



Notes of Meeting: North Headteacher board

Thursday 17 September 2020

Attendance

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

HTB members who sent apologies have been consulted on all projects, where available, before the meeting. This excludes items where there were conflicts. Their views are reflected in the discussion at the meeting (where appropriate).

Regional school commissioner (RSC) chair

- Katherine Cowell (RSC)

Headteacher board (HTB) members

- Zoe Carr (HTB)
- George Beveridge (HTB)
- Lesley Powell (HTB)
- Nick Hurn (HTB)
- Elizabeth Horne (HTB)
- Andy Bayston (HTB)
- Chris Clarke (HTB)
- Sir Michael Wilkins (HTB)

Guests

- none

Apologies

- none

DfE senior civil servants

- none

General discussion points

Points discussed in the meeting.

RSC Update

RSC welcomed board members to the meeting. RSC thanked board members for agreeing to extend their headteacher board tenures beyond October 2020 following delays to the HTB elections, due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Discussion of projects, including decisions made by RSC with advice from HTB. All decisions are made in reference to relevant legislation and the published criteria.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: This is a proposal for St Robert's Catholic Primary School to convert and join Bishop Wheeler Academy Trust

HTB discussion:

- St Robert's Catholic Primary School was Ofsted rated 'Outstanding' in May 2009
- The board was advised that this proposal is in line with the Bishop of Leeds RC Diocese's vision on Catholic education
- St Robert's has historically been a strong performer being well above national and local averages. The board was advised that despite the drop in performance in 2009, the diocese and incoming trust are confident that this school remains strong
- The Bishop Wheeler Academies Trust includes nine primaries and one secondary and covers North Leeds and into North Yorkshire
- The board was advised that following the deployment of the SRMA and DfE support the trust is now in a position to grow to include this school
- The board challenged the five levels of governance within the trust
- The board supported this proposal with recommendation that we clarify the current governance structure and confirm that the support of the SRMA/AMSD will continue

RSC decision: approve

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Project: This is a proposal for Annfield Plain Infant School, Annfield Plain Junior School & East Stanley School to convert and join Stanley Learning Partnership (SLP)

HTB discussion:

- Annfield Plain Infant, Juniors and East Stanley are Ofsted rated 'Good'
- The three schools are located in close proximity of the trust and would like to formalise existing arrangements
- SLP includes four schools which are Ofsted rated 'Good', the board was informed that two

inspections were undertaken pre-conversion

- Trust governance structure is in line with DfE guidelines, and includes a good mix of skills
- The board was advised that the trust received a SRMA deployment which has led to improved financial forecasting
- The board supported this proposal on condition that the trust provides an updated financial plan, including pipeline schools by December 2020.

RSC decision: approve with condition

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Project: This is a proposal for St Bede's Comprehensive School and Byron College to convert and join Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust

HTB discussion:

- St Bede's Comprehensive School and Byron College was Ofsted rated 'Good' in February 2017
- The board was advised that this proposal is in line with the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese's vision on Catholic education
- The board was informed that St Bede's Comprehensive and Byron College is the last remaining catholic secondary school within the Diocese to apply to convert, its three feeder primaries are already academies within the trust
- The board was advised that there is already an established partnership in place which the trust would like to develop further
- The board discussed current pupil numbers and was advised that pupil projections are expected to increase
- Performance has been rising steadily over a 3-year period, and in 2019 was above national and LA averages
- The board discussed the financial health of both the school and trust and supported the need for a SRMA deployment
- The board supported this proposal on condition that a SRMA is deployed, the trust provides a financial plan to mitigate current and potential deficits, the school deficit arrangement is upheld as a condition of conversion and DfE colleagues continue to monitor the trust position before supporting any further growth

RSC decision: approve with condition

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Project: This is a proposal for Saltburn Primary School to convert and join Vision Academy Learning Trust (VALT)

HTB discussion:

- Saltburn Primary School was Ofsted rated 'Good' in May 2018
- Saltburn Primary has voluntarily applied to convert and become an academy within Vision Academy Learning Trust (VALT)
- Performance at Saltburn Primary is above national average

- The board was advised that Saltburn Primary is federated with Huntcliff School, both schools share the same site forming the Saltburn Learning Campus
- Huntcliff School was approved to join VALT in June 2020 following an 'Inadequate' Ofsted judgement
- The board was advised that Saltburn Primary School will add further capacity to the trust
- The board challenged the current trust governance structure and discussed the need for some educational experience on the board
- The board supported this proposal on condition that the trust adds further educational expertise and challenge to its board

RSC decision: approve with condition

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Significant Change

Points discussed in relation to approving significant changes to academies.

Project: UTC South Durham

HTB discussion:

- This is a proposal to add year 9 to the UTC from September 2021
- The board was advised that the RSC is not the decision maker, the case will be presented to ministers for decision following views from HTB
- UTC South Durham is a specialist technical school and sixth form, currently Ofsted rated 'Good' in January 2019.
- The board was advised that South Durham UTC would like to move away from the traditional enrolment age by introducing year 9
- Formal consultation has been undertaken, written responses were received, two of which raised some concerns with the proposal
- The board was advised that the UTC received an SRMA deployment in March 2019, some savings have been made however discussions are still ongoing regarding the SRMA recommendations
- The board questioned current performance data and advised that adding a further year group would lead to additional challenges in respect of finance and the curriculum offer
- The board discussed the advantages of UTC South Durham joining a MAT
- The board was unable to support this proposal currently and agreed that a further conversation with the UTC was required

RSC decision: defer

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Academy opening approved in principle

Project: School Returners/Young Mums Provision

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/10/2020

RSC decision: approve

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: No further action required

Decisions taken between HTB meetings

Project: Forest Moor School to be sponsored by Wellspring Academy Trust

RSC decision: approve

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision