



## Notes of Meeting: North West Advisory Board

17<sup>th</sup> May 2023

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

### DfE senior civil servants

- Jon Howlin, Deputy Director, North West Regions Group
- Mark Taylor, Deputy Director, North West Regions Group

### Representations received

2 received; Sponsored Route; Discussion to consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join Northern Schools Trust:

- Four Oaks Primary School, Liverpool.
- Gateacre School, Liverpool.

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

## **General Discussion Points**

- Regional Director provided an update on the Academies Regulatory and Commissioning Review roundtables, held in the preceding month, and reflected on the national feedback with the board.

## **AB member reflections**

- The board reflected on recent network meetings and general feedback from the sector.

## Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

### Discussion to consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join Cheshire Academies Trust:

- **Rock Ferry Primary School, Wirral.**
- **Woodfall Primary School, Cheshire West and Chester.**

#### **AB discussion:**

- Board members considered the details of this project and did not raise any concerns with the proposal.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

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

### Discussion to consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join Romero Catholic Academy Trust:

- **St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Burnley, Lancashire.**
- **St Edward's Roman Catholic Primary School, Blackburn.**

#### **AB discussion:**

- Board members considered the details of this project and did not raise any concerns with the proposal.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery Officer to inform Trust, Local Authority and Diocese of decision and Academy Order to be sent.

**Discussion to consider the proposal of a new Multi-Academy Trust, Collective Learning Partnership, to form and for the following schools to join:**

- **Ribble Drive Community Primary School, Bury.**
- **Whitefield Community Primary School, Bury.**
- **Cams Lane Primary School, Bury.**
- **Heaton Park Primary School, Bury.**
- **Butterstile Primary School, Bury.**
- **Woodbank Primary School, Bury.**

**AB discussion:**

- The board supported the project recommendation.
- There was a discussion about the need for a new trust in Bury and how it aligned to the published Trust Development Statement for the area.
- Recommendation for School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) to be deployed.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

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

## Sponsored Route:

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

### **Project: Discussion to consider Woodchurch Road Primary School, Wirral, to convert and join Cheshire Academies Trust.**

#### **AB discussion:**

- The board supported the project recommendation, with one condition.
- The board reflected that this conversion would enable the trust to deploy and continue to develop its school improvement approach at primary.
- The board reflected that the trust board will need to consider how the trust board should grow and evolve with the addition of two new schools and any future growth plans.

#### **RD decision:** Approve with conditions:

1. The trust should submit updated financial plans to take account of the three approved projects and SFSO should assure itself that plans are in place to address any financial challenges associated with the trust's planned growth.

**Conflicts:** None

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

### **Project: Discussion to consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join Northern Schools Trust:**

- **Four Oaks Primary School, Liverpool.**
- **Gateacre School, Liverpool.**

#### **AB discussion:**

- The board supported the project recommendation, with two conditions.
- There was a discussion about the contents of the representations received and the board reflected that Regions Group should assure itself that the trust is working effectively with unions and that efforts should be made to build relationships with union representatives at the two schools and more generally in the trust.
- The board reflected that the trust board will need to consider how the trust board should grow and evolve with the addition of two new schools and any future growth plans.
- Recommendation for School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) to be deployed.

#### **RD decision:** Approved with conditions:

1. The trust board should commission an External Review of Governance to shape how the trust board will grow and evolve to reflect future growth.
2. For the trust to submit a 3-year financial plan regarding Gateacre School for ESFA to review.

**Conflicts:** None

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

### **Project: Discussion to consider Blackmoor Park Infant's School, Liverpool, to convert and join Three Saints Academy Trust.**

**AB discussion:**

- The board supported the project recommendation and reflected that the trust board will need to continue to grow and expand its skillset to reflect the size and shape of the trust.
- Recommendation for School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) to be deployed.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

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

### **Project: Discussion to consider Weston Point Community School, Halton, to convert and join Wade Deacon Trust.**

**AB discussion:**

- The board supported the project recommendation.
- The board noted that the trust is expanding its skillset at board level, in particular primary education and finance experience.
- Recommendation for School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) to be deployed.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

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

## **Project: Discussion to consider Overchurch Junior School, Wirral, to convert and join Leading Learners Multi-Academy Trust.**

### **AB discussion:**

- The board supported the project recommendation and reflected that the trust should now focus on building future capacity through strong converter applications.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

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

## **Project: Discussion to consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join Romero Catholic Academy Trust:**

- **Our Lady & St John Catholic College, Blackburn with Darwen.**
- **St Anne's and St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Lancashire.**

### **AB discussion:**

- The board supported the project recommendation but noted the pace of growth at the trust.
- The board advised that we carefully consider future growth projects to ensure the trust is continuing to develop capacity alongside supporting its more vulnerable schools.
- Recommendation for School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) to be deployed.

**RD decision:** Approve with conditions:

1. The trust is asked to share the findings of its governance review and the timeline for progressing the actions to provide additional assurances that governance is developing in line with trust growth.

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery Officer to inform Trust, Local Authority and Diocese of decision and Academy Order to be sent.

**Project: Discussion to consider Bury Secondary PRU Spring Lane School, Bury, sponsor option.**

**AB discussion:**

- The board were provided with an update on the sponsor options for Bury Secondary PRU Spring Lane School, Bolton.

**RD decision:** FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** None.

**Project: Discussion to consider St Stephens CoE Primary School, Bury, sponsor options.**

**AB discussion:**

- The board were provided with an update on the sponsor options for St Stephens CoE Primary School, Bury.

**RD decision:** FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** None.



## Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

**Project: Discussion to consider the transfer of ESSA Foundation Academies Trust, Bolton, to Northern Education Trust.**

**AB discussion:**

- The board were provided with an update on this Trust Change project.

**RD decision:** FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** None.