



Notes of Meeting: South-East England and South London

20 May 2021

Attendance

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

HTB members who send their apologies for the meeting are, where possible, 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 Schools Commissioner (RSC) chair

- Claire Burton

Headteacher Board (HTB) members

- Alison Beane
- Stephen Carey
- Andrew Carter
- Jon Chaloner
- Mark Ducker
- Paula Farrow
- David Boyle

Guests

- None

Apologies

- None

DfE senior civil servants

- Paul Schofield
- Chris Armstrong-Stacey

Representations received

- No representations were made for any items discussed at this meeting.

General Discussion Points

RSC update

- Minutes from previous meeting agreed. RSC noted that the Platanos Sixth Form has now been approved by the Minister.
- SoS speech at CST making clear his support for all schools to be part of a strong multi-academy trust. Priority for the region will be thinking about MAT growth, strength of collaboration and where there are cold spots in SESL.
- 21/22 TCAF announced yesterday with £21m, tilted towards areas with high levels of disadvantage and poor pupil outcomes.
- Plan to hold roundtables focusing on strengthening MAT system in the region this term or Autumn term.
- In the process of agreeing an agenda and format for discussions with trusts for the Autumn term
- Covid response: looking at attendance, managing variants of concern, updates to Contingency Framework.

HTB member reflections

- Teaching Schools Hubs (TSH). HTB members expressed concern that previous TSHs that have now been de-designated continue to operate without the same restrictions as the newly appointed TSH. Discussed areas working together and the ripple effect in the neighbouring areas. Request that there should be some recognition on the financial burden TSH puts on trusts.
- Moulsecomb Primary School joining the Pioneer Academy with significant local press and anti-academy social media coverage. The Department is providing support to the trust.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: Hurst Green Church of England Primary School, East Sussex, and Northiam Church of England Primary School, East Sussex, to join the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust (DCAT)

HTB discussion: The two schools are the only members of the Quercus Federation, but now wish to join an academy trust that shares their ethos and values, especially in reference to faith. Both schools are Ofsted good and seek to improve further by joining DCAT which has a good track record for school improvement.

On governance, question on whether there is a conflict with trust board chair. Noted educational experience, but less clear financial experience. Also noted that DCAT currently has 7 trustees.

Question on viability of Northiam.

Discussed secondary capacity.

RSC decision: Approve with condition

Conflicts: None

Further actions required:

- Condition for the trust to review governance to look at skills, capacity and size
- to review School Improvement strategy

Project: St Paul's Catholic College, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, to join Bosco Catholic Education Trust

HTB discussion: HTB noted that Bosco CET was the diocesan trust for academies in West Sussex, and that St Paul's would bring the trust further capacity as it developed.

The family relationship between the headteacher of St Paul's and trust CEO was noted.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Project lead to seek assurance that the trust will ensure that potential conflicts of interest are properly managed.

Project: Orchard Primary School, Bexley LA, to join Primary First Trust

HTB discussion: 1FE school to join a specialist primary school. In the last judgment the school became RI. PFT has a good track record on School Improvement. They also have a

thorough support plan for current head. The governance is strongly in favour of the proposal.

Discussion on trust members and bring them to the best practice model.

Suggestion for CEO to join induction programme.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Significant change:

Points discussed in relation to significant changes application(s).

Project: Noadswood School, Hampshire, physical expansion and addition of SEMH provision

HTB discussion: The proposal is fully supported by LA who are also providing some of the funding. The provision is to help meet the need in Hampshire for SEMH, as pupils are currently traveling out of the area to get this. A recruitment process, fully funded by LA, will ensure the provision is delivered by a new team.

Question on LA support beyond funding.

Noted that there is clear planning in place.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Great Oaks School, Southampton, physical expansion and capacity increase

HTB discussion: Part of the Rosewood Limited Trust. Request for a capacity increase by 90 by 2022. School currently has a waiting list of 30 for year 7.

HTB noted that this would represent a large expansion of the school and need for trust governance to be robust.

HTB noted that two members are in dual roles as trustees and two trust employees are on the board.

HTB would have liked to see more information on the trust's School Improvement plans.

RSC decision: Approve with condition

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Recommendation that the CEO is the only trust employee on the board.

Trust to provide more information on their school improvement plan.

Project: Delce Academy, Medway, Age range reduction

HTB discussion: The school has gone from good to RI and so the intention now is to focus on improvement of KS2.

The board were encouraged to hear that Inspire were developing relationships with other schools locally and hoped this change would help strengthen collaboration further.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Deanwood Primary School, Medway, Age range expansion

HTB discussion: The request is for HTB to extend the age range to formally include the nursery within the school.

Discussed financial health of the trust, and the impact of nursery provision.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: RDD team to continue to liaise closely with ESFA, and meet the trust for a review as a priority in the autumn term.

Project: Stoke Primary Academy to amalgamate with Allhallows Primary Academy

HTB discussion: Proposal to amalgamate two rural schools. Previously considered in 2019. Since then, the level of support for the amalgamation has increased with a high proportion of positive responses to the consultation. The Board noted that Stoke had received a good judgement since joining the Leigh Academies Trust following a sustained period as requires improvement but the numbers of pupils at the academy had decreased further presenting challenges for continuing to provide an effective educational experience for remaining pupils and jeopardising the academy's viability.

The board discussed transport provision for children that have to travel.

RSC decision: Defer

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Written confirmation from trust on minibus provision.

Recommendation of proposals to the Minister.

Trust change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to a new trust.

Project: The Great North Wood Education Trust, Lambeth, to join The Dunraven Education Trust

HTB discussion: Upon joining Dunraven Education Trust, The Great Northwood Education Trust will dissolve. Dunraven currently has three academies. Dunraven School is Ofsted outstanding and has a good track record of School Improvement. Rationale for the transfer: Following the result of an external report carried out by GNWET, the trust drew up criteria for what they were looking for in a trust to join. A couple of trusts were considered, including Chestnut Grove and Charter Trusts, and the conclusion was that Dunraven was the preferred partner. Dunraven has a SI strategy in place to address underperformance at KS4 in Elmgreen School, and therefore this is a good time for the school to join Dunraven before performance declines any further at KS4. With regards to stakeholder consultation, positive response received in general and the LA are also supportive.

Question around the trust board and whether there is sufficient financial expertise.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: David Boyle was not present for this item and did not receive the paper.

Further actions required: Recommendation to explore addition of finance skills on governance.

Decisions taken between HTB meetings

List of decisions taken by the RSC outside of HTB meetings.

Project: The Maplesden Noakes School, Kent, Physical Expansion

Decision type: Significant change

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Danecourt Academy, Medway - Satellite Provision Expansion

Decision type: Significant change

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Chilmington Green Primary - age range change

Decision type: Significant change

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Decisions escalated to the Minister/NSC

List of decisions that have been escalated to the Minister/NSC.

Project: Hurstpierpoint College Sponsor Application

HTB advised on: 25 March 2021

NSC decision: Approve with condition

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Condition that the sponsor status will be limited to allowing the college to apply to free school applications.

Project: Hillview School for Girls, Kent - physical expansion

HTB advised on: 25 March 2021

Minister decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

List of projects listed on the published draft agenda, but were removed before the meeting

List of projects that were on the published draft agenda but not discussed at the HTB meeting.

Project: Bandon Hill Primary, Sutton, conversion to join Greenshaw Learning Trust

Type of decision: Converter Academy Orders

Reason for why it was taken off agenda: Awaiting further information needed for the paper.