



Notes of Meeting: North West Advisory Board

12th September 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-Gibson
- Karen Burns
- George Beveridge
- Helen O'Neill
- Annette Williams
- Nic Brindle

Apologies

- Tania Lewyckyj

DfE senior civil servants

- Jon Howlin, Deputy Director, North West Regions Group

Representations received

5 received; Sponsored Route; Discussion to consider sponsor options for the following schools.

- Chesham Primary School, Bury: 4 representations

- Hazlehurst Community Primary School, Bury: 1 representation

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

General Discussion Points

- The Regional Director reflected on the North West region's response to Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) in schools.

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.

Project: Discussion to consider St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Reddish, Stockport, to convert and join Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation.
- The board reflected on general trustee recruitment challenges at the trust and the need to ensure future appointments included individuals with HR and legal experience and expertise.
- The board reflected on the trust's growth strategy and the need to ensure the trust continues to build capacity.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust, Local Authority and Diocese of decision.

Project: Discussion to consider Ridgewood Community High School, Lancashire, to convert and join The Youth Engagement Schools Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation.
- The board reflected on the trust moving into a new area and how the trust intends to establish a 'northern hub'.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: Nic Brindle. Member was not present and did not receive papers for this item.

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

Project: Discussion to consider the proposal of a new Multi-Academy Trust, Synergy Education MAT, to form and for the following schools to join:

- **Highfurlong Special School, Blackpool.**
- **Boundary Primary School, Blackpool.**
- **Stanley Primary School, Blackpool.**

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation, with one condition.
- The board reflected on the levels of academisation in Blackpool and how this new trust fits into the area's trust development statement.
- The board reflected on how the new trust would strengthen special provision in the academy landscape
- The board reflected on the potential growth strategy for the new trust, including in Lancashire.

RD decision: Approve with condition.

1. Trust to provide a financial plan to demonstrate long term stability.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: Discussion to consider Ainsdale St John's Church of England Primary School, Sefton, to convert and join Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation.
- SFSO reflected that they are comfortable with the trust's financial position.
- The board reflected that the trust has grown and matured over time and is in a positive position to take on a good converter.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust, Local Authority and Diocese of decision.

Sponsored Route:

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

Project: Discussion to consider St Francis RC Primary School, Manchester, to convert and join Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board supported the project recommendation.
- Recommendation for a School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) to be deployed to support plans for restructuring and growth.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust, Local Authority and Diocese of decision.

Project: Discussion to consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join Northern Education Trust:

- **Chesham Primary School, Bury.**
- **Hazlehurst Community Primary School, Bury.**

AB discussion:

- The projects returned to the Advisory Board after a discussion at July's Advisory Board meeting.
- The board reflected in detail on the trust options, the rationale for the options and the evidence used to inform the recommendation.
- There was a discussion about the contents of the representations received, and the board were informed that further discussions had taken place with the Local Authority prior to the meeting to inform them of the recommendation and reasoning.
- The board discussed the recommended trust's strength in supporting disadvantaged schools, particularly regarding leadership and governance, with a notable impact on schools they were supporting.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: Discussion to consider Huxley CofE Primary School, Cheshire West and Chester, to convert and join Cheshire Diocesan Academies Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board members considered the details of the project and raised no concerns in relation to the proposal.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust, Local Authority and Diocese of decision.

Decisions taken between AB meetings:

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

Project: St James CE Primary School, Tameside, for establishing a 10-place resourced provision at the school

Decision type: Significant change

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: Mereside Primary Academy, Blackpool, for removal of a resourced provision/ SEN unit

Decision type: Significant change

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: Chapelford Village Primary School, Warrington, for a temporary capacity increase

Decision type: Significant change

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None.

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

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