

## Notes of Meeting: North West Advisory Board

12<sup>th</sup> March 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

- Vicky Beer (RD)

### Advisory Board (AB) members

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

### Apologies

- Anita Ghidotti-Gibson
- Annette Williams

### DfE senior civil servants

- Jon Howlin, Deputy Director, North West Regions Group

### Representations received

None.

## **General Discussion Points**

- There was a general discussion about any concerns and updates from the AB member's trusts and regions.

## **AB member reflections**

- None.

## Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

### **Project: To discuss and consider Hebden Green Community School, Cheshire West and Chester, to convert and join Cheshire Academies Trust**

#### **AB discussion:**

- The board discussed the potential for the trust to form a SEND hub and how Hebden Green would be able to support other schools in this space.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

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

### **Project: To discuss and consider Oakdene Primary School, St Helens, to convert and join Wade Deacon Trust**

#### **AB discussion:**

- The board reflected on the range of expertise on the trust board and the steps the trust may wish to take to bring in additional expertise as it grows.
- The board suggested additional financial information that the team and the Regional Director might wish to gather from the trust as part of the decision making process.
- The decision was made to defer in order to review the additional information, with members to be updated on a decision between meetings at the next meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April.

**RD decision:** Defer

**Conflicts:** None

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

### **Project: To discuss and consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join The People's Learning Trust:**

- **Bidston Avenue Primary School, Wirral**
- **Meadow Community Primary School, Cheshire West and Chester**
- **Wincham Community Primary School, Cheshire West and Chester**
- **Oldfield Primary School, Cheshire West and Chester**
- **The Bridge Short Stay School, Cheshire West and Chester**

**AB discussion:**

- The board reflected positively on the proposal but suggested a range of further information that the team and the Regional Director might wish to gather from the trust as part of the decision making process. This information included further detail on the financial impact on the trust should the schools join, specific detail on the school improvement, experience that the trust has and will secure to support the schools and specific detail on the accountable arrangements for the schools once they join the trust.

**RD decision:** Defer

**Conflicts:** None

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

**Project: To discuss and consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join The One Community Trust:**

- Locking Stumps Primary School, Warrington
- Culcheth Primary School, Warrington
- Brook Acre Primary School, Warrington

**AB discussion:**

- The board reflected on the range of expertise on the trust board and the steps the trust may wish to take to bring in additional expertise as it grows.

**RD decision:** Approve with one condition

1. A conversation with the trust to better understand its recruitment plans for the trust board as it grows.

**Conflicts:** None.

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

**Project: To discuss and consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join Pope Francis Catholic Multi Academy Trust:**

- Our Lady of Wolsingham Primary School, Sefton
- St Edmunds & St Thomas Catholic Primary School, Sefton
- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, Sefton
- St Marys Catholic Primary School, Sefton

**AB discussion:**

- The board reflected positively on the proposal, the early improvements being seen in the schools within Pope Francis and the detailed thinking the trust has done on the proposal. There was a discussion about the steps the trust is planning to take to bring in primary expertise and experience to support the schools once they join the trust, including from the schools themselves. The decision was made to defer in order to review the additional information, with members to be updated on a decision between meetings at the next meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April.

**RD decision:** Defer

**Conflicts:** None

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

**Project: To discuss and consider Overleigh St Mary's CofE Primary, Cheshire West and Chester, to convert and join Chester Diocesan Academies Trust**

**AB discussion:**

- The board reflected on the trust's progress with a school they have sponsored and its experience with school improvement.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

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

**Project: To discuss and consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join St Teresa of Calcutta Catholic MAT:**

- **Mount St Joseph, Bolton**
- **St Teresa's RC Primary School, Salford**
- **St Peter and St Paul RC Primary School, Bolton**
- **St Teresa's RC Primary School, Bolton**

**AB discussion:**

- The board reflected on the progress with recent sponsored projects and the trust's capacity and capability to support and improve its schools.
- The board discussed the trust's move into Salford Local Authority and the expectation that other schools will follow St Teresa's RC Primary School into the trust.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None.

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

**Project: To discuss and consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join Mater Ecclesiae Catholic MAT**

- **Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Lancashire**
- **Alston Lane Catholic Primary School, Lancashire**

**AB discussion:**

- The board discussed the need to clarify the responsibilities linked to current Service Level Agreements.
- The board reflected on the support that has been provided by the mentorship of another trust, and the confidence of the CEO.
- The board recommended the trust provides clarity on strategy and timescales to support future growth.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** Helen O'Neill – due to the member's trust providing school improvement support to Mater Ecclesiae Catholic MAT.

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

## Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

### **Project: To discuss the transfer of Over Hall Community School, Cheshire West and Chester, to Cheshire Academies Trust**

#### **AB discussion:**

- This project was discussed alongside the converter project Hebden Green Community Primary School.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

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

### **Project: To discuss the transfer of Range High School, Sefton, to Southport Learning Trust**

#### **AB discussion:**

- The board were informed that the trust will engage in an external review of governance to work through independence from the local governing body chairs.

**RD decision:** Approve with one condition.

1. Trust to share their model of governance and ensure they're getting independent quality assurance.

**Conflicts:** None

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

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