



## Notes of Meeting: South West Advisory Board

26 September 2022 (rescheduled from 19 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

- Hannah Woodhouse

### Advisory Board (AB) members

- Adele Haysom
- Ben Antell
- Jackie Smith
- Jennifer Blunden
- Margaret Simmons-Bird
- Rachel Howie
- Steve Savory

### Apologies

- Mark Ducker

### DfE senior civil servants

- Matthew Stevenson

### Representations received

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

## General Discussion Points

### Local Update

- Welcomes to the new AB members at the first meeting and scene setting
- The priorities for the region for 2022 / 2023 and the focus of South West Region work this term was presented
- A Ministerial team update was given
- The latest inspection data was shared

### Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

**Project:** Whether to approve Nanpean Community Primary School, **Cornwall** converting to academy status and joining Truro and Penwith Academy Trust

**AB discussion:** No concern

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** Jennifer Blunden was not present and did not receive the papers for this project

**Further actions required:** Project lead to inform the school and trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve the Wynstream School, **Devon** converting to academy status and joining Education South West

**AB discussion:** No concern

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Project lead to inform the school and trust.

### Significant Change

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

**Project:** Whether to approve a proposed merger between Chandag Infant School and Chandag Junior School, **BANES** (Futura Learning Partnership).

**AB discussion:**

**Finance:**

- The financial position of the schools has been reviewed by the SFSO (Schools Financial Support & Oversight) and no concerns have been raised regarding the merger proposal.

**Other:**

- The structural options for both schools have been explored in depth over the last year. Both schools currently work closely together, and this partnership working was accelerated through Covid19.
- Both schools are based on the same site, and the merger will formalise and build on existing working arrangements.
- The merger will support a more consistent approach to policies and practices across the key stages and will provide greater continuity for pupils and families as students transition. There will be a greater range of resource and opportunity for the development of staff in the merged school

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** Margaret Simmons-Bird was not present and did not receive the papers for this project

**Further actions required:** Project lead to inform the school and trust.

## Sponsored Route

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

**Project:** Whether to approve Amesbury Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, **Wiltshire** joining Magna Learning Partnership

**AB discussion:****School Improvement:**

- AB members raised questions on the school improvement model and the sequencing of the implementation of the proposed SI support
- The trust has recruited additional SI support and recognise the need for a robust plan for when this support will be in place and the timeliness of implementation.
- The SI model has been tested with the trust and will be subject to continued review by the Department
- The use of an external advisor will be discussed with the trust

**Governance:**

- AB members questioned the diversity of experience of the board and the level of education expertise. This will be reviewed with the trust

**RD decision:** Approve with conditions project to continue to current plan pending clarification of all issues raised by the AB and RD. Project papers are not required to come back to AB.

**Conditions:**

- The trust provides costed leadership and school improvement plans which include the timeline and sequencing of leadership resources being deployed to drive improvement at Amesbury School.
- The trust seeks to appoint a minimum of two trustees with significant experience in Primary education by January 2023, to support the governance and accountability of primary school improvement at the trust.

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Project lead to inform the school and trust.

## Free School Presumption – Sponsor Approval

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

**Project:** Whether to approve Gloucestershire County Council's recommended sponsor for a new special school for children aged 4 – 11 with moderate and additional learning difficulties, **Gloucestershire**

**AB discussion:**

Gloucestershire County Council ran an open campaign for applications. Following interview, they have recommended that SAND Academies Trust is approved as the sponsor.

SAND has demonstrated that they have evidenced strong partnerships with stakeholders and they have the confidence of the parents. Their financial position is strong.

**Governance:**

- AB members questioned the CEO succession and plans for the incoming CEO
- Assurances were given that mentoring from a specialist in SEND will be agreed with the trust

**Other:**

- AB members recognise the challenges for Gloucestershire County Council in providing SEND and SEMH places.
- It was acknowledged by AB members that the proposed site is well situated to serve the needs of the area

**RD decision:** Approve with conditions, project to continue to current plan pending clarification of all issues raised by the AB and RD. Project papers are not required to come back to AB.

**Conditions:**

- The trust provides a mentoring programme for the incoming CEO with a focus on SEND and SEMH expertise

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Project lead to inform the school and trust.

## Trust Change

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

**Project:** Whether to approve the following thirteen academies from the Clevedon Learning Trust, **North Somerset** transferring to Futura Learning Partnership

- Clevedon School, **North Somerset**
- Willowdown Primary School, **Somerset**
- Woolavington Village Primary School, **Somerset**
- Yeo Moor Primary School, **North Somerset**
- Tickenham Church of England Primary School, **North Somerset**
- Mary Elton Primary School, **North Somerset**
- Puriton Primary School, **Somerset**
- Westover Green Community School and Autism Centre, **Somerset**
- Northgate Primary School, **Somerset**
- St Nicholas Chantry Church of England Primary School, **North Somerset**
- Chilton Trinity School, **Somerset**
- All Saints Church of England Primary School, **North Somerset**
- Chestnut Park Primary, **North Somerset**

### **AB discussion:**

#### **School Improvement:**

- AB members discussed the school improvement models across both trusts and the vision for how this will be aligned and implemented during the interim period and following the merger. In particular, the trusts intend to further develop their secondary SI approach through collaboration with strong secondary MATs.
- AB members also discussed the interim school improvement capacity and plans to increase this at executive level following the merger.

#### **Finance:**

- AB members reflected on the financial position of both trusts. ESFA have confirmed that the merger is expected to strengthen the financial position of the future merged trust, and they are supportive of the proposed merger.

#### **Governance:**

- AB members reviewed the experience of the boards of both trusts. The benefit of increasing secondary MAT expertise on the combined board has been discussed with the trusts and will be considered as part of the skills auditing exercise when appointing trustees.

#### **Other:**

- AB members expressed that they were pleased with the thoroughness of the approach both trusts have taken in progressing this voluntary merger application.
- AB members highlighted the importance of communicating their new vision and ethos to stakeholders through this process.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** Margaret Simmons-Bird was not present and did not receive the papers for this project

**Further actions required:** Project lead to inform the school and trust.

## Academy Opening Approved in Principle

List of academies approved to open.

**Project:** Berry Pomeroy Parochial Church of England Primary School, **Devon** (The Academy for Character and Excellence )

**AB discussion:**

Opening date 1 October 2022

No issues raised.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

**Project:** St Sidwell's Church of England Primary School and Nursery, **Devon** (St Christopher's C of E (Primary) Multi Academy Trust)

**AB discussion:**

Opening date 1 October 2022

No issues raised.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

**Project:** Cold Aston Church of England Primary School, **Gloucestershire** (North Cotswold Schools Federation MAT)

**AB discussion:**

Opening date 1 October 2022

No issues raised.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

**Project:** Longborough Church of England Primary School, **Gloucestershire** (North Cotswold Schools Federation MAT)

**AB discussion:**

Opening date 1 October 2022

No issues raised.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

**Project:** Swell Church of England Primary School, **Gloucestershire** (North Cotswold Schools Federation MAT)

## **AB discussion:**

Opening date 1 October 2022

No issues raised.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

## **Decisions taken between AB meetings**

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

**Project:** Whether to approve a significant change application for Beechwood Primary Academy, **Plymouth** (Discovery Multi Academy Trust) to change the age range from 3 – 11 to 2 – 11.

**Decision type:** Significant Change

**RD decision:** Approve with conditions

**Conditions:** The Local Authority to review sufficiency data and confirm their support

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Project lead to inform the trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve a significant change application for Weston Mill Community Primary Academy, **Plymouth** (Discovery Multi Academy Trust) to change the age range from 3 – 11 to 2 – 11

**Decision type:** Significant Change

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Project lead to inform the school and trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve a significant change application for Wyndham Park Infants' School, **Wiltshire** (Somerset Road Education Trust) to increase the capacity of the resource base by 8 places from 10 to 18.

**Decision type:** Significant Change

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Project lead to inform the school and trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve a significant change application for St Boniface's RC College, **Plymouth** (Plymouth CAST) to retrospectively remove its Sixth Form provision and to change the age range from 11-18 to 11-16.

**Decision type:** Significant Change

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Project lead to inform the school and trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve a significant change application for North Cornwall Alternative Provision Academy, **Cornwall** (Wave Multi Academy Trust) to increase capacity by 15 places

**Decision type:** Significant Change

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Project lead to inform the school and trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve a retrospective significant change for Field Court Church of England Infant Academy (The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust) to change the age range to 3 – 11

**Decision type:** Significant Change

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Project lead to inform the school and trust.

## **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 AB meeting.

None

© Crown copyright 2022