



Notes of Meeting: North West London South Central Advisory Board

21 July 2022

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 Director (RD) chair

- Dame Kate Dethridge

Advisory Board (AB) members

- Sarah Bennett
- Dame Yasmin Bevan
- Dame Sue Bourne
- Sarah Brown
- Dr Jamie Clarke

Guests

- Stuart Gardner – new South East AB member
- Claire Lowe – new South East AB member
- Sue Samson MBE – new South East AB member

Apologies

- Claire Robins OBE

DfE senior civil servants

- Paul Schofield, Deputy Director

Representations received

- 139 representations (1 having 59 signatures on behalf 78 individuals) - for Trust Change: transfer of Holland Park School (SAT), Kensington & Chelsea, to United

Learning Trust (ULT). These representations were shared in advance of the meeting with all attendees and considered alongside their corresponding item.

General Discussion Points

- AB members gave their reflections on the exams process this year.
- The meeting note of June Advisory Board was agreed by all members.
- Conflicts of interest were noted for Dame Yasmin Bevan for Holland Park School item. Dame Yasmin confirmed she was not sent the papers.

Converter Academy Order

Project: To discuss and consider Milton Keynes Primary Pupil Referral Unit, **Milton Keynes**, to convert and join Stephenson (MK) Trust.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed the governance structure at Stephenson (MK) Trust and the need to diversify the board.
- AB members recognised the current support from the trust to MK Primary PRU.
- AB members discussed the finances and the need for a governance review at Stephenson (MK) Trust.
- AB members discussed whether the trust have the capacity and support to provide the challenge on school improvement.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school and trust of the RSC decision.

Converter Academy Order

Project: To discuss and consider The Hemel Hempstead School, **Hertfordshire**, to convert and join Scholars' Education Trust.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed the governance and scheme of delegation for decision making at Scholars' Education Trust.
- AB members discussed the trust's school improvement plan for The Hemel Hempstead School.
- AB members discussed the finances of The Hemel Hempstead School.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Claire Robins (Claire did not attend this Advisory Board).

Further actions required: Inform the school and trust of the RD decision.

Sponsor Application

Project: To discuss and consider the application from Pioneer Learning Trust, **Luton**, to become an academy sponsor.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed the sponsor options currently within Luton borough.
- AB members discussed the capacity of the trust to become a sponsor and to provide school improvement.
- AB members commented that a more developed case was needed with measurable evidence.

RD decision: Decline.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school and trust of the RD decision.

Sponsor Application

Project: To discuss and consider the application from James Marks Academy Trust, **Hertfordshire**, to become an academy sponsor.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed the governance structure at James Marks Academy Trust.
- AB members discussed the need for a track record with measurable evidence at the multi-academy trust.
- AB members agreed the item should be brought back to AB at a future date.

RD decision: Decline.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school and trust of the RD decision.

Trust Change

Project: To discuss and consider the transfer of Flamstead End School (SAT), Hertfordshire, to join Generations Multi-Academy Trust.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed the governance structure at Generations Multi-Academy Trust and the importance of independent representation.
- AB members emphasized the need for primary educational expertise on the trust board.
- AB members discussed the trust's expertise on safeguarding and the scheme of delegation on the board.
- The RD recommended the trust have a governance review and a School Resource Management Adviser.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school and trust of the RD decision.

Trust Change / Decision escalated to the minister

Project: To discuss and consider the application from London Design and Engineering UTC, Newham, to form a multi-academy trust with Watford UTC, Hertfordshire.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed LDE UTC's capacity and the need for a track record to support its application to becoming a sponsor multi-academy trust.
- AB members recognised the financial challenges with Watford UTC.

RD decision: Defer – escalated to the minister for decision.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Decision to be escalated to the minister.

Converter Academy Order

Project: To discuss and consider St Michael's Catholic School, **Buckinghamshire**, to convert and join St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed the school's pupil performance data.
- AB members discussed the need for trustee primary and secondary expertise on the trust board.
- AB members discussed the need for a more detailed school improvement plan for St Michael's Catholic School.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school and trust of the RD decision.

Sponsored Route:

Project: To discuss and consider Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust as the sponsor for The Downley School, **Buckinghamshire**.

Reason for Academy Order: Inadequate Ofsted judgement.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed what impact ODBST have had on the schools within the multi-academy trust to date.
- AB members discussed the ODBST's capacity if sponsorship were to be agreed.
- AB members were in agreement for ODBST to be the sponsor of The Downley School.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school and trust of the RD decision.

Trust Change

Project: To discuss and consider the merger proposal for Newbury College Academy Trust Ltd (Highwood Copse Primary School), **West Berkshire**, with Thames Learning Trust.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed the governance structure at the trust boards of both Newbury College Academy Trust (NCAT) and Thames Learning Trust (TLT).
- AB members discussed the expertise within the two trust boards.
- AB members discussed the advantages of joining a larger trust to be beneficial to a standalone primary school in the long term.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school and trust of the RD decision.

Significant Change

Project: To discuss and consider the application from Barton Park Primary School, **Oxfordshire**, to extend the age range from 3-11yrs to 2-11yrs, to allow the school to offer eight funded 2 year olds nursery places to commence from September 2022.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed sustainability of pupil places in the area.
- AB members agreed to recommend the significant change application.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school and trust of the RD decision.

Trust Change / Decision escalated to the minister

Project: To discuss and consider the transfer of Holland Park School (SAT), **Kensington & Chelsea**, to United Learning Trust (ULT).

AB discussion:

- AB members considered the issues and themes raised by the representations received.
- AB members noted the positive work Kensington Aldridge Academy (KAA) had done to date for the community of Kensington and Chelsea, however focus was on the likely capacity and impact of the potential trusts to take on Holland Park School (HPS).
- AB members agreed without exception that the school should join a multi-academy trust.
- AB members discussed the performance of the schools currently within ULT.
- AB members recognised the sensitivities presented and would welcome a robust school improvement plan from ULT.
- AB members were unanimous in agreement that HPS should join ULT as this was the best option for securing the rapid support for the school needed.

RD decision: Defer - decision escalated to the minister.

Conflicts: Dame Yasmin Bevan. Dame Yasmin did not receive the papers for this item and left the meeting before this discussion.

Further actions required: Decision to be escalated to the minister.