Tom Jackson updated the Board.

*Item 6: Executive Report - SIMS:* The Executive Officer updated the Board on developments regarding the reimbursement of monies and the need for further discussion with the service provider on the terms and conditions of the reimbursement.

#### **4. Key Operational Areas and Related Board Committees.**

- **Finance**

School audits by RBK are ongoing.

- **Ethos**

The extreme variations in individual schools' financial resources was discussed as one possible indicator of the imbalance between schools in their efforts to develop their responses to the education mission and, in general, to the capacity of SET centrally to action our seven core values. Discussion covered issues such as access to funds for Spiritan project and the potential for excess school finds to be centralised in SET for sharing between schools, the possible leveraging of extensive reserves to guarantee bank loans to schools, existing and future donations policy in schools, and the existence or otherwise of inter-school solidarity. The Board noted the independent nature of our schools and possible resistance from parents, past-pupil unions, or teaching staff to such financial arrangements, but also questioned whether parents are fully informed as to the provenance and disbursement of school income.

- **Education**

It was agreed that the Education Sub Committee would examine the potential of a draft Trust Deed specifically for Spiritan schools, focusing on the relationship between SET and the schools

- **Governance**

The Chair, on behalf of the Governance Committee, tabled a document, prepared by Tom Whelan, on the relationship between SET Directors and the Members. The

need for a clear statement on this relationship was agreed. The BOD was asked to study the document for discussion at the November meeting.

**5. Executive Report – Specific Matters**

*Rockwell College*

The Chair said Rockwell College remains a very significant concern. In relation to a recent press report, the school had taken legal & PR advice and while media interest hadn't gone further, the issues remain very serious. The Executive Officer updated the Board on school management matters.

**6. Any Other Business** as may properly arise.

- New BOM nominations: The Chair proposed *en bloc* the Patron nominees, elected parent representatives and elected teacher representatives for incoming BOMs of St. Mary's College Junior and Senior schools. The Board approved all nominations for appointment.
- After 3 years as Director, Mary Fulton has decided not to continue on the Board. The Chair thank Mary most sincerely for her input and sound advice and in particular her contribution as Chair of the Finance Committee.
- The Board noted with satisfaction that Tom Sheridan had agreed to renew his contract as Executive Officer, under revised terms and conditions, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 for a 3-year term.

**7. Next Meeting**

- Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 6:30pm.

Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_