



Notes of meeting: East Midlands and Humber headteacher board

19 November 2020

Attendance

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

HTB members who sent their apologies for the meeting have, where available, 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 school commissioner (RSC) chair

- Carol Gray

Headteacher board (HTB) members

- Andrew Child
- Inderjit Sandhu
- Paul West
- Peter Bell
- Anne Martin
- Paul Stone

Guests

- None

Apologies

- None

DfE senior civil servants

- ESFA Representatives
- Rizwana Parveen
- Kelly Hughes

General discussion points

Helen Winn, CEO and Tony Myers, Chair of Hope Learning Trust presented the strategic planning for the merger of Hope Learning Trust with Sentamu Academy Learning Trust to the board.

Points discussed in the meeting.

- The strategic plan, benefits and risks of proposed merger.
- Operating model of the new trust.
- Proposed structure of new trust board.
- School improvement model.

Converter academy orders

Project: Highfields School, Derbyshire, to join East Midlands Education Trust

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Good May 2017 (short inspection).

Voluntary conversion.

Percentage of pupils meeting expected standard in reading, writing and maths is below national average.

School wishes to join trust as it closely meets criteria set out in selection process.

Trust offers strong school to school support, which will help drive further improvement at school.

Trust has capacity for school to join.

The financial health of the school, strength of financial management and governance at the trust and impact on the trust's future financial health if this school joins were considered.

Supportive deployment of a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) is already pending.

RSC decision: Approved

Conflicts: N/A

Further actions required: Academy Order to be sent to Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of decision.

Project: Carcroft Primary School, Doncaster, to join XP School Trust Limited

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Requires Improvement December 2018.

Percentage of pupils meeting expected standard in reading, writing and maths is below local and national average for last three years.

Trust has proven track record and history of school improvement.

Board raised concerns regarding low pupil numbers. However pupil numbers are forecasted to increase over time.

The financial health of the school, strength of financial management and governance at the trust and impact on the trust's future financial health if this school joins were considered.

RSC decision: Approved

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Academy Order to be sent to Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of decision.

Project: Friskney All Saints Church of England Primary School, Lincolnshire, to join Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Requires Improvement February 2020.

School facing financially challenging future, due to low pupil numbers and high staffing costs. These are issues the school and trust will need to focus on and address as a priority.

Board considers trust to be a good strategic match for the school due to its ability to drive improvement, provide support and share resources.

Trust has proven track record of school improvement.

The financial health of the school, strength of financial management and governance at the trust and impact on the trust's future financial health if this school joins were considered

School will benefit by gaining access to peer support network within trust's hub

RSC decision: Approved

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Academy Order to be sent to Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of decision.

Academy opening approved in principle

Project: Field House Infant School, Derbyshire to join Embark Multi Academy Trust

HTB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 01/12/2020

RSC decision: Approved

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Glossopdale School, Derbyshire to join The True Learning Partnership Trust

HTB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 01/12/2020

RSC decision: Approved

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Hillocks Primary and Nursery School, Nottinghamshire to join Diverse Academies Trust

HTB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 01/12/2020

RSC decision: Approved

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Ladywood Primary School, Derbyshire to join Embark Multi Academy Trust

HTB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 01/12/2020

RSC decision: Approved

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Waingroves Primary School, Derbyshire to join Embark Multi Academy Trust

HTB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 01/12/2020

RSC decision: Approved

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Dearne Goldthorpe Primary School, Barnsley to join Delta Academies Trust

HTB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 01/12/2020

RSC decision: Approved

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Significant change

Project: Goole Academy, East Riding of Yorkshire- closure of sixth form provision

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Requires Improvement November 2015.

Low sixth form pupil numbers making the provision financially unviable.

Four of the other schools in trust have closed their sixth form provision, which have been consolidated at Don Valley in Doncaster.

Local authority have expressed no objections to proposal.

Closure will not have detrimental impact on viability of school.

The financial health of the school, strength of financial management and governance at the trust and the impact of the significant change on the trust's future financial health was considered.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: Paul West was not present for this item and did not receive the papers

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform school of decision

Project: Ashby School, Leicestershire- removal of boarding provision and in year variation to admissions

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Inadequate October 2019.

School provides boarding provision for up to 75 boys in the age range 14 - 18 years old.

School considers boarding provision to be no longer financially viable.

Alternative options have been considered but failed to meet the test of financial sustainability and quality of provision.

The impact of Covid-19 and of exiting European Union has accelerated the need for urgent action. Local authority has no objections to proposal.

School has advised staff and provided support to pupils to find alternative arrangements.

Proposal to take effect from August 2021.

The financial health of the school, strength of financial management and governance at the trust and the impact of the significant change on the trust's future financial health was considered.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: N/A

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform school of decision

Project: Thomas Estley Community College, Leicestershire- creation of a 15 place Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Communication and Interaction Unit

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Good January 2019

Proposal to take effect from August 2021 and is fully supported by local authority, due to it being part of their Special Education Needs and Disability Strategy.

All students attending will have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Places to be allocated by local authority.

Planning permission has been obtained. Capital funding for construction will be met by the local authority. Local authority to also provide trust with start-up grant to establish the unit.

Unit will be opened on a phased basis in August 2021 and is expected to be at full capacity by August 2022.

Full consultation undertaken, with no objections.

The financial health of the school, strength of financial management and governance at the trust and the impact of the significant change on the trust's future financial health were considered.

Supportive deployment of a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) recommended.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform school of decision

Project: Boston Grammar School, Lincolnshire - increase physical capacity from 643 to 740 following physical expansion

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Requires Improvement March 2018

Expansion required due to increase in demand for secondary school places.

Trust advised that the school has grown significantly over the last six years.

Headteacher advised school is full and class sizes are large.

No objections from neighbours or parents about the proposal.

The financial health of the school, strength of financial management and governance at the trust and the impact of the significant change on the trust's future financial health were considered.

Deployment of a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) is pending

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Led to inform school of decision

Project: Greenfields Academy, Lincolnshire – increase in capacity at the Special School from 65 to 78

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Good January 2020

Proposal does not require physical expansion to be implemented. Therefore no capital costs required. Additional funding required to accommodate additional staffing costs, which will be provided by the trust.

Fully supported by local authority as it contributes to the delivery of their Special Education Needs and Disability Strategy and addresses the increase in demand for places.

Full consultation undertaken, with one negative response, which was considered.

The financial health of the school, strength of financial management and governance at the trust and the impact of the significant change on the trust's future financial health was considered.

School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) currently deployed.

RSC decision: Approved

Conflicts: Paul West was not present for this item and did not receive the papers

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform school of decision

Sponsored route

Project: Surfleet Primary School, Lincolnshire - consider sponsor options

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Inadequate February 2019.

School issued with Directive Academy Order in July 2020.

Number of trusts expressed interest but Keystone Academy Trust considered most suitable match.

Trust has track record of driving school improvement and schools in the area to provide support.

Trust has identified school's areas for improvement and has plan in place to address them.

Board raised concerns regarding the growth strategy of the trust.

The financial health of the school, strength of financial management and governance at the trust and the impact on the trust's future financial health of this school joining it was considered.

School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) currently deployed.

RSC decision: Approved

Conflicts: N/A

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform school and trusts of decision

Trust change

Project: Sentamu Academy Learning Trust merging with Hope Learning Trust

HTB discussion:

Proposed merger will create a faith-based trust, which will span two Regional School Commissioner regions (North and East Midlands and Humber), and will comprise fifteen schools.

Risks associated with merger discussed, along with revised governance arrangements.

Hope Learning Trust has proven track record of delivering school improvement. The trust's school improvement model will be bespoke for each individual school.

Robust financial planning and forecasting of budgets undertaken.

Board raised concerns regarding the ambitious delivery timescales, especially due to current pandemic.

Board advised that merger should be implemented for September 2021 rather than April 2021, in order to allow further time for planning and preparation.

The current financial health of the individual trusts, forecast financial health of the merged trust and strength of the proposed financial management and governance arrangements were considered.

Supportive deployment of a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) recommended.

RSC decision: Approved for September 2021.

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform trusts of decision.