



Notes of Meeting: North West Advisory Board

13th September 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

- Vicky Beer (RD)

Advisory Board (AB) members

- Anita Ghidotti
- Tania Lewyckyj
- Karen Burns
- Annette Williams
- Helen O'Neill
- George Beveridge
- Nic Brindle

Guests

- None

Apologies

- Jonathan Nichols

DfE senior civil servants

- SFSO representatives

Representations received

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

General Discussion Points

- Regional Director provided an update on recent ministerial changes and an update on provisional data publication and potential usage.
- AB members provided reflections on recent matters within the sector.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: Discussion to consider Sandbrook Community Primary School, Rochdale, to convert and join Watergrove Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board agreed this proposal worked well geographically and would create a strong cluster of schools within the area.
- The board agreed to the following conditions:
 - SRMA to be deployed to at trust level.
 - Trust to review governance board to ensure there is sufficient expertise across all areas.
 - External review of governance.
 - Trust to provide overview of the co-ordination of and accountability for school improvement across the trust

RD decision: Approved with conditions

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Project lead to inform Trust and DCS of decision and Academy Order to be sent.

Project: Discussion to consider Gayton Primary School, Wirral, to convert and join Cheshire Academies Trust.

AB discussion:

- The Board agreed that as the trust grows, they will need to review School Improvement plan and create a more robust strategy which does not rely on peer review. This will also support the trust with future growth plans in the event they take on more challenging schools.
- The board also suggested that the trust should develop their strategic brand within the Cheshire sub-region and consider how they will support other schools within the nearby area.

RD decision: Approved with conditions

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Project lead to inform Trust and DCS of decision and Academy Order to be sent.

Project: Discussion to consider Dawpool Primary School, Wirral, to convert and join Chester Diocesan Academies Trust

AB discussion:

- The board reflected on the trust's reliance on external experts to review performance, and suggested the trust need to evolve the board to overcome this.
- The board reflected on the school's legacy Ofsted judgement and considered what the implications may be if this changes after the next inspection.
- SRMA to be deployed at trust level.

RD decision: Approved with conditions

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Project lead to inform Trust and DCS of decision and Academy Order to be sent.

Project: Discussion to consider Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School, Cumbria, to convert and join Mater Christi Multi-Academy Trust

AB discussion:

- The board shared concerns regarding the trust's growth rate.
- SFSO suggested an additional SRMA to help uncover the trust's financial capacity.
- The board also reflected on the reliance of external bodies providing School Improvement strategy.

RD decision: Approved with conditions

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Project lead to inform Trust and DCS of decision and Academy Order to be sent.

Project: Discussion to consider St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Cumbria, to convert and join Mater Christi Multi-Academy Trust

AB discussion:

- The board shared concerns regarding the trust's growth rate.
- SFSO suggested an additional SRMA to help uncover the trust's financial capacity.
- The board also reflected on the reliance of external bodies providing School Improvement strategy.

RD decision: Approved with conditions

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Project lead to inform Trust and DCS of decision and Academy Order to be sent.

Sponsored Route:

Points discussed in relation to a school's sponsor status.

Project: Discussion to consider Lily Lane Primary School, Manchester, sponsor options.

AB discussion:

- The board were provided with a summary of this project and reflected on their initial views.

RD decision: FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

Conflicts: Karen Burns was not present for this discussion

Further actions required: None.

Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

Project: Discussion to consider Queen Elizabeth Grammar School Penrith, Cumbria, to join West Lakes Multi-Academy Trust

AB discussion:

- SFSO informed the board that an SRMA has been planned for both trusts to understand where efficiencies can be made.
- West Lakes MAT will need to continue working with SFSO and provide a financial plan on how the trust will manage any financial risks.
- The board also suggested that West Lake MAT should reflect on their trust board composition and consider how this will merge with QEGS.
- The board have also sought clarity on West Lake's scheme of delegation and how QEGS fits within this.

RD decision: Approved in Principle

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Trust to be informed of RD's decision.

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