



Department
for Education

Notes of Meeting: South East Advisory Board

Date of meeting – 22 February 2024

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

- Dame Kate Dethridge

Advisory Board (AB) members

- Sarah Bennett
- Dame Yasmin Bevan
- Sarah Brown
- Sir Andrew Carter
- Stuart Gardner
- Paul James
- Claire Lowe
- Sue Samson MBE

DfE senior civil servants

- Paul Schofield, Deputy Director South East Regions Group

Representations received

- No representations were made for any items discussed at this meeting.

General Discussion Points

- A temperature check was completed for the region.

Converter Academy Order

Project: To discuss the application for Kings International College to join Bourne Education Trust, Surrey

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed the governance structure of Bourne Education Trust.
- It was noted there was no primary expertise on the trust board, however the trust has indicated they will be appointing someone to the board with this educational expertise.
- The RD was concerned that no consultation had taken place and so would like this to be completed before confirming final approval.
- RD was happy to approve in principle subject to the consultation.

RD decision: Approve with conditions:

- Consultation to take place and results to be brought to RD for review before final approval of conversion.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust and local authority of the RD decision.

Converter Academy Order

Project: To discuss the application for St Pauls CofE (Aided) Primary School to join The Good Shepherd Trust, Surrey.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed the falling roll of the school and whether this would cause a problem for the trust. It was noted that the local authority will be looking to reduce the capacity of the school in due course.
- AB members discussed the trust's capacity for school improvement, highlighting that the school Improvement plan could be stronger, however did feel that the school would be a capacity giver to the trust.
- AB members discussed potential timeframes of this school and the other pipeline schools joining the trust.
- The RD decided that more information was needed from the trust on the school improvement offer across its existing academies, specifically the actions that the trust has been taking and the impact of these, as well as information on who the people are doing the work, and their experience.

RD decision: Defer.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust, Diocese and local authority of the RD decision.

Converter Academy Order

Project: To discuss the application for Holy Family Catholic Primary School to join St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust, Slough.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed the finances and governance structure at St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust.
- AB members discussed the local context in Slough and the educational needs in the area.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust, diocese and local authority of the RD decision.

Discussion – Not For Decision

Project: To discuss the application by Bracknell Forest LA to revoke the dAO for College Hall PRU.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed the request from College Hall's Management Committee to revoke the academy order due to the financial viability of the PRU.
- The AB members noted that the LA will need to carry out a formal consultation on the closure of the PRU before a final decision can be made on the academy order being revoked.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school and local authority of the discussion.

Trust Change

Project: To discuss the application for Ousedale School (SAT) Milton Keynes to transfer to E-ACT.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed E-ACT's capacity due to the trust having 9 other schools in the pipeline. It was confirmed to the AB that the trust is looking at adapting their central systems to aid the transfers.

- AB members were cautious of the transfer as this would be the trust's first school in Milton Keynes, however the members reflected it would be positive to develop in the area and the school would be a capacity giver.
- The performance results of the schools currently in EACT were discussed in the context of how this would benefit Ousedale School.
- AB members discussed E-ACT's governance structure.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Sarah Bennett. Personal connection to Ousedale school since 2018 to present. Papers issued, excluded this item and Sarah left the room during the discussion.

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust and local authority of the RD decision

Converter Academy Orders

Project: To discuss the application from Hangleton Primary School to join Eko Trust, Brighton and Hove.

Project: To discuss the application from Benfield Primary School to join Eko Trust, Brighton and Hove.

AB discussion:

- AB members were happy with the returning paper, noting the previous questions had been answered.
- The RD updated the AB on her positive reflections following a visit to EKO Trust.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the schools, trust and local authority of the RD decision.

Converter Academy Orders

Project: To discuss the application from Crawley Down Village Church of England School to join Hurst Education Trust, West Sussex.

Project: To discuss application from Holy Trinity Church of England School to join Hurst Education Trust, West Sussex.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed the finances of Crawley Down Village and Holy Trinity.
- AB members discussed the Hurst Education Trust's school improvement track record.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust, diocese and local authority of the RD decision.

Significant Change

Project: To discuss the application from the University of Chichester Academy Trust to merge Langstone Infants and Junior schools, Portsmouth.

AB discussion:

- AB members discussed the expertise on University of Chichester Academy Trust's Board.
- AB members discussed the performance of the current schools within the trust.
- The RD recommended that the trust update their articles if they wish to grow in the future.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Sue Samson MBE. Previously CEO of University of Chichester Academy Trust.

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust and local authority of the RD decision.

Trust Change

Project: To discuss the transfer of College Central (Hastings) from the Sabden Trust, East Sussex.

AB discussion:

- The AB members discussed potential trusts for College Central to transfer to.
- The trust were seeking a transfer following discussions with the LA.
- AB members discussed the distance between the trusts and the school.
- AB members indicated that London and South East Academy Trust's high quality and inclusive education, and school improvement record, in comparison was stronger.
- AB members discussed the local authority's funding model and potential challenges with this.

RD decision: Approve - London and South East Academy Trust as the preferred trust.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Inform the school, trusts and local authority of the RD decision.

Decisions taken between AB meetings

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

Project: Cuxton Community Infant School, Medway, The Primary First Trust

Decision type: Significant Change - Age range change for to include nursery provision.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: None.

Project: Wayfield Primary School, Medway, The Primary First Trust

Decision type: Significant Change - Age range change to increase from 1FE to 2FE (210 to 420 capacity).

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: None.

Project: Westover Primary School, Portsmouth, Hamwic Education Trust

Decision type: Significant Change – to add nursery provision for 30 places to commence in September 2024.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: None.

Academy Opening Approved in Principle

List of academies approved to open on 1 March 2024

- **Project:** Chantry Community Primary School, **East Sussex**, joining Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust.
- **Project:** Cranleigh Church of England Primary School, **Surrey**, The Good Shepherd Trust
- **Project:** Crondall Primary School, **Hampshire**, Weydon Multi Academy Trust
- **Project:** Kennel Lane School, **Bracknell Forest**, The Corvus Learning Trust
- **Project:** Newick Church of England Primary School, **East Sussex**, Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust