

Notes of Meeting: East Midlands and Humber Advisory Board

13th October 2021

Attendance

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

Advisory Board 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

- Carol Gray
- Kate Copley

Advisory Board members

- Paul West
- Anne Martin
- Paul Stone
- Peter Bell
- Andy Child

Guests

- None

Apologies

- Inderjit Sandhu

DfE senior civil servants

- None

Representations received

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

Sponsor Application

Points discussed in relation to applications for becoming a sponsor. .

Project: Discuss whether to approve Minster Trust for Education (MiTrE), Nottinghamshire becoming a sponsor

AB discussion:

The Minster School is a National Support School, a former teaching school and a Maths Hub. The trust is a strategic partner of the Redhill Teaching Hub.

All seven schools in the trust are rated good or outstanding, creating capacity and expertise to support schools in the local area. The trust has applied to become a sponsor to allow it to sponsor underperforming schools and increase the number of academies in the trust. The trust expects to sponsor schools within its current area of operation.

The current and future financial health, and strength of financial management and governance at the trust were considered.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform the trust of the decision and recommendation of an external review of governance.

Free School Presumption – Sponsor Approval

Points discussed in relation to sponsorship of a free school .

Project: Discuss sponsor options for Barugh Green MU1 Free School, Barnsley

AB discussion:

The academy will be a 1.5 form entry primary school (315 places), with the view to expand pupil places in the future should the need arise. The academy is required to meet basic need for school places in the area due to a local housing development.

The LA is arranging for the building to be funded via S106 agreements with the developer, as part of their requirements for MU1 is to provide a new primary school. The LA will be funding pre-opening revenue costs and underwriting financial shortfall if pupil numbers are lower than anticipated. The final amounts to be finalised between the LA and the trust in due course.

The proposed opening date is September 2023. The site and building for the school will be transferred to the successful trust on a lease arrangement.

9 trusts applied to sponsor the school, and 5 were taken through to the interview stage. The LA's preferred sponsor is Delta Academies Trust.

The trust has a proven track record as a sponsor and has schools in the vicinity to provide support.

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

RSC decision: Approve

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

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform the trust and Local Authority of the decision

Trust Change

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

Project: Huttoft Primary School (Single Academy Trust), Lincolnshire, to transfer to Horncastle Education Trust (Multi Academy Trust), Lincolnshire.

AB discussion:

Ofsted judged Huttoft Primary School as requires improvement on 26 February 2020.

The academy has an established working relationship with Horncastle Education Trust and would benefit from formally joining the trust, having access to greater school improvement support and finance and resource management.

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

A supportive deployment of a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) to Horncastle Education Trust was recommended.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform the trusts of the decision and the recommendation of a supportive SRMA deployment

Sponsored Route:

Points discussed in relation to sponsorship of a school.

Project: Discuss sponsor options for Kirkby College, Nottinghamshire

AB discussion:

In March 2018, Ofsted deemed Kirkby College to be inadequate and a termination warning notice was issued on 21 June 2018.

Kirkby College has been included in the second round of the School Rebuilding Programme; this capital investment will provide the long-needed improvement required to the school buildings.

The board considered proposals from three trusts to sponsor Kirkby College.

The financial health, strength of financial management and governance of each trust and the impact on the trust's future financial health if Kirkby College joins were considered.

The board agreed that Outwood Grange Academies Trust (OGAT) was the preferred sponsor. The trust has a strong track record of supporting and improving schools and the board's view is that OGAT would bring benefits to the wider Ashfield area.

RSC decision: Approve OGAT as the sponsor for Kirkby College

Conflicts: Paul West and Andy Child did not receive the papers and were not present for the discussion

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