



## Nexus MAT Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday 22 November 2023 5.00 pm – 7.30 pm via Teams

<b>Attendees:</b>		
Andrew Child MBE	Director/Member & Chair of Trust Board of Directors	Chair
Rachel Potts	Director/Member & Vice Chair of Trust Board of Directors	RP
Steve Booth	Director	SB
Colin Bradley	Director	CB
Peter Castleton	Director	PC
Naveen Judah	Director	NJ
Sue Shelley	Director	SS
Ray Palmer	Director	RPa
Rosey Andrassy	Adviser	RA
Victoria Morris	Adviser	VM
<b>Also Present:</b>		
Joel Hardwick	Assistant CEO – Corporate Affairs	JH
Karen Smith	Chief Finance Officer	KS
Jacky Tattershall	Assistant CEO – Quality Assurance and Improvement	JT
Renata Robins	Governance Clerk	Clerk
<b>Apologies:</b>		
Warren Carratt	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Tina Havenhand	Director	TH
Mark Greenwood	Director	MG
Gillian Askew	Director	GA

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	ACTIONS
<p>1.1 Welcome &amp; receive apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received for CEO, TH, and GA.</p>	
<p>1.2 To accept apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were accepted for CEO, TH, and GA.</p>	
2. ITEMS FOR AOB	
<p>Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered</p> <p>Items noted below.</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>None declared.</p>	
4. NEXUS MAT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES	
<p>4.1 To approve the minutes of the following meetings: Trust Board Meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023</p> <p>The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.</p>	
<p>4.2 Review of Action Tracker</p> <p>Action Tracker was updated as appropriate.</p>	
<p>4.3 Matters arising from the Minutes</p> <p>None raised.</p>	
5. DRAFT MAT LEVEL DASHBOARD – TO TAKE A DECISION	
<p>JH introduced this item and explained that the CEO had led the work on this dashboard which, following discussion at the awayday, aligns itself with the DfE indicators and continues to be fed by self-assessment from the schools and their individual dashboard indicators. It gives an overview and performance of the Trust as a whole at any one time. JH explained that the DfE indicators were more mainstream-based. We would not be judged against the mainstream performance indicators as we only have one mainstream primary and the threshold is five. The specialist area on Safeguarding is also missing on the DfE one but is absolutely included in the school's dashboard.</p> <p>JH asked if Directors were happy with the way the MAT Level Performance Dashboard was set out and aligned to the DfE Performance indicators?</p>	

<p><b>Chair asked, with reference to Safeguarding, would it be helpful to state that on the front of the dashboard?</b> JH agreed with this suggestion.</p> <p><b>Chair asked if it was possible to display the DfE Metrics and Verifiers to the right somewhere on page 1 to the Indicators as it made it difficult to read across with a ruler?</b> JH agreed to pick this up.</p> <p>Directors were very impressed with the Nexus Dashboard and understood the amount of work that had gone into aligning it with the DfE Dashboard.</p> <p><b>Draft MAT Level Dashboard Report was unanimously approved by the Board.</b></p>	
<p>5.1 School Performance Dashboard Indicators - For information</p> <p>JH explained that they were attached to read in conjunction with the Nexus Dashboard.</p> <p><b>Chair asked if they could be attached as an annexe to the Nexus Dashboard in the future?</b> JH agreed with this suggestion.</p>	
<p><b>6. CONFEDERATION OF SCHOOL TRUSTS CODE OF GOVERNANCE PROPOSAL – TO TAKE A DECISION</b></p>	
<p>JH introduced this item. Discussion ensued on this agenda item.</p> <p><b>SB asked, referring to 4.1.2, would the Trust publish a brief statement in their annual report explaining their use of the Code?</b> <b>Action Point</b> – CEO to produce a short narrative in the annual report linking it to the accounts around governance, timing to be agreed at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>Chair asked for another version be shared with Directors early in the summer term for fine tuning ready to be used in the autumn term 2024?</b> JH agreed with this suggestion on the same basis as the above dashboard discussion – that the draft audit would be shared for agreement on format/layout, with the actual assessment/audit being done for the September awayday.</p> <p><b>The Board unanimously voted to adopt the code as proposed in 5.2.1, 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 of the report and for officers to put an audit together against this.</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CEO 20.12.23</b></p>
<p><b>7. POLICY UPDATE REPORT – TO TAKE A DECISION</b></p>	
<p>The Suspension and Exclusion Policy had been updated to reflect latest DfE guidance.</p> <p><b>Report was unanimously approved by the Board.</b></p>	

## 8. HILLTOP REFURBISHMENT – FOR INFORMATION

JH referred the Directors to the document on GovernorHub and as a background explained that the connection to the charity and the proposed refurbishment was likely a result of the BBC documentary that featured Hilltop earlier in the year. They are based and linked to a number of national but locally based construction companies and do a Big Build Project once a year and did a refurbishment of a school in North Yorkshire of £1.8 million both entirely based on charitable contributions through donations and also through the construction companies and their corporate social responsibility.

On the back of the documentary they contacted Nexus and identified Hilltop as a possible project and that has now been confirmed. The attached document is their first outline of the sorts of things they want to put in place at Hilltop. This is a fairly major and exciting project, with the timescale to start the work in the Spring term. They are very clear that it cannot be around sufficiency needs, it can't be around expansion itself. It has got to be around making improvements to the buildings. The principles that they started with was trying to replace, as far as they could, the need for the modular buildings and to rejig some of the internal space.

The projected investment runs into millions that we would be receiving through this project and there would be a couple of bits that they would want Nexus to pick up, namely around ventilation and access. JH explained that Rotherham LA may be interested in involving themselves with this project by helping to part fund the capital costs that fall to Nexus and getting their logo alongside Nexus and The Yorkshire Children's Charity. The only probable difficulty that we may encounter is the decanting of pupils whilst the work is undertaken. JH said that they could talk to Rotherham LA and/or use 300 Meadowhall Way as it has classrooms that could be used in the interim this academic year. JH did not think this was a risk to the viability or success of the project.

### **SB asked about the about the assessment of the impact on the students and would there will be a plan and an assessment done in good time?**

JH confirmed this would be the case.

### **Chair asked if the school could be closed for one year whilst this was done?**

JH stated that it would be about the education of the pupils and the EHCPs and the statutory regulations around that. As he understood it, from the initial discussions around phasing should allow that it may be just 3 or 4 classes that need to be out at any one time.

### **PC asked what was the catch and who had been involved in the design brief which has happened quite quickly and how closely had Nexus been involved?**

JH confirmed that there was no catch really, only the capital costs for Nexus noted above, but they were small compared to the overall scheme and its benefits. Sacha and Rob Mulvey have had a visit to the project from last year and they were really positive around everything to do with the scheme and the communications around it publicly and have been all around celebrating the construction companies that want

to put their name to it. Sacha, Rob and Lana have all been engaged in the design team brief.

**PC asked, as a Trust, were we comfortable with the design proposals?**

JH answered yes.

**RP asked what was in it for them? Was it around publicity and were we geared up for that? What is the scale what they are expecting in terms of their reputation?**

JH stated that this was part of the conversation with the headteacher of the school who benefitted last year. It is a way that construction companies fulfil their commitments around their corporate social responsibilities. PLMR support Nexus around communications in general and they are geared up around this as well.

**RP asked, referring to Hilltop's financial position, as JH had talked about capital costs with the potential of that being met by Rotherham LA, were there any revenue costs that might stack up against this?**

JH said that none that we have been made aware of so far and none that we can see. If there were any costs around decant, then Nexus would have to look at those. Relative to the size of the scheme they are probably ones that we are looking to pick up we would have a conversation with Rotherham LA or centrally rather than it having an impact on Hilltop's budget. Better use of space through the redesign process could support the revenue position at Hilltop.

**NJ asked that he noticed there were three new classrooms towards the back of the school. Did this mean that capacity was increased for students or are there three extra classrooms now or not being utilised at the moment?**

JH said that there would not, in theory, be any increase in the number of classrooms overall. The project is to improve the lot of the pupils at Hilltop current and future, because the space might be more aligned to the needs of the pupils, it is not impossible that it might deliver more space for an increase in pupils once complete.

**NJ asked, regarding revenue costs, because it was going to be refurbished and things would JH not expect to have lower utility costs because of more efficient heating costs to be lower in the future?**

JH responded that it would certainly be possible. One of the things that we are trying to do and still trying to do is to make sure Achieve Your Goals, our sustainable energy partner, are linked in. One of the things they have done is put a monitoring kit on to Hilltop to try to monitor energy use to try to reduce it and we have tried to nudge them into a conversation around the project to make sure that where there are opportunities around sustainability and reducing energy use through the new build that we would be able to realise those opportunities.

**NJ expressed his excitement at the prospect of the refurbishment as he had been going to Hilltop on a daily basis for almost 10 years.**

**RPa asked if the project had been fully costed?**

JH responded that he had not received a headline figure yet.

**RPa asked, there is mention of a fire strategy, but that might be to do with the new elements in terms of the new buildings but it might be an idea to include the existing fire strategy for the school corridors. Fire doors are a big cost to schools and to look at the fire alarm system so if we could have that included it might be a worthwhile opportunity.**

**Action:** JH thanked RPa for his observation and agreed to make sure that Lana was aware of that and is feeding it into the meetings.

**SS asked what was the catch/what was in it for them? What does the charity have to gain from this? It would be really useful to have a look at the objectives of the charity and what they have got to deliver and it is clearly logical to label things up 1 to 9 but will they do them in that order, or, if they have got so much money will they stop at some point. Is this fully costed, or will we find that we will have to find more money that we expected?**

JH responded that there was a project manager for the build and his job was to deliver this project. Both Lana and Rob Mulvey took a lot of confidence from the way he was talking. JH stated that he did not think they have a budget that they will be working to. The construction companies are signed up to deliver the project as it has been outlined in the brief. We will probably be able to pin down any of those sorts of issues between now and Christmas. We only received this document during the last two weeks. As far as we have been briefed, so far, there is no risk around not completing all elements of this project. This is the brief and this is what they will deliver. At some point we will formally have to get Rotherham as the leaseholder's approval for the works and then nail down exactly what will need to be done in contractual terms.

**Chair asked will there be any staffing requirement of Nexus to run this project and if so, where will the money come from?**

JH responded no, beyond the input really that we are happy with it. It is the standard input around schools for capital projects. It will be Rob and Sasha as the main people involved and Lana from a more technical project team contract side. We are therefore covering from existing capacity.

**Chair asked if Nathan would be involved from an IT perspective?**

JH said yes.

**Chair asked what the timeline was from today, 22 November, to grand opening day?**

JH said that he believed they were looking at from February half term until summer to be delivered.

**Chair asked that everything could be done ready for September 2024 intake?**

JH responded, yes. It was an annual big build project and they would then move onto the next project.

**Chair asked when this would be brought back to the Directors with an update?**

JH said after Christmas with hopefully a clearer programme/timescale and any changes that had been made since this version.

**JH**  
**23/11/2023**

<p><b>Chair asked for January or March?</b> JH stated January as things were moving quite quickly.</p> <p><b>Action point:</b> JH/CEO to update Directors at the TBoD meeting on 31 January 2024.</p>	<p><b>CEO/JH</b> <b>31/01/2024</b></p>
<p><b>9. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</b></p>	
<p><b>9.1 CB asked regarding the event in July 2024, would any alcohol be bought by the Academy Trust/gifts? Is it part of the deal?</b> KS confirmed that it was not allowed and JT stated that the event would not be funded by the Trust.</p> <p><b>9.2 JH updated on:</b> <b>Derrymount Special School, Nottinghamshire</b> At the November meeting of the East Midlands Advisory Board, Nexus was approved as the sponsor of Derrymount. Nottinghamshire CC had already been in touch and asked us if we could offer support. Neil Davies from Beech is offering support on a commissioned basis. It is an inadequate SEMH special school and will require some support to bring it around. We will now set the process in motion on due diligence and will bring that back to the Trust Board in the new year.</p> <p><b>Free School Interviews</b> Following the four applications that Nexus submitted in the summer, we have had our first response and been shortlisted for the East Riding and Rachel has very kindly volunteered to fill the Trust Board role on the interview panel in December. JH confirmed with the DfE that we will hear one way or the other. The other three are Barnsley/Sheffield joint bid; one in North East Lincolnshire and one in Leeds. We are also expecting to find out around the AP free school in Nottinghamshire that we have already interviewed for and we should find out before Christmas. There are two further free school presumptions, so this is where the LA have defined the need for a new special school. Nottinghamshire closes in the second week of December and North Yorkshire have also put forward a free school presumption (a Harrogate based special school). We are potentially looking to submit applications for both of those two processes as well. We will keep you informed of any further interviews and they do ask that the Chair/Vice Chair is present on the interview panel.</p> <p><b>Abbey Academy Council</b> All appointments of Academy Council Chairs need to be agreed by Directors. We had confirmation from Alison Warner, Chair at Abbey Academy Council, that she will be stepping down from the end of October. We will send a message of thanks to Alison. She has been the Chair at Abbey for quite some time. She has been a very active school governors in Sheffield and the wider area. Ian Tankard, who is a primary school head teacher, is a member of Abbey governors for some time and a strong member of the governing body. If directors are happy we will appoint?</p> <p><b>PC asked if there were any other candidates for Chair?</b> JH said there were not.</p>	

<p><b>SS asked that as he was a parent governor, would Abbey have to find a new parent governor to fill his place?</b> JH stated that Ian could continue as a parent governor.</p> <p><b>Chair asked if the Board approve the appointment of Ian Tankard as Chair of Abbey Academy Council?</b> <b>Ian Tankard was approved as Chair of Abbey Academy Council effective 22/11/23.</b></p> <p>9.3 The Chair stated that the Trust Board agreed at the last meeting to have a pre-meet for 20-30 minutes, without Nexus officers, to give a free space at their meeting on 20 December 2023. A discussion ensued around topics.</p> <p>Chair had suggested two topics for discussion (which will be deferred into 2024):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there confidence in Directors regarding the direction of travel towards director changes between now and August. Are Directors confident about what is happening as a team. Is there anything else that needs to be put in place to help Directors collectively through that transition period?</li> <li>2. Is there any more the Central Team could do to support Directors to take their work forward. Do Directors need more presentations to improve how they oversee the work so that they have a keener insight into what is happening in the Nexus Trust?</li> </ol> <p>Directors agreed to meet at 16:45 for 30 minutes to discuss the following:</p> <p><b>Agenda: Scoping – (show and tell exercise) Directors share what they have been doing in the last month as a starting point, what is Directors’ linkage into Nexus, if there are any gaps in knowledge and build on from that.</b></p> <p>The TBoD’s meeting would start at 17:15.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Clerking Services to send out confirmation email inviting Directors to attend.</p>	<p><b>Clerking Services 23/11/2023</b></p>
<p><b>10. REVIEW OF RISK</b></p>	
<p>10.1 To consider any new risks identified during the meeting for referral to Trust Committees.</p> <p>None raised.</p>	
<p><b>11. CONFIDENTIALITY</b></p>	
<p>To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting</p> <p>None raised.</p>	



**13. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

<b>Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023</b>	17:00 – 19:30	<b>Extra-Ordinary Meeting – Pre- accounts - Teams</b>
Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> December 2023	17:00 – 19:30	<b>Nexus HQ</b>
<b>Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 – AGM</b>	<b>17:30 – 19:00</b>	<b>Nexus HQ/Teams</b>
Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2024	17:00 – 19:30	<b>Teams</b>
Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	17:00 – 19:30	<b>Nexus HQ</b>
Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> Marcy 2024	17:00 – 19:30	<b>Teams</b>
Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	17:00 – 19:30	<b>Nexus HQ</b>
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2024	17:00 – 19:30	<b>Teams</b>
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	17:00 – 19:30	<b>Nexus HQ</b>
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	17:00 – 19:30	<b>Teams</b>

**Minutes approved.**

<b>CHAIR</b>	<b>SIGNATURE</b>	<b>DATE</b>