



Notes of Meeting: North West Advisory Board

Tuesday 7th February

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

Apologies

- Jonathan Nichols

DfE senior civil servants

- SFSO representatives

Representations received

- 1; Discussion to consider Abraham Moss Community School, Manchester, to convert and join The Dean Trust. Converter Academy Order

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

General Discussion Points

- RD provided an update on the launch of the Children's Social Care review and launch of SEND Ofsted Inspections for Local Authorities.

AB member reflections

- AB members reflected on recent strike actions and how this has impacted their schools.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: Park View Primary School, Bury, to convert and join Bury College Education Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board discussed the trust's future growth strategy.
- The board suggested for the trust to review their governance board to identify any overlapping roles.

RD decision: Approved with conditions

Conflicts: None

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

Project: Discussion to consider Abraham Moss Community School, Manchester, to convert and join The Dean Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board discussed the potential risks with the trust's Wigan cluster. Following this discussion, the board agreed that the risks are manageable, but the trust should pause further growth until improvements are made.

RD decision: Approved

Conflicts: None

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

Project: Discussion to consider Fiddlers Lane Community Primary School, Salford, to convert and join Prestolee Multi Academy Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board agreed that this would strengthen the Salford cluster of schools.

RD decision: Approved

Conflicts: None

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

Project: Discussion to consider Plantation Primary School, Knowsley, to convert and join The Rowan Learning Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board were supportive of this proposal.

RD decision: Approved

Conflicts: None

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

Project: Discussion to consider Meols Cop High School, Sefton, to convert and join Southport Learning Trust.

AB discussion:

- Although the board were supportive of the trust's growth and agreed this is a sensible cluster, they require clarity on the trust's finances and the driving factor around the decline, pre and post pandemic.
- The board also agreed that the trust should look to reset their governance board through an external review of governance.

RD decision: Deferred

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust of decision.

Project: Discussion to consider Bedford Primary School, Sefton, to convert and join Southport Learning Trust.

AB discussion:

- Although the board were supportive of the trust's growth and agreed this is a sensible cluster, they require clarity on the trust's finances and the driving factor around the decline, pre and post pandemic.
- The board also agreed that the trust should look to reset their governance board through an external review of governance.

RD decision: Deferred

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust of decision.

Project: Discussion to consider Appley Bridge All Saints C of E Primary School, Lancashire, to convert and join Cidari Education Ltd.

AB discussion:

- The board were supportive of this project but set a condition on the trust to continue with the trust board recruitment of a member who can support with reconfiguring the trust model.

RD decision: Approved with conditions

Conflicts: None

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

Project: Discussion to consider St Bees Village Primary School, Cumbria, to convert and join Changing Lives Learning Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board were supportive of this proposal.

RD decision: Approved

Conflicts: None

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

Project: Discussion to consider Red Gates School, Croydon, to convert and join Pegasus Academy Trust. Agreed to be brought to North West Advisory Board due to a conflict of interest.

AB discussion:

- The board shared concerns regarding the joint leadership of the trust.
- The board recommended that the trust complete an external review of governance to support with the structure of the trust board.
- The board have asked the trust to provide assurances that there are clear lines of accountability.

RD decision: Deferred

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust of decision.

Sponsored Route:

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

Project: Discussion to consider Crosslee Community Primary School, Manchester, converter options.

AB discussion:

- The board were presented with information regarding this project.

RD decision: FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

Conflicts: Karen Burns was not provided with any supportive materials in advance of this meeting nor was she present for this discussion.

Further actions required: N/A

Free School Presumption – Sponsor Approval

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

Project: Discussion on a trust to take forward a Cheshire East Presumption Free School

AB discussion:

- The board were supportive of this decision and recognised the need for a school in this area.

RD decision: Approved

Conflicts: Annette Williams was not provided with any supportive materials in advance of this meeting nor was she present for this discussion.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform trust of decision.

Decisions taken between AB meetings

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

Project: Increase in capacity for Queen Elizabeth Grammar School Penrith, Cumbria.

Decision type: Significant Change

RD decision: Approved

Conflicts: N/A

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform trust of decision.

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