



## Notes of meeting: South West

Date of meeting – 11 November 2024

### Attendance

AB members who sent their apologies for the meeting but sent in their comments on agenda items, are listed under the apologies section. These members' views are reflected in the discussions below, unless the AB member(s) declared a conflict of interest.

### Regional Director (RD) chair

- Lucy Livings, Regional Director, South West Region

### Advisory Board (AB) members

- Steve Savory
- Stuart Ingram
- Adele Hayson
- Mark Ducker
- Jackie Fieldwick
- Margaret Simmons-Bird
- Rachel Howie

### Guests

- None

### Apologies

- Jennifer Blunden

### DfE senior civil servants

- Jessica Trahar, Interim Deputy Director, South West Region

### Representations received

- None

When received in time, representations are shared in advance of the meeting with all attendees, who considered them alongside the corresponding item.

## General discussion points

- Lucy Livings, RD presented to the board on the Regions Group focus and the Government priorities.
- AB members shared local intelligence from the sector at this time and provided insight on the challenges being faced.

## Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

### **Project: An application from Kewstoke Primary School, North Somerset to convert and become an academy and join Wessex Learning Trust.**

**Representations received:** \*\* all projects for Wessex Learning Trust (academy conversion and trust change) were discussed together.

- No representations were made for this project.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

### **Project: An application from St Cuthbert's Junior School, Somerset to convert and become an academy and join Wessex Learning Trust.**

**Representations received:** \*\* all projects for Wessex Learning Trust (academy conversion and trust change) were discussed together.

- No representations were made for this project.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

### **Project: An application from Martock CofE VA Primary School, Somerset to convert and become an academy and join Bath and Wells Diocesan Multi Academy Trust.**

**Representations received:**

- No representations were made for this project.

**AB discussion:**

- Martock is a CofE Voluntary Aided school, this is a voluntary conversion. The school was rated at their last Ofsted inspection as continues to be a good school, but it is

indicated that the school may not retain at its next full inspection - improvement is needed in curriculum delivery and attainment outcomes.

- Regions Group have undertaken an assessment using the High-Quality Trust Framework and are supportive of the school's application to join Bath and Wells MAT (BWMAT).
- BWMAT has experience in working with schools with similar characteristics and delivering on outcomes. They can offer extensive support in school improvement areas, curriculum development and progression.
- The financial position of Martock was raised, the trust is aware and will be working closely with the school.
- The School Improvement model of the trust was discussed. Regions Group provided assurances, and this will be discussed at the trust review meetings.
- The growth strategy of the trust was discussed, and Regions Group will make future growth decisions based on the High-Quality Trust Framework.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

## Significant changes to an open academy

Points discussed in relation to significant changes

### **Project: An application for Abbot Alphege and Weston All Saints CofE Primary School, Bath and North East Somerset (The Partnership Trust) to make the following change:**

- To amalgamate Abbot Alphege Academy and Weston All Saints Primary School and form one entity on the site of Weston All Saints Primary School, known as Weston All Saints Primary School.

**Representations received:**

- No representations were made for this project.

**AB discussion:**

- Abbot Alphege Academy (AAA) is a 210-place mainstream primary school that was opened through the presumption free school route in 2017. This was in response to anticipated increases in student numbers due to the building of around 300 houses in the local area. Projected numbers of students did not materialise.
- The Partnership Trust began exploring the option of merging Abbot Alphege Academy with Weston All Saints Primary School – a local school within the trust with a similar Christian character.
- The trust has worked with both the Local Authority and the Diocese of Bath and Wells who are in support of this proposal and are working together to ensure the best outcomes for all pupils.
- The School Improvement model and growth strategy for The Partnership Trust was discussed and this will be reviewed by the Regions Group team and discussed with the trust as part of regular strategic conversations.

- The Hospital Education Reintegration Services (HERS) currently occupies the whole top floor of the AAA school building. The Local Authority have committed to HERS to remain in situ at the school building for the remainder of the academic year 2024/25, this is the preference for both students and staff at the HERS provision.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

## Trust Changes

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

### **Project: A proposal for St Cuthbert's Church of England Academy Infants and Pre-School to transfer from St Cuthbert's Church of England Academy Infants and Pre-School (SAT), Somerset to Wessex Learning Trust**

**Representations received:** \*\* all projects for Wessex Learning Trust (academy conversion and trust change) were discussed together.

- No representations were made for this project.

#### **AB discussion:**

- St Cuthbert's Junior School, this is a voluntary conversion. The school was rated good at their last Ofsted inspection September 2023.
- St Cuthbert's Infants and Pre-School, the school was rated good at their last Ofsted inspection June 2023.
- Kewstoke Primary School is in a small village in the Weston-Super-Mare constituency. The school holds a good Ofsted judgement and is the last remaining local authority-maintained school within North Somerset.
- Wessex Learning Trust (WLT) was set up in June 2016, as a sponsor trust and has 17 schools, in Somerset and North Somerset. The trust has experience in working with small schools and their communities.
- The trust considers that all the schools will fit with their demographic, values and ethos and are committed to working towards local needs, reducing preventable exclusions, improving attendance, and closing the disadvantage gap.
- Regions Group have assessed the applications against the High-Quality Trust Framework and are supportive of the schools joining Wessex Learning Trust.
- The Trust's School Improvement model was discussed and the importance of this developing and being secure as the trust grows was highlighted. Regions Group provided assurances that this will be reviewed by the Regions Group team and discussed with the trust as part of regular strategic conversations.
- The trust is currently undergoing an external review of governance.
- The financial position of the trust was discussed, and the Education and Skills Funding Agency and Regions Group will work with WLT.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

## **Academy opening approved in principle**

List of academies approved to open the following month.

*All of the projects have gone through previous Advisory Board meetings for consideration and discussion. These projects are checked for any legal inconsistencies to ensure they are in line with departmental requirements and that all conditions are met.*

### **Project: Evercreech CoE Primary School, Somerset (Preston Primary Academy Trust).**

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

Opening date 1 December 2024.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

### **Project: Lovington CoE Primary School, Somerset (Preston Primary Academy Trust).**

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

Opening date 1 December 2024.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

### **Project: Westbury Leigh CofE Primary School, Wiltshire (Palladian Trust).**

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

Opening date 1 December 2024.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

### **Project: Beckington Church of England First School, Somerset (The Bath and Wells Diocesan Academies Trust).**

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

Opening date 1 December 2024.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

**Project: Mells Church of England First School, Somerset (The Bath and Wells Diocesan Academies Trust).**

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

Opening date 1 December 2024.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

**Project: St Nicholas Church of England VC Primary School, Bromham, Wiltshire (Equa Mead Learning Trust).**

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

Opening date 1 December 2024.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

**Project: Elmhurst Junior School, Somerset (Wessex Learning Trust).**

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

Opening date 1 December 2024.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

## **Decisions taken between AB meetings**

List of decisions taken outside of AB meetings.

## **Significant changes to an open academy**

**Project: Treverbyn Academy, Cornwall (Aspire Academy Trust) to make the following change:**

- to change the age range from 4-11 to 2-11 by closing a separate nursery on site and locate to the Treverbyn Academy site.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

**Project: Clyst Vale Community College, Devon (Clyst Vale Academy Trust SAT) to make the following change:**

- to change the age range from 11-18 to 11-16 removing the sixth form provision.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

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