



**Nexus MAT Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday 23 October 2024
5.00 pm – 7.30 pm at Nexus HQ**

Present:	Role:	Initials:
Rachel Potts	Director/Member & Chair of Trust Board of Directors	Chair
Sue Shelley	Director & Vice Chair of Trust Board of Directors	SS
Gillian Askew (via Teams)	Director	GA
Phil Bradley	Director	PB
Naomi Cooper	Director	NC
Mark Greenwood (via Teams)	Director	MG
Tina Havenhand	Director	TH
Victoria Morris	Director	VM
Also Present:		
Warren Carratt	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Joel Hardwick	Assistant CEO – Corporate Affairs	JH
Joanna Hedge (for Item 5)	HR Business Partner	JHe
Renata Robins	Governance Clerk	Clerk
Karen Smith	Chief Finance Officer	CFO
Jacky Tattershall	Assistant CEO – QA & Improvement	JT
Apologies:		
Rosey Andrassy	Advisor	RA
Colin Bradley	Director	CB
Ray Palmer	Director	RPa
No Apologies:		

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	ACTIONS
<p>1.1 Welcome & receive apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received for RA, CB and RPa.</p>	
<p>1.2 To accept apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were accepted for RA, CB and RPa.</p>	
2. ITEMS FOR AOB	
<p>Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered</p> <p>2.1 Resignation of NJ from the Board. 2.2 Procurement podcast. 2.3 End of year celebration.</p>	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS	
<p>3.1 Individual Directors to declare any personal, business/governance interests on any item on the agenda</p> <p>CEO declared that he, CFO, JH and JT had an interest in Items 5 and 13 on the agenda and would therefore leave the meeting for these items.</p>	
4. NEXUS MAT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES	
<p>4.1 To approve the minutes of the following meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust Board Meeting held on Wednesday 17 July 2024. <p>The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.</p>	
<p>4.2 Review of Action Tracker</p> <p>Action Tracker was reviewed and updated as appropriate.</p> <p><u>Hilltop Big Build Capital Scheme Update</u></p> <p>The Directors were pleased to hear from JH that over 90% of the build funding had been secured from contractors. Initially, JH indicated a January 2025 start date, but the work had been moved up to begin at half term and would run in phases throughout the academic year. This should minimise the need for student relocation, though additional space at Forest View was available, if required.</p> <p><u>Procurement Pipeline/Policy</u></p> <p>The draft revised Procurement Policy was initially planned for the November Board meeting. However, with the procurement regulations now delayed from pre-Christmas to January 2025, JH recommended postponing any updates until the new regulations were published to ensure alignment. Therefore, any proposed changes to the policy would be deferred to the April Board meeting.</p>	

<p>Action: Deferred until 30 April 2025 Board meeting for approval.</p>	<p>Action: JH 30/05/2025</p>
<p>4.3 Matters arising from the Minutes</p> <p>None raised.</p>	
<p>5. EXECUTIVE PAY SCALE REVIEW REPORT – TO TAKE A DECISION</p>	
<p>Report circulated in advance.</p> <p>JH attended for Item 5 on behalf of the report author, Michelle Smith (HR Manager), who was unable to be present.</p> <p>JH took the Directors through the report and invited questions.</p> <p>Chair asked for clarity on the current Band 3 CEO scale, that there was no calculated scale and if the 5.5% pay rise award had been incorporated into the figures?</p> <p>JH confirmed that there was no published Band 3 scale and that the pay rise award had been incorporated into the figures.</p> <p>Following a robust discussion, Directors unanimously approved the recommendations proposed in the Executive Pay Scale Review Report, under <u>2. Recommendation(s) for decision(s)</u>, namely, point 2.1 in its entirety including the proposals in 2.1.1, 2.1.2. and 2.1.3.</p>	<p>Action: MS 24/10/2024</p>
<p>6. ACCOUNTING OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24 – TO TAKE A DECISION</p>	
<p>CEO explained that the report had been discussed in detail by the Directors at their Development Day in September.</p> <p>Approval to publish the report was unanimously given by the Board.</p>	
<p>7. WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT STATEMENT 2023-24 - TO TAKE A DECISION</p>	
<p>CEO explained that the statement had been discussed in detail by the Directors at their Development Day in September.</p> <p>GA questioned whether the goal to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030, outlined on page 9, should be revisited and updated?</p> <p>The CEO responded that since the target was aligned with the Strategic Business Plan, it would be prudent to reassess it during the plan's scheduled five-year review in 2025.</p> <p>The statement was accepted unanimously by the Board.</p>	
<p>8. SCHOOLS 2023-24 ATTAINMENT AND OUTCOMES REPORT - TO RECEIVE AND SCRUTINISE</p>	

<p>JT introduced the report, noting that it was authored by Becky Allard, who now leads on assessment. JT highlighted an improving outlook and directed the Directors' attention to the data on page 2 for English and page 4 for Maths.</p> <p>The Chair asked whether the report, including trend data, would be presented to the Board annually?</p> <p>JT confirmed this would be the case.</p> <p>Following thorough scrutiny of the report, the Directors received and thanked JT and Becky Allard for its comprehensiveness and expressed their anticipation for receiving trend data in future years.</p>	
<p>9. TRUST TRANSFORMATION EFFICIENCIES REPORT – TO RECEIVE AND SCRUTINISE</p>	
<p>JH opened the report by praising GA's expertise, connections and Lana Stoyles's dedication to advancing the Trust's procurement strategy. JH highlighted significant cost savings over the past 18–24 months and the Trust's elevated reputation in the field.</p> <p>GA described procurement as an evolving journey, noting stronger partnerships between the procurement team and schools. This shift had moved procurement from a restrictive role to that of a trusted advisor, focused on collaboration and shared goals. Governance remained essential but was balanced with openness and support.</p> <p>GA also mentioned Nexus's rising profile with Lana recently serving on a Department for Education panel. This visibility supported broader goals, like enhancing student employability and fulfilling the Trust's civic responsibilities. GA emphasised that while this progress was a team effort, Lana's dedication and the Trust's support were key to positioning the Trust for continued success.</p> <p>The Directors received the report with appreciation for JH's work. The Chair highlighted the positive impact of seeing procurement aligned closely with the Trust's educational and transformational objectives.</p>	
<p>10. STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE REPORT – TO RECEIVE AND SCRUTINISE</p>	
<p>The CEO introduced the report and highlighted the key points for Directors' information and was pleased to announce that there was still increased interest from governing boards regarding conversions which were being explored; as well as potential merger interest shown by one or two multi-academy trust chief executives in exploring merger opportunities.</p> <p>The report was received and scrutinised.</p>	
<p>11. P12 BUDGET MONITORING – TO RECEIVE AND SCRUTINISE</p>	
<p>Report previously circulated and had already been discussed in detail by the Finance & Infrastructure Committee.</p> <p>The CFO introduced this item, noting that it differed to a normal monthly report as it looked at the actuals for the whole year for 2023-2024. It was reported that the year-</p>	

<p>end position was better than forecast with an in-year surplus of 4.5% of the revenue budget. There was a carry forward amount of 13.7% into 2024-25 which was just below the reserve policy 15%.</p> <p>The report was received and scrutinised.</p>	
<p>11.1 P12 Cash Flow Report – To receive and scrutinise</p> <p>Received and scrutinised.</p>	
<p>11.2 P12 Balance Sheet Report - To receive and scrutinise</p> <p>Received and scrutinised.</p>	
<p>11.3 External Audit Plan 2023-24 – To take a decision</p> <p>The CFO provided a brief summary of the external auditors’ role, outlining their current audit plan, which closely followed last year’s structured approach. Given the rigorous nature of external audits, there was limited flexibility in the process. However, the CFO welcomed any confirmations or feedback to ensure that all Directors were comfortable with the plan and its scope.</p> <p>GA queried if Appendix G in the Audit Planning Pack was completed by the auditors or Nexus staff? CEO confirmed that he, as Accounting Officer, was responsible for its completion.</p> <p>GA raised a question regarding item 7 under "Fund Details and Spending." The item referenced the government’s procurement policies as "previously (OJEU) Official Journal of the European Union," though GA pointed out that OJEU still applied until officially replaced. GA questioned the wording, noting it as technically incorrect and requesting clarification from Forrester Boyd? Action: CFO agreed to query the anomaly with Forrester Boyd.</p> <p>The External Audit Plan 2023-24 was unanimously approved by the Board.</p>	<p>Action: CFO 24/10/2024</p>
<p>11.4 Trustee Questionnaire- For information</p> <p>The Trustee Questionnaire was completed by former chair Andy Child MBE back in July, on behalf of the Board as previously agreed, and circulated.</p> <p>Directors received the Trustee Questionnaire for information.</p>	
<p>12. CORE SCHOOLS BUDGET GRANT – FORMULA PROPOSAL – TO TAKE A DECISION</p>	
<p>The CFO presented Item 12 for Directors to take a decision on the allocation methodologies for CSBG allocation. Although three allocation options were modelled, Option 1 was recommended by officers for Directors to approve, which redistributed the CSBG grant within Local Authorities, based on each school’s top-up funding.</p>	

<p>Directors unanimously approved Option 1 as the fairest allocation methodology for CSBG.</p>	
<p>13. CEO & CFO APPRAISALS -VERBAL FEEDBACK</p>	
<p>The Appraisal Panel provided verbal feedback to the Directors regarding the CEO's and CFO's appraisals. Directors were informed that the full appraisal documentation was available with HR should they wish to review it.</p> <p>The Directors acknowledged and noted the verbal feedback provided.</p>	
<p>14. RISK REGISTER – TO RECEIVE AND SCRUTINISE</p>	
<p>The CEO presented the Risk Register and drew Directors' attention to the fact that there were no major changes since the last time it was presented to the Board. Questions were invited.</p> <p>PB referenced page 10 and inquired about the assurance model, specifically regarding the accuracy of the Academy's self-assessment. Having met with Joanne Cliff earlier in the week, PB was also looking for the safeguarding audit currently underway and wondered if it could serve as an additional source of assurance?</p> <p>The CEO clarified that the detailed reports officers receive do not cover the School Performance Scrutiny Board's activities. Directors' primary source of assurance comes from the minutes of the School Performance Scrutiny Board, which provide confirmation that audit and review activities are effectively in place. The aim here is to communicate to Directors the assurance framework rather than to delve into the management-level details of these activities.</p> <p>The Risk Register was received and scrutinised.</p>	
<p>15. POLICY REVIEW REPORT – TO TAKE A DECISION</p>	
<p>The CEO explained that the policies in the report had been scheduled for review or updated due to a change in context.</p>	
<p>15.1 The Health & Safety Policy was subject to significant re-write and was therefore attached in full as an appendix.</p> <p>SS queried on page 13 – Induction – “ their induction training was provided within one week, ...” and suggested using wording like “upon commencement”?</p> <p>Action: JH to make the necessary amendment to the wording under Induction.</p>	<p>Action: JH 24/10/2024</p>
<p>Directors voted unanimously to accepted the changes made to the Trust policies as outlined in Section 3 of the report.</p> <p>Action: JH to issue a policy briefing to inform the workforce on the policy updates.</p>	<p>Action: JH 24/10/2024</p>

<p>16. CHAIR FOR ACADEMY COUNCIL CHAIRS FORUM ON 20 NOVEMBER – TO TAKE A DECISION</p>	
<p>The Chair indicated that she would be available to attend the forum on 20 November. Before any decision was to be made about cancelling the meeting, the three non-Nexus Chairs should be contacted to see if they would be attending.</p> <p>Action: Clerking Services to determine if the Academy Council Chairs from Abbey, Heatherwood and Willows schools would be in attendance.</p>	<p>Action: Clerking Services 24/10/2024</p>
<p>17. DIRECTOR RESIGNATION AND APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR OF FINANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE – TO TAKE A DECISION</p>	
<p>Following NJ's resignation from the Board, the CEO informed Directors that SS had agreed to Chair the Finance & Infrastructure Committee for the remainder of the academic year with GA taking over as Chair for 2025-26.</p> <p>Directors unanimously approved the appointment of SS as Chair of the Finance & Infrastructure Committee for 2024-25 and GA as Chair for 2025-26.</p> <p>Action: Clerking Services to facilitate the necessary amendments and GIAS updates.</p>	<p>Action: Clerking Services 24/10/2024</p>
<p>18. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR OF COPPICE SCHOOL ACADEMY COUNCIL – TO TAKE A DECISION</p>	
<p>The CEO informed the meeting that Paul Burns had stepped down as Chair of Coppice School Academy Council and the CEO recommended Joanne Cliff, Executive Assurance Partner for the vacant post. JC had previously indicated that she would like to expand her knowledge of the local academy function and was very clear that her role would be to act as a facilitator of discussion and to bring people in.</p> <p>Directors unanimously approved the appointment of Joanne Cliff as Chair of Coppice School Academy Council.</p> <p>Action: Clerking Services to facilitate the necessary amendments and GIAS updates.</p>	<p>Action: Clerking Services 24/10/2024</p>
<p>19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p>	
<p>19.1 2.1 Resignation of NJ from the Board</p> <p>Following the resignation of NJ from the Board, the Chair and CEO suggested a 4.00pm pre-meet over refreshments at the 18 December meeting for the Board to acknowledge his tenure.</p> <p>Action: CEO took to invite NJ and, if acceptable, to extend the invitation to the three Directors that left in the summer – AC, SB and PC.</p>	<p>Action: CEO/ Clerking Services 24/10/2024</p>
<p>19.2 2.2 Procurement Podcast</p> <p>GA directed the Directors to a procurement podcast that she, MG and Lana Stoyles had produced the day before, sharing the link in the live chat - https://www.buzzsprout.com/2002384/episodes The podcast aimed to highlight</p>	

the impact of procurement in education and to inspire fellow practitioners to approach procurement creatively. GA welcomed any feedback on the podcast.	
19.3 2.3 End of Year Celebration The Chair reminded Directors about the end of year celebration on Friday 18 July 2025 and stated that a £10 deposit was due in by Friday, 25 October to secure a place.	
20. REVIEW OF RISK	
To consider any new risks identified during the meeting for referral to Trust Committees None.	
21. CONFIDENTIALITY	
To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting None.	
22. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS	

Wednesday 27 November 2024	17:00-19:30	Teams
Wednesday 11 December 2024	17:00-19:30	Teams
Wednesday 18 December 2024	17:00-19:30	Nexus HQ
Monday 13 January 2025	17:30-19:00	Annual General Meeting - Nexus HQ/Teams
Wednesday 29 January 2025	17:00-19:30	Teams
Wednesday 26 February 2025	17:00-19:30	Nexus HQ
Wednesday 26 March 2025	17:00-19:30	Teams
Wednesday 30 April 2025	17:00-19:30	Nexus HQ
Wednesday 21 May 2025	17:00-19:30	Teams
Wednesday 25 June 2025	17:00-19:30	Nexus HQ
Wednesday 23 July 2025	17:00-19:30	Nexus HQ

Minutes approved.

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE