



Notes of Meeting: South West

20 February 2023

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

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

Guests

- None

Apologies

- None

DfE senior civil servants

- Lucy Livings
- Matthew Stevenson

Representations received

- Five representations were received for the transfer of the nine academies from Horizon MAT, **Plymouth** transferring to Learning Academies Trust.
- One representation was received for Huish Episcopi Academy, **Somerset** joining United Learning Trust.
- One representation was received for Bodmin College, **Cornwall** transferring to Cornwall

Education Learning Trust.

These representations were shared in advance of the meeting with attendees and considered alongside their corresponding item.

General Discussion Points

Regional Director Update

- Priorities for the South West Region and Ofsted inspection outcomes from the start of this academic year were shared.
- AB members shared local intelligence.
- Presentation delivered on the growth strategy of Cabot Learning Federation.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: Whether to approve Amberley Parochial School, **Gloucestershire** converting to academy status and joining The Diocese of Gloucester Academy Trust.

Points raised in discussion: AB members were in agreement.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Rachel Howie was not present and did not receive the papers for this project.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Project: Whether to approve St Mary's Church of England VA Primary School, **Gloucestershire** converting to academy status and joining The Diocese of Gloucester Academy Trust.

Points raised in discussion: AB members were in agreement.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Rachel Howie was not present and did not receive the papers for this project.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Project: Whether to approve Worlebury St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, **North Somerset** converting to academy status and joining The Bath and Wells Diocesan Academies Trust.

Points raised in discussion: AB members were in agreement.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Project: Whether to approve Oakhurst Community Primary School, **Swindon** converting to academy status and joining Grove Learning Trust.

Points raised in discussion: AB members were in agreement.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Sponsored Route:

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

Project: Whether to approve Berrow Church of England Primary School, **Somerset** joining The Priory Learning Trust.

Points raised in discussion:

Governance:

- Comment was made on the number of Board Members, currently four. This is due to the need for Diocesan representation but will be discussed with the trust.

Strategy:

- The capacity of the trust to take on another school was discussed. It was confirmed that future growth would be subject to regular updates with the trust and the Regions Group team.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

Project: Whether to approve Bodmin College (SAT), **Cornwall** transferring to Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT).

Points raised in discussion:

Finances:

- The financial position of Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT) was discussed. Assurances were provided by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) that CELT would consider the deployment of a School Resources Management Advisor (SRMA) with continued support through regular review with the Trust and the Regions Group team.

Governance:

- The diversity of the CELT Trust Board and the need to strengthen its education expertise especially at primary was discussed. This will be raised with CELT and their plans to mitigate this through future recruitment.

Other:

- The future growth and capacity of CELT was discussed following any decision to bring Bodmin into the trust. This will be subject to review with the Trust and the Regions Group team to ensure that growth is managed.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Jen Blunden was not present and did not receive the papers for this project.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Project: Whether to approve Pool Academy (SAT), **Cornwall** transferring to Athena Learning Trust.

Points raised in discussion:

Finance:

- The financial forecasting of Pool Academy was discussed in detail. Assurances were provided by the ESFA that they will undertake a full review with continuing support through regular review with the Academy and the Trust.

Governance:

- The diversity of the Athena Trust Board was discussed and the governance structure, whilst there are experienced members the need to strengthen education expertise was recommended. This will be raised with the Trust and will be considered as part of the External Review of Governance.

Strategy:

- The future growth plans of the Athena Trust were asked about. It was confirmed that this would be subject to regular update with the Trust and the Regions Group team to ensure that growth is managed.

Other:

- AB members sought clarification on the distance of the school from other academies within the trust.
- Pool Academy considered all options and Athena was best aligned to their vision and values.
- The Trust will ideally look to establish a hub in this area.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Jen Blunden was not present and did not receive the papers for this project.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Project: Whether to approve Tewkesbury School (SAT), **Gloucestershire** transferring to Cabot Learning Federation (CLF).

Points raised in discussion:

Other:

- It was acknowledged that Cabot Learning Federation (CLF) could be perceived to disadvantage local trusts, this was voted and approved by the Tewkesbury Trust Board after consideration of all potential options both local and further afield.
- The Regions Group Team will continue to work closely with all trusts.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Adele Haysom was not present for the decision and did not receive the papers for this project.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Project: Whether to approve Huish Episcopi Academy (SAT), Somerset joining United Learning Trust.

Points raised in discussion:

Finance:

- The financial position of the school was discussed, assurances were provided, and this will be subject to regular review with the ESFA.

Other:

- There was a discussion on introducing United Learning Trust (ULT) into the area, the views of the local community and ULT operating at a distance.
- ULT has three Regional Directors based in the South West, one is currently acting as Interim Head at Huish Episcopi and has had an immediate impact, beginning to address the issues identified.
- The introduction of high performing trusts into the Somerset Local Authority area will introduce capacity and expertise and challenge existing trust performance.
- It was acknowledged that continued strategic engagement with the LA and the Regions Group team is essential to address the concerns of the community and LA.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Ben Antell was not present and did not receive the papers for this project.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Project: Whether to approve The Brunel Academy, **Torbay** (Catch22 Multi Academies Trust Limited) transferring to Special Partnership Trust (SPT).

Points raised in discussion:

Finance:

- The financial position of the Academy and Trust was discussed and the level of investment that will be needed.
- Catch22's financial accounts are not separate from the wider Catch22 charity, and the final reserve position for the school will not be known until the trust closes.
- The funding options will be subject to review by the ESFA and the Regions Group team once this has been finalised.

School Improvement:

- The School Improvement (SI) plans, and capacity of the Trust were discussed.
- The Senior Team have dedicated SI roles across different aspects of SEND and are supported by a newly developed school improvement and inclusion team.
- Although the trust does not have dedicated SEMH schools, all schools in Special Schools Partnership (SPT) have an increasing SEMH profile. The trust is recruiting a head of SEMH.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

** This project was discussed together with The Burton Academy.

Project: Whether to approve The Burton Academy, **Torbay** (Catch22 Multi Academies Trust Limited) transferring to The Thinking Schools Academy Trust (TSAT).

Points raised in discussion:

Finance:

- The financial position of the Academy and Trust was discussed and the level of investment that will be needed.
- Catch22's financial accounts are not separate from the wider Catch22 charity, and the final reserve position for the school will not be known until the trust closes.
- This will be subject to review by the ESFA and the Regions Group team once finalised.

School Improvement:

- The transfer will be the first Alternative Provision (AP) for The Thinking Schools Academy Trust (TSAT) and AB members questioned the support available to the Trust.
- The Trust are planning on recruiting a Behaviour, SEND and AP specialist to their SI team as well as appointing a Trustee with AP experience.
- The Trust does have SEMH experience across their other schools and has committed to enhancing their AP expertise by working with The Rowans.
- The existing presence of TSAT in the area will allow both the school to improve and enhance their relationship with mainstream providers.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

** This project was discussed together with The Brunel Academy.

Project: Whether to approve the following nine academies from Horizon Multi Academy Trust, **Plymouth** transferring to Learning Academies Trust.

- Elburton Primary School, **Plymouth**
- Widewell Primary Academy, **Plymouth**
- Hooe Primary Academy, **Plymouth**
- Pomphlett Primary School, **Plymouth**
- Ford Primary School, **Plymouth**
- Victoria Road Primary, **Plymouth**
- Plaistow Hill Infant and Nursey School, **Plymouth**
- Hyde Park Infants' School, **Plymouth**
- Hyde Park Junior School, **Plymouth**

Points raised in discussion:

Representations:

- The concerns raised were discussed and taken into consideration.

Leadership:

- The leadership structure and the need for a senior person who has clear accountability for the education strategy was discussed.
- The proposals did not include a deputy CEO position, AB members thought there was merit in the trust considering such a position and for that person to have overall responsibility of the trust' School Improvement (SI) strategy and the SI team.
- A mentor for the CEO to provide positive and constructive challenge during the transition was recommended. This has been agreed.

Governance:

- AB members queried whether the proposed governance structure was best practice and would be agreed by a National Leader of Governance (NLG).
- An External Review of Governance was recommended as early as possible following the transfers of the Horizon schools.

Strategy:

- AB members agreed with the disappointment expressed in the representations that the trusts did not take the opportunity to rebrand the new organisation. Members cited the benefits that a change of name could have and would clearly signal to the local community, pupils and staff regarding creation of a new entity with a new culture, vision and ethos.

RD decision: Approved - following subsequent assurances received from both trusts.

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Academy Opening Approved in Principle

List of academies approved to open.

Project: Christ The King Catholic School, Amesbury, **Wiltshire** (The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust)

Points raised in discussion: No questions or concerns were raised.

Opening date 1 March 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: St Mary's Catholic Primary School, **Wiltshire** (The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust)

Points raised in discussion: No questions or concerns were raised.

Opening date 1 March 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Gulworthy Primary Academy, **Devon** (The Learning Academy Partnership)

Points raised in discussion: No questions or concerns were raised.

Opening date 1 March 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Lamerton C of E Academy, **Devon** (The Learning Academy Partnership)

Points raised in discussion: No questions or concerns were raised.

Opening date 1 March 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Mount Tamar School, **Plymouth** (Transforming Futures Multi Academy Trust Limited)

Points raised in discussion: No questions or concerns were raised.

Opening date 1 March 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Sidmouth College, **Devon** (The Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust)

Points raised in discussion: No questions or concerns were raised.

Opening date 1 March 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Banwell Primary School, **North Somerset** (Extend Learning Academies Network)

Points raised in discussion: No questions or concerns were raised.

Opening date 1 February 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Churchill Church of England Primary School, **North Somerset** (Lighthouse Schools Partnership)

Points raised in discussion: No questions or concerns were raised.

Opening date 1 February 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Golden Valley Primary School, **North Somerset** (Lighthouse Schools Partnership)

Points raised in discussion: No questions or concerns were raised.

Opening date 1 February 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Nanpean Community Primary School, **Cornwall** (Truro & Penwith Academy Trust)

Points raised in discussion: No questions or concerns were raised.

Opening date 1 February 2023.

Conflicts: None.

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 Oasis Academy New Oak, **Bristol** (Oasis Community Learning) to increase capacity of its Resource Base from 14 to 28 places.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Project: Whether to approve a significant change application for Oasis Academy Long Cross, **Bristol** (Oasis Community Learning) to increase capacity of its Resource Base from 35 to 50 places.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Project: Whether to approve a retrospective significant change application for Oasis Academy Long Cross, **Bristol** (Oasis Community Learning) to increase capacity by 105 places.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Project: Whether to approve a significant change application for Castle Mead School, **Wiltshire** (The Mead Academy Trust) to increase capacity of its resource base from 20 to 35 places.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

Project: Whether to approve a significant change application for River Mead School, **Wiltshire** (The Mead Academy Trust) to increase capacity of its resource base from 20 to 35 places.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools 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.

Project: Whether to approve Callowell Primary School, **Gloucestershire** joining Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust.

Decision type: Sponsored route

Reason for why it was taken off agenda: Necessary papers were not ready.

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