

Notes of Meeting: South West Advisory Board

15 November 2021

Attendance

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

AB 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

- Hannah Woodhouse

Advisory Board (AB) members

- Brian Hooper
- Suzanne Flack
- Sally Apps
- Steve Savory
- Michael Larsen
- Alun Williams
- Paul Jones
- Joy Tubbs

Guests

- None

Apologies

- None

DfE senior civil servants

- Lucy Livings (Deputy Director)
- Matthew Stevenson (Deputy Director)

Representations received

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

General Discussion Points

Advisory Board Elections

- Members were informed that the AB election polls open on Monday 22 November 2021 and close on Monday 10 December 2021. Academy heads can vote online or by post, and outcomes will be announced in late January 2022.
- The February 2022 AB meeting will be in person with both the current and newly elected members in attendance.

Ofsted Update

- The RSC noted that James McNeillie will be starting as Ofsted's Regional Director, South West from 1 December 2021.

Growing Great Trusts – a South West pilot

- AB members were provided a strategic update on academisation in the South West region. Members were pleased that the focus was on improving the quality of education and supported the RSC with the message.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: Whether to approve St Andrew's Primary School, North Somerset to convert to academy status and join Lighthouse Schools Partnership

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed governance and concerns around dual membership.
- AB members noted that the board had financial and business expertise and agreed with the trust that more trustees with an educational background would be good.
- AB members discussed the importance of trust leadership and accountability.
- AB members discussed the trust's school improvement approach.
- AB members discussed the preference to move all schools on to the same master funding agreements but noted the costs in this.
- AB members noted the match made sense.

RSC decision: Approve with conditions.

Condition: That duplication between membership of Trust Board and LGBs should be ended or strictly in place for a limited period of time.

Conflicts: Lucy Livings

Further actions required: Converter Academy Order to be issued to Chair of Governors. Project lead to inform the local authority and trust.

Project: Whether to approve High View School, **Plymouth** to convert to academy status and join Learning Academies Trust

AB discussion:

- AB members noted that the CEO is dedicated to school improvement and commended this.
- AB members noted the trust has three Members at present but are aiming for five.
- AB members noted the school will add further capacity to the trust.
- AB members discussed the trust's financial position and noted it was healthy.
- AB members queried the large reserve and high staff costs.
- An EFSA official assured the members that there were plans for the reserve. They also informed that the trust has a high central team staff cost which has been built in preparation for growth.
- AB members noted that the trust and school have worked together for a number of years and recognised the match was a good fit.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Converter Academy Order to be issued to Chair of Governors. Project lead to inform the local authority and trust.

Academy Opening Approved in Principle

List of academies approved to open.

Project: Sandford Primary School, **North Somerset** (Wessex Learning Trust)

AB discussion:

- Opening date 1 December 2021
- No issues raised.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Winscombe Primary School, **North Somerset** (Wessex Learning Trust)

AB discussion:

- Opening date 1 December 2021
- No issues raised.

Further actions required: No action required.

Significant Change

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

Project: Whether to approve a significant change application for The Willow Primary Academy, **Gloucestershire** (SAND Academies Trust) to increase the capacity of its communication and interaction centre from 20 to 30 pupils.

AB discussion:

- AB members agreed there was a need for the additional places in Gloucestershire.
- AB members were content to approve the change based on the trust's expertise, despite the schools Inadequate rating.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Project lead to inform the trust.

Decisions taken between AB meetings

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

Project: Whether to approve a significant change application for Fishponds Church of England Academy, Bristol (Diocese of Bristol Academy Trust) to amend its age range from 3-11 to 4-11 and remove nursery provision.

Decision type: Significant change

RSC decision: Approved via RSC correspondence log on 19 November

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Project lead to inform the trust.

Project: Whether to approve a significant change application for Forest and Sandridge Church of England Primary School, Wiltshire (White Horse Federation) to increase capacity from 420 to 525.

Decision type: Significant change

RSC decision: Approved via an internal meeting on 16 November

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Project lead to inform the trust.

Project: Whether to approve a significant change application for Teignmouth Community School, Mill Lane, **Devon** (Osprey Learning Trust) to add eight additional places to its reserved provision for SEN pupils.

Decision type: Significant change

RSC decision: Declined via an internal meeting on 16 November

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Project lead to inform the trust.

Project: Whether to approve a significant change application for Westcliff Primary Academy, **Devon** (The First Federation Trust) to add a reserved provision for SEN pupils of eight places.

Decision type: Significant change

RSC decision: Approved via an internal meeting on 16 November

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Project lead to inform the trust.

Project: Whether to approve a significant change application for Great Torrington School, Devon (Great Torrington School Academy Trust) to add a reserved provision for SEN pupils of eight places.

Decision type: Significant change

RSC decision: Declined via an internal meeting on 16 November

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Project lead to inform the trust.

Project: Whether to approve a significant change application for Okehampton Primary School, **Devon** (Dartmoor Multi-Academy Trust) to add a reserved provision for SEN pupils of eight places

Decision type: Significant change

RSC decision: Approved via an internal meeting on 16 November

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Project lead to inform the trust.

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