



Notes of Meeting: North West Advisory Board

14th December 2023

Attendance

Attendance data is published annually on the GOV.UK website.

AB members who sent their apologies for the meeting have, where possible, been consulted on all projects before the meeting. Their views are reflected in the discussion at the meeting (where appropriate). This excludes items where that member declared a conflict of interest.

Regional Director (RD) chair

- Vicky Beer (RD)

Advisory Board (AB) members

- Anita Ghidotti-Gibson
- Karen Burns
- George Beveridge
- Helen O'Neill
- Tania Lewyckyj
- Annette Williams
- Nic Brindle

Apologies

- None

DfE senior civil servants

- Jon Howlin, Deputy Director, North West Regions Group
- Mark Taylor, Deputy Director, North West Regions Group

Representations received

Carr Hill High School – 5 representations.

General Discussion Points

- Members reflected on the recent announcements by Ofsted.

AB member reflections

- None.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: To discuss the proposal of the following schools converting and joining Merseyview Multi Academy Trust:

- **Valewood Primary School, Sefton.**
- **Rowan Park School, Sefton.**
- **Forefield Community Infant and Nursery School, Sefton.**
- **Forefield Junior School, Sefton.**
- **Waterloo Primary School, Sefton.**

AB discussion:

- This proposal was discussed alongside the trust change discussion for Chesterfield High School to change from a Single Academy Trust to a Multi Academy Trust.
- The board supported the project recommendation with one condition.
- The board reflected on the governance of the trust and advised that the board should secure a trustee or trustees with primary education experience to provide support and challenge to the board and executive leadership team, and to ensure there is additional financial experience on the board.
- The board reflected on the executive leadership of the trust and advised that we should ask the trust to provide further information on the recruitment plans for the Chief Financial Officer.
- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to offer a supportive School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) deployment once the multi academy trust is established.

RD decision: Approve with one condition.

1. The trust ensures there is primary education and additional financial experience on the board by the time the multi academy trust is established.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Project: To discuss Brookdale Primary School, Wirral, converting and joining Leading Learners Multi Academy Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board members considered the details of the project and supported the project recommendation.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Project: To discuss Thomas Gray Primary School, Sefton converting and joining Northern Schools Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation with one condition.
- The board noted there is going to be an external review of governance in January.

RD decision: Approve – with one condition.

1. The trust ensures it implements the findings from the external review of governance.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Project: To discuss the proposal of the following schools converting and joining Alexandra Academy Trust:

- **Cledford Primary School, Chesire East.**
- **Gainsborough Primary and Nursery School, Cheshire East.**

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation.
- The board commented on the geography and capacity of the trust, as well as the relationship between schools and how this differs as a trust.
- The board observed that this proposal provides an opportunity for the trust to ensure it is operating in line with the high quality trust descriptions, in particular ensuring it has a robust scheme of delegation.
- ESFA recommended an offer of a School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) deployment.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Sponsored Route:

Points discussed in relation to a school's sponsor status.

Project: To discuss De La Salle School, St Helens, being sponsored by proposed new trust, The Laetare Catholic MAT.

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation with four conditions.
- The board noted the trust will start with an interim executive leadership team and advised that the trust ensure it has a robust recruitment plan in place to appoint substantive posts as soon as is practically possible.
- The board noted the trust's plans to ensure it has robust financial management and controls in place and is keen to work with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to ensure the trust is on a strong financial footing when it is established.

RD decision: Approve with conditions

1. Trust to provide assurance on plans for school improvement at De La Salle School.
2. Trust to provide assurance on the recruitment plans for the substantive executive leadership roles.
3. Trust to ensure it has financial expertise on its board.
4. Condition of a supportive School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) deployment.

Conflicts: Helen O'Neill – Member sits on the same trustee board as a trustee for the Laetare Catholic Multi Academy Trust. Member was not present for this item.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust, Local Authority and Diocese of decision.

Project: To discuss Everton in the community Free School Trust, Liverpool, changing from a Single Academy Trust to form a new Multi Academy Trust (permanent name tbc) and sponsor IMPACT, Sefton.

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation with two conditions.
- The board noted the opportunities that this proposal brings for alternative provision in Sefton and noted the trust's plans for growth.
- The board advised that the trust board should evolve to reflect the trust's growth plans and anticipates this being reflected in any future proposals brought to AB for discussion.
- The board noted the ongoing discussions with ESFA on finances.
- ESFA recommended a School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) deployment.

RD decision: Approve with conditions.

1. Trust to give assurances regarding School Improvement model for IMPACT.
2. Trust to meet with ESFA to discuss financial forecast.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Project: To discuss Woodchurch CofE Primary School, Wirral, being sponsored by Chester Diocesan Academies Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board members considered the details of the project and supported the project recommendation.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust, Local Authority and Diocese of decision.

Project: To discuss the following schools being sponsored by Shaw Education Trust.

- **Hallwood Park Primary School & Nursery, Halton.**
- **Meadowside School, Wirral.**

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation.
- The board reflected on the track record of the trust and its capability.
- The board were informed that there is strong LA support for this proposal.
- The board reflected on the positive progress being made in other schools in the trust, including recently joined inadequate and multiple RI schools.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Annette Williams – member was not present for this item and did not receive the papers.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Project: To discussion St Paul's Church of England Primary School, Bury, being sponsored by Forward As One Church Of England Multi Academy Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board members considered the details of the project and supported the project recommendation.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust, Local Authority and Diocese of decision.

Project: To discuss Carr Hill High School, Lancashire, being sponsored by Education Partnership Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation.
- The board reflected on the representations received and discussed the information provided by the shortlisted trusts and the decision making process we went through to come to the recommended option.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

Project: To discuss Chesterfield High School, Sefton, to change from a Single Academy Trust to form a new Multi Academy Trust, Merseyview Multi Academy Trust.

AB discussion:

- This school was discussed alongside the converter academy order discussion for five schools to join the Merseyview Multi Academy Trust.
- The board supported the project recommendation with one condition.

RD decision: Approve with one condition.

1. The trust ensures there is primary education and additional financial experience on the board by the time the multi academy trust is established.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust of decision.

Project: To discuss the following Single Academy Trusts to form a new Multi Academy Trust, The Laetare Catholic Multi Academy Trust:

- St Anselm's College, Wirral.
- St Edward's College, Liverpool.
- Saint Ambrose College, Trafford.
- St Joseph's College, Stoke.

AB discussion:

- These schools were discussed alongside the sponsored route discussion for De La Salle School, St Helens, to join the Laetare Catholic Multi Academy Trust.
- The board supported the project recommendation with four conditions.

RD decision: Approve with conditions

1. Trust to provide assurance on plans for school improvement at De La Salle School.
2. Trust to provide assurance on the recruitment plans for the substantive executive leadership roles.
3. Trust to ensure it has financial expertise on its board.
4. Condition of a supportive School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) deployment.

Conflicts: Helen O'Neill – Member sits on the same trustee board as a trustee for the Laetare Catholic Multi Academy Trust. Member was not present for this item.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Diocese of decision.

Project: To discuss the transfer of Settlebeck School, Westmorland & Furness, to Changing Lives Learning Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation.
- The board reflected on the opportunities this transfer will bring to Settlebeck and how it will build on the relationship it has already established with Changing Lives Learning Trust.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust of decision.

Project: To discuss the transfer of The Queen Katherine School, Westmorland & Furness, to Cumbria Education Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation.
- The board discussed how the trust is a good fit for the school, with the ability to provide good CPD, teaching and learning support.
- There was discussion regarding the demographic and how declining numbers are not exceptional for the area and that there is continues to be a need for the school.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: George Beveridge - Governor for Cumbria Education Trust. Member was not present for this item and did not receive the papers.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust of decision.

Project: To discuss the transfer of George Hastwell School Special Academy, Westmorland & Furness, to The Eden Academy Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation.
- The board reflected on the trust's positive reputation in Cumbria, with strong relationships with their schools and assurance about their pace of growth.
- It was discussed that pupil numbers are increasing at the school and the need for good SEND provision in the area.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust of decision.

Project: To discuss the transfer of Walney School, Westmorland & Furness, to Furness Education Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust of decision.

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