



**Nexus MAT Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Wednesday 21 May 2025**  
**5.00 pm – 7.30 pm – via MS Teams**

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Role:</b>	<b>Initials:</b>
Rachel Potts	Director/Member & Chair of Trust Board of Directors	RP
Sue Shelley	Director & Vice Chair of Trust Board of Directors	SS
Naomi Cooper	Director	NC
Colin Bradley	Director	CB
Phil Bradley	Director	PB
Mark Greenwood	Director	MG
Victoria Morris	Director	VM
<b>Also Present:</b>		
Warren Carratt	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Joel Hardwick	Assistant CEO – Corporate Affairs	JH
Renata Robins	Governance Clerk	Clerk
Lana Stoyles	Executive Director - Business Transformation (For Item 5)	LS
Jacky Tattershall	Assistant CEO – Quality Assurance & Improvement	JT
<b>Apologies:</b>		
Gillian Askew	Director	GA
Tina Havenhand	Director	TH
Ray Palmer	Director	RPa
Karen Smith	Chief Finance Officer	CFO

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	ACTIONS
1.1 Welcome & receive apologies for absence  Apologies were received for GA, TH, RPa and KS.	
1.2 To accept apologies for absence  Apologies were accepted for GA, TH, RPa and KS.	
2. ITEMS FOR AOB	
Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered  2.1 CEO to update Directors on a Tier-One SEND Tribunal outcome. 2.2 CEO to update Directors on the 2025 pay award position.	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS	
3.1 Individual Directors to declare any personal, business/governance interests on any item on the agenda  CEO declared that both JH and JT had an interest in Item 6, but there was no issue with them being present as officers in attendance; and LS was only present for Item 5, so didn't need to declare an interest in Item 6.	
4. NEXUS MAT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES	
4.1 To approve the minutes of the following meeting:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trust Board Meeting held on Wednesday 30 April 2025.</li> </ul> The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.	
4.2 To approve the confidential item from the 30 April 2025 meeting:  The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.	
4.3 Review of Action Tracker  Action Tracker was reviewed and updated as appropriate.	
4.4 Matters arising from the Minutes  No matters were raised.	
5. HILLTOP BIG BUILD UPDATE REPORT	
5.1 Hilltop School Interior Design	

LS referred Directors to the report and interior design illustrations which provides some of the detail and projected outlook.

The project was now divided into three core phases and the Yorkshire Big Build would be relying on their supplier chain to complete the whole project. It had now grown from a £1.4 million cost to just over £4 million. The charity would lean on their suppliers over the three phases and it will help keeping momentum going to have 'red carpet' events at the completion of each phase. This would also help Nexus MAT mitigate the impact on staff and learners.

**The Chair sought clarification regarding the £4 million expenditure, specifically enquiring whether supplier contracts had been secured or if there remained a material risk of project failure?**

LS confirmed that funding for Phase One had been secured and that initial work was already underway. It was clarified that the cited £4 million does not represent a direct financial outlay, but rather reflects the value of labour contributions pledged by suppliers. This initiative is being delivered as a social value project, with services provided on a pro bono basis.

LS further noted that Stage Three of the project presents a higher level of risk. However, there is some commitment from both the local authority and Nexus to support efforts in mitigating potential costs associated with this phase.

**The Chair enquired whether this was the reason the date for Stage Three had yet to be confirmed?**

LS confirmed that they are not prepared to commit to specific dates until the planning process has been completed.

The CEO noted that it would be appropriate to remind Directors that they had previously approved Nexus to engage with external partners, including Rotherham Council, which has agreed to underwrite a portion of the project costs. Additionally, Kelford School is expected to contribute through a contingency fund of up to £500,000. The CEO expressed full confidence in LS's ability to effectively manage and mitigate the associated costs.

**SS expressed concern that, based on her observations of Phase One during the first half of the autumn term, it was unclear how the school could continue to operate effectively amidst ongoing construction—particularly with regard to health and safety considerations and the potential impact on pupils with autism?**

LS reassured Directors that the contractors engaged for the project have prior experience working in special school environments, having previously undertaken work at both Forest View and Hilltop. To address health and safety concerns, LS noted that more disruptive construction activities have been scheduled to take place during the summer months.

The CEO confirmed that Kelford School would be vacating Forest View in the summer, and the additional space has been earmarked for future use by Hilltop.

<p><b>The Chair enquired if there would be any media coverage at the mentioned 'red carpet' events? This would be a fantastic new school – will demand increase over time?</b></p> <p>CEO responded that the media will be involved and the BBC team who were involved in the original documentary will be invited at each phase. LS also confirmed that the red-carpet events centre around the supply chains. The big fund raising, time committing events occur behind closed door and generally do not involve the public sector.</p> <p><b>The Chair enquired whether there was a clear site planning narrative that illustrated the current state, the envisioned development, and the future outcome—particularly given the scale of the project?</b></p> <p>LS confirmed that Phase Three was not ready yet and undertook to share a virtual tour for Directors.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> LS to provide a virtual tour of the plans at a later stage.</p> <p>Directors thanked LS for the update on the Hilltop Big Build and were very keen to learn more.</p> <p>LS left the meeting at 5.20pm.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> LS 22/10/25</p>
<p><b>6. PROPOSED CENTRAL TRUST STRUCTURE 2025-26</b></p>	
<p>Report was received and scrutinised by Directors.</p> <p>CEO referred to the structure that was intended from September 2025, which will be fully costed and submitted as part of budget setting in July.</p> <p>The CEO invited questions from the Directors.</p> <p><b>The Chair asked with regards to the lines of reporting of the Executive Headteachers, two report directly to the CEO and asked why this was?</b></p> <p>The CEO explained that this arrangement partly stems from legacy decisions. At an earlier time, there were only three Executive Headteachers (EHT), who, aside from the CEO, held the highest-paid positions in the Trust. However, as new EHT posts have been created, line management of these has been allocated to the Executive Regional Directors.</p> <p><b>CB asked a question about what the budget was compared to other trusts or benchmark to other MATS?</b></p> <p>CEO responded that it was really difficult to compare to other MATs as Nexus is unique and there is nothing out there like us. There are no other helpful benchmarks from the DfE.</p> <p>CEO stated that the CFO should be able to confirm expenditure % queries as part of budget reporting in June.</p>	
<p><b>7. 2025-2026 NEXUS MEETING DATES – STANDARDS COMMITTEE – NEW PROPOSED DATES</b></p>	
<p><b>Chair asked if the changes were linked to the reporting of data?</b></p>	

<p>JT clarified that this was linked to the Schools Performance and Scrutiny Board meetings, so that Directors would receive the information in a timely manner.</p> <p><b>Directors unanimously agreed the new proposed meeting dates.</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> Clerking Services to update records, calendar invites as appropriate.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Clerking Services 22/05/2025</p>
<p><b>8. ALLOCATION OF NEW DIRECTORS TO COMMITTEES</b></p> <p>The item was included on the agenda in error.</p> <p>No action was required, as there have been no new director appointments since the previous year.</p>	
<p><b>9. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS FOR 2025-26</b></p> <p>CEO proposed that Directors continue with the current Chairing arrangements and, as approved last year, GA will take over from SS for 2025-26. Namely:</p> <p>Standards Committee – NC Audit &amp; Risk Committee – TH Finance &amp; Infrastructure Committee – GA.</p> <p><b>Directors unanimously agreed the continuation of Committee Chairs and appointment of GA as Chair of Finance &amp; Infrastructure for 2025-26.</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> Clerking Services to update records, calendar invites as appropriate.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Clerking Services 22/05/2025</p>
<p><b>10. CHAIR FOR SUMMER ACADEMY COUNCIL CHAIRS FORUM</b></p> <p>The Chair invited nominations from Directors to put themselves forward to act as Chair for this forum on 11 June, 2.00pm - 3.30pm via MS Teams.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> SS confirmed she would be happy to act as Chair and would liaise confirmation with the CEO and Clerking Services.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> SS to advise CEO &amp; Clerking Services 22/05/2024</p>
<p><b>11. TRUST BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2025</b></p> <p>JH thanked Directors for completing the process and hoped Directors had noticed a development in terms of the offers from NGA. There was no area securing a low score. Outlined in 3.8 more for individual Directors to pick up over the next period.</p> <p>The Chair encouraged Directors to undertake some of the internal Executive Team workshops. She had found the finance and curriculum workshops particularly useful. She also felt that Directors would benefit greatly from attending/chairing academy council meetings.</p> <p><b>SS asked whether the National Cyber Security training was covered during the Directors' Development Day, or if it was something Directors were expected to complete independently?</b></p> <p>JH stated that it was recommended as an annual training exercise and it had been covered at the Development Day.</p>	

<p>JH stated that it would be added to the Governance Planner.</p> <p><b>Directors scrutinised the report and agreed to adopt the actions outlined in Table 3.8.</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> JH to add National Cyber Security to the Governance Planner.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> JH 25/6/25</p>
<p><b>12. POLICY UPDATE – ASSESSMENT POLICY</b></p>	
<p>The CEO advised Directors that this policy had been subject to significant rewrite by Rebecca Allard and replaces what we do now.</p> <p>JT confirmed that it was a summary around bringing a common language. It means all Nexus schools will be reporting in the same way and it will change how we use the data provided by schools. As a trust, JT stated that it would be able to look at progress measures. The biggest part are the appendices which provide a toolbox for schools to be able to use.</p> <p><b>PB referred to the first sentence of the fourth paragraph on page 9 (<i>In special schools, formative assessment ...</i>), and queried the meaning of this?</b> JT replied that it was the observations that staff make of children and formative and AFL are one and the same thing.</p> <p><b>VM referred to qualifications and accreditation and was the Trust hoping that there would be an increase in qualifications gained in the coming years?</b> JT was hopeful of this happening by tracking pupils' flight path from the KS2 route through to KS4. If children were capable of achieving the Level 2 qualifications, we can have those conversations with schools.</p> <p><b>VM also asked if the Trust thought that culture was going to change?</b> JT highlighted the importance of engaging in dialogue with schools. JT noted ongoing uncertainty regarding the suitability of vocational pathways and emphasised the need for schools to clearly articulate a defined flight path for learners.</p> <p>The CEO stated that there had been a stay of execution for a number of vocational qualifications since last year's general election and the future of these will be clear after the Curriculum and Assessment Review concludes and reports.</p> <p><b>The Chair asked if there was a timescale for the government's review process?</b> CEO stated that it was due to report back in the Autumn of 2025.</p> <p><b>Directors were happy to approve the policy update to the Assessment Policy.</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> JH to issue a policy briefing to inform the workforce on the policy update to the Assessment Policy.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> JH 22/05/2025</p>
<p><b>13. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</b></p>	

13.1	CEO updated the Directors on the outcome of a First-Tier SEND Tribunal.	
13.2	CEO informed the Directors that the local government employers recently made a final offer of 3.2% for non-teaching staff. After consulting with trade union partners, CEO took the decision to process the 3.2% pay award now, so that staff felt the benefit as quickly as possible. Confirmation was expected shortly of the teacher pay award for 2025.	
<b>13. REVIEW OF RISK</b>		
To consider any new risks identified during the meeting for referral to Trust Committees		
None.		
<b>14. CONFIDENTIALITY</b>		
To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting		
None.		
<b>15. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</b>		

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