



Notes of Meeting: South-East England and South London

22 April 2021

Attendance

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

HTB 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 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

Representations received

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

General Discussion Points

- Minutes to previous meeting agreed.

SoS speech

- SoS due to make a speech to the Confederation of Schools Trusts on Wednesday 28 April about the Academies Programme and strategy going forward.
- Brief discussion about SoS vision on the future of the Academies Programme.

Local Update

- Priority going forward in the next term is to focus on MAT development and focussing on school improvement issues in the region.
- Clarified that decision on Maplesden Noakes School and Wilmington Academy have not been taken.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: Whytemead Primary School, Worthing (West Sussex) to join Schoolsworks Academy Trust

HTB discussion: Discussed composition of the trustee board and the role of the Director of Teaching and Learning.

RSC decision: Approve with condition

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Schoolsworks Academy Trust remove the two employee places on its board of trustees for a head of school and the director of teaching and learning by September 2021.

Project: Kenley Primary School, Croydon to join The Collegiate Trust

HTB discussion: Discussed the reputation of the trust in the area and the evidence of this from local stakeholders and communities.

Also discussed the future strategy of the trust and the impact of the CEO standing down.

Question on whether recruitment of CEO will effect anything.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Conversation next term with Collegiate about their succession plans.

Significant Change

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

Project: Application from University of Portsmouth to form a MAT

HTB discussion: Discussed next steps for the future of the MAT, specifically which schools the MAT will be looking to take on initially and the danger of taking on vulnerable schools given the relative inexperience of the MAT team.

Also discussed the school improvement strategy of the MAT and the potential (over) reliance on external expertise.

Question on leadership plan and CEO recruitment.

RSC decision: Approve with condition

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Fair and open recruitment process to appoint a CEO once MAT approval is given

We don't expect any more proposals for vulnerable schools to be taken on until there is evidence of the impact of the trust.

Project: Hampton High, Richmond-Upon-Thames, to add SRP unit

HTB discussion: Discussed future of Richmond West Schools Trust and the potential transfer of Bourne Education Trust who are supportive of the proposal.

Question on other options available.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Dysart School, Kingston-Upon-Thames to add satellite site

HTB discussion: General agreement that it is a sensible proposal although there are concerns about the capacity of Orchard Hill Academies Trust.

LA is supportive and funding the refurbishment of the site.

Discussed governance and number of members in Orchard.

Noted some feedback on the proposal which seem to be against the proposal.

RSC decision: Approve with condition

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Condition on governance – to have a governance review.

Project: The Weald CofE Primary, Surrey - removal of EYFS and KS1

HTB discussion: Weald want to remove the places by September 2022.

Question on the direction of travel as it seems to be against Surrey's strategy for all-through primaries. Concern that this is a first step towards closure. However, both LA and Pupil Place advisor are supportive of this proposal.

Question on pupil numbers for KS2.

RSC decision: Defer

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Review the proposal again and bring to the next HTB

Project: Christs College, Surrey - removal of sixth form

HTB discussion: a 5fe secondary school.

Discussion on pupil numbers and other FE providers in the area.

Historical educational performance issues, so school want to focus improvement on KS3 and KS4.

Question on sustainability of school improvement and leadership plan.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Conversation with the trust about their strategy.

Project: Athena Schools Trust and Guildford Education Partnership - proposal to merge

HTB discussion: proposal for a voluntary transfer.

The two trusts have been working closely for the last 18 months and share the same CEO.

The rationale of this merger was discussed as well as strength of leadership.

Also discussed trusts finances as well as their growth plan given the challenges in some of the schools.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: Jon Chaloner was not present for this item.

Further actions required: CEO to be invited to take part in mentoring programme.

Period of consolidation before future growth.

Decisions taken between HTB meetings

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

Project: Penhale Infants, Portsmouth, physical expansion / addition of SEN provision

Decision type: Significant change

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Bedesford School (OHCAT) - to increase capacity

Decision type: Significant change

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required

Decisions escalated to the NSC/Minister

List of decisions that have been escalated to the Minister.

Project: Platanos College, Lambeth, to expand to include sixth form provision

HTB advised on: See March notes

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: The Maplesden Noakes School, Kent, Physical Expansion

Type of decision: Significant change

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

Project: Wilmington Academy, Kent, Physical Expansion

Type of decision: Significant change

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