



## Notes of Meeting: London Advisory Board

20 October 2022

### Attendance

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

AB members who have 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 has declared a conflict of interest.

### Regional Director (RD) chair

- Claire Burton

### Advisory Board (AB) members

- Rama Venchard
- Vanessa Ogden
- Lee Mason-Ellis
- Cassie Buchanan
- Susan Douglas
- Emma Bradshaw
- Gill Bal
- Penny Barratt

### Guests

- None

### Apologies

- Susan Douglas

### DfE senior civil servants

- Anna Barker
- Alan Parnum

### Representations received

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

## **General Discussion Points**

### **RD Update**

- Minutes of last meeting agreed.
- Conflicts declared.

### **LA areas**

- Area profiles provided for Brent, Enfield, Hillington and Lambeth.
- AB to be briefed on strategic planning around PPP and SEND in London at a future meeting

## Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

**Project:** Streatham Wells Primary School, Lambeth - academy conversion to join The Charter Schools Educational Trust (TCSET)

**AB discussion:** Streatham Wells Primary school is a Lambeth school which is currently 107% full and has strong forecasted pupil numbers. It remained rated good in its latest short Ofsted inspection in January 2019.

TCSET already supports school improvement at Streatham Wells and has developed strong relationships. The SEND provision at Streatham Wells is supported by the TCSET SEND lead.

Following a consultation, the Governing Board agreed that joining TCSET presents both an exciting opportunity for Streatham Wells and offers the stability of being within a strong family of school.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** Cassie Buchanan did not receive papers for this item.

**Further actions required:** No action required

## Sponsor route

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

**Project:** Brent LA Presumption project seeking approval for a preferred sponsor

**AB discussion:** Brent local authority has identified the need to establish a new special secondary school in the Wembley area. The school will create additional local school places for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This was identified as a key part of the School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 Refresh and the new SEND Strategy 2021-25.

The project is being funded by Brent Local Authority through its SEND Capital Programme.

Brent LA's evaluation identified The Rise Partnership Trust as its preferred provider for the new Special School in Brent.

The Rise Partnership has two special schools: Manor School and The Avenue. Both schools cater for children with ASD, are in Brent and are 1.24 miles apart.

AB discussed size of Trust's central team and its top slice policy.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Recommendation that SRMA visit include consideration of central team.

## Significant Change

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

**Project:** Significant change from Connect Education Academy Trust for one of its special schools in Enfield, Fern House School, to:

- add a satellite site,
- increase the number of places across both sites from 64 to 104,
- and a change of SEN designation from SEMH to SEMH and ASD.

**AB discussion:** Fern House School (Ofsted rated good Mar 2022) is a sponsored all-through special academy, temporarily sited on spare capacity at the grounds of another of the trust's schools (Chesterfield Primary School) whilst a new purpose-built school is being constructed nearby.

The trust is proposing to create satellite provision for Fern House School pupils on the site of Chesterfield Primary School. With both the new build and Fern House Chesterfield satellite provision the school in total can provide an additional 40 new places. The school currently caters for pupils with SEMH, but the trust would like to expand the designation to SEMH and ASD.

Consultation took place from 13 June 2022 to 15 July 2022 with favourable responses. The London Borough of Enfield also supports this change.

AB discussed trust finances and risks.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Recommendation for SRMA visit.

## Trust Change

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

**Project:** Discussion to consider The Harefield Academy, Hillingdon (SAT) transfer to QED Academy Trust (MAT), Hillingdon

**AB discussion:** This is a Voluntary transfer of The Harefield Academy (SAT) to QED Academy Trust (MAT).

AB discussed viability of Harefield and concerns on finance, the trust's reserves and risk sharing. Noted that colleagues from ESFA are talking with the trust about a financial plan.

QED Academy Trust have carried out due diligence and is happy to take on Harefield, subject to agreeing a financial plan.

AB discussed local partnerships and noted the school is building new links within the local community.

AB discussed pupil numbers and forecasts which appear to be declining. Noted that Northwood and Queensmead are oversubscribed, and a pipeline free school in the same planning area.

AB discussed trust's school improvement plan, stakeholder strategy and requested further details of plan to increase pupil numbers at Harefield.

**RD decision:** Approve in principle

**Conflicts:** Susan Douglas

**Further actions required:** Subject to ESFA being able to agree a financial plan with QED, to bring the project back to RD for final approval.