



Nexus MAT Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday 28 February 2024 5.00 pm – 7.30 pm at Nexus HQ

Attendees:	Role:	Initials:
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
Tina Havenhand	Director	TH
Naveen Judah	Director	NJ
Ray Palmer (via Teams)	Director	RPa
Sue Shelley	Director	SS
Also Present:		
Rosey Andrassy	Advisor	RA
Phil Bradley	Advisor	PB
Warren Carratt	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Adam Cloney	Corporate Governance Manager	AC
Joel Hardwick	Assistant CEO – Corporate Affairs	JH
Renata Robins	Governance Clerk	Clerk
Karen Smith	Chief Finance Officer	KS
Apologies:		
Gillian Askew	Director	GA
Peter Castleton	Director	PC
Naomi Cooper	Advisor	NC
Mark Greenwood	Director	MG
Jacky Tattershall	Assistant CEO – QA & Improvement	JT
No apologies:		
Victoria Morris	Advisor	VM

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	ACTIONS
<p>1.1 Welcome & receive apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received for GA, PC, NC, MG and JT.</p>	
<p>1.2 To accept apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were accepted for GA, PC, NC, MG and JT.</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>CEO declared that NJ and SS had an interest in Item 9 on the agenda and would therefore be asked to temporarily leave the meeting for this item.</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 31 January 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>Hilltop Refurbishment JH updated the Directors that The Yorkshire Children’s Charity had made sufficient commitments, allowing Hilltop’s Headteacher to inform the Hilltop community about ‘The Big Build’ project. The anticipated timeline for the build is between June and November. JH expressed optimism about presenting a fully costed programme of works at the meeting in May.</p> <p>SS – asked what percentage of money did Nexus have to put into the project? JH indicated that the amount was marginal. Regarding the scheme’s financial status, there was £240K remaining, and Nexus planned to approach Rotherham Council for assistance.</p> <p>Chair – asked how much was being sought? The amount remaining was £240k and Nexus would be asking Rotherham to contribute half of this.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Action: JH 22/05/2024</p>

<p>RP – asked what the contribution was from The Yorkshire Children’s Charity? JH replied that it was in the region of £2m.</p>	
<p>4.3 Matters arising from the Minutes None raised.</p>	
<p>5. STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE – TO RECEIVE AND SCRUTINISE</p>	
<p>CEO provided a brief overview of the notable points and invited questions.</p> <p>RP – Page 1, Mocksteds – are there any particular areas of feedback that the Directors needed to be aware of? Feedback from Headteachers was highly favourable. The primary objective of the exercise revolved around thorough preparation for the performance of inspection, especially for middle leaders, whose roles had gained prominence in the new framework. It was crucial for Headteachers to rehearse their responsibilities to ensure readiness in front of inspectors, rather than going through this for the first time in a real inspection.</p> <p>CB - Page 2, teaching assistant apprenticeship programme to include non-Nexus participants – why? Initially designed for 40 participants, the programme ultimately enrolled 28 from Nexus schools. Nexus are subcontracted by their apprenticeship partner to design and deliver the programme, which not only contributes to Nexus's commercial value but also enhances partnerships. This initiative complements the apprenticeship programme delivered with Rotherham College, targeting new entrants into the workforce from college students.</p> <p>SB - Page 4, APSEND – acronym meaning? Refers to the Alternative Provision Specialist Educational Needs and Disability Network. It is a coalition of alternative provision and specialist providers forming a lobby group and consultation forum aimed at addressing sector-wide issues with the DfE and other relevant bodies. One of the Executive Regional Directors (PS) represents Nexus within this network.</p> <p>RP – Page 2, Heads learning (Headspace) – coming together as a peer group with no agenda and now they would like a more structured curriculum? A proportion of the Heads had requested this to develop the ‘Headspace’ meetings.</p> <p>Chair - Is there an opportunity for Directors to hear more about what this change could be – an agenda item for the May meeting? The intention is to have a development day once a term for Headteachers, with the curriculum that has been developed across a 2- or 3-year period being the delivery vehicle for this. Not for prescriptive purposes but adding value to Headteachers with access to knowledge and toolkits.</p> <p>RP & PB - Page 6, conversations with different schools joining Nexus, had any progressed further than others? What were the implications of this?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Action: CEO 22.05.2024</p>

The growth of academy trusts follows interesting phases, with ample time to evaluate a school's suitability from expression of interest to conversion, typically spanning several months/years. Nexus assumes no accountability until conversion. Officers have license to secure the relationship pre-academisation and the option to withdraw if necessary, leaving decision making prerogative with Directors.

Chair – Page 5, Sheffield - any updates from Sheffield Council about provision and places?

JH stated that no confirmation had been received but was hopeful for a reply next week about funding. JH further updated the meeting regarding the Sheffield Kenwood and Moncrieff buildings. Replacement venues being explored.

SB commented that the new Nexus signage on the outside of the HQ building was very impressive.

6. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - TO RECEIVE AND SCRUTINISE

KS reported that there were no significant updates to highlight to the Directors, noting that thorough discussions occurred during both the most recent Audit & Risk and Finance & Strategy meetings.

The Directors conducted a comprehensive review of the budget monitoring report to ensure thorough examination.

Report received.

7. DERRYMOUNT DUE DILIGENCE REPORT - TO TAKE A DECISION

CEO provided an overview and updated Directors on notable changes since the publication of the report and invited questions thereafter:

- Both the Department for Education (DfE) and Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) are talking about a 1 April 2024 conversion, this year. CEO is recommending that Derrymount is not academized at pace but that the Trust seeks to fulfil its role as a named sponsor for Derrymount School and improve the school, with conversion following the similar caveats that were implemented around the Holgate Meadows conversion. The CEO pointed to the school roof and infrastructure issues in the report, and stated that the Trust couldn't take on those liabilities without the DfE and/or NCC playing their part.
- The Headteacher of Derrymount went on paid leave on Friday and Neil Davies, Headteacher at Beech (who had been providing consultancy support since last October) had stepped in as Interim Executive Headteacher on Monday 26 February. At 10:30 that morning the school received notification of an OFSTED monitoring visit.
- Primarily, the feedback from HMI highlighted that - due to the support from the Trust - the school had successfully implemented effective safeguarding measures. Progress had been noted in addressing several areas for improvement, with the exception being the quality of education. However, HMI acknowledged the reasons behind this lack of progress.
- The Trust's expansion into Nottinghamshire is strategically coherent, especially considering the fair funding framework for special schools in the region. Notably, Fountaindale and Beech, both situated in Nottinghamshire, have been successful

collaborations. Furthermore, the Trust's current bid to establish a Nottinghamshire free special school underscores its commitment to further engagement in the area.

- The school is an MLD/SEMH school.
- The budget still requires some further work.

RP – in terms of funding the structural repairs, the local authority would feel confident to fund that?

CEO - they have a responsibility to. Either they agree to use capital funding, as they have some, or use the school budget. It is a very reasonable local authority and the Council have been paying for Neil's consultant head role since October.

SB - in terms of timescales, there seems to be a lot of work to be done, irrespective of funding, are the timescales tight?

CEO – that is the assurance that Directors need. When the Trust receives a contractual commitment from the local authority then officers could come back with that certainty and assurance to Directors to vote on then.

SB - it does say that we are waiting for further reports from further sources and they do not say how long it takes to complete the work?

CEO – the process is not at that stage yet.

RPa – to add to what has been said already, it's essential to emphasise the necessity of a comprehensive plan moving forward, coupled with assurances to allay concerns regarding potential deficits. Specifically, upon your return, Directors will need reassurance that critical safety repairs and structural issues will be effectively managed without significant financial strain on the school. Providing detailed insights into these aspects within the plan for our next discussion will greatly aid Directors' decision-making process.

CEO – agreed. The principle that the CEO is proposing is that Directors agree to progress conversion, on the proviso that those two conditions are satisfied and to provide Directors with that and also on the medium-term budget profile as well.

Chair – When would this next discussion come back to the Board?

CEO - Possibly June/July. The asset side of things should be more straightforward and the Trust needs to be mindful of the short term needs for the school in terms of improvement, re: the financial risk.

NJ – is there a risk to the school if Nexus try to convert staff contracts from a 52 to a 39 weeks contract?

CEO – agreed there would be risks. The Trust will have to be mindful of the different terms and conditions across Nexus localities and align with local authorities in terms of conditions and TUPE.

SS – page 3, notes on CLASP and that this type of construction is not unusual. What is the lifetime of a CLASP building? We need the survey to inform Directors better.

CEO – many have expired their life.

<p>Chair reiterated that a detailed structural survey needs to come back to the Directors before a decision is made on academisation. CEO reiterated that this work has already started.</p> <p>PB – page 8, safeguarding, the issues/concerns raised comments and mitigation comments contradict each other, which is it? CEO – it is both. The new DSL has come in and provided some additional oversight, but it’s early days and she requires support.</p> <p>Recommendation: Conditionally approve Derrymount's conversion, pending clarity on building conditions and local authority support. A detailed budget projection post-conversion is needed, which officers cannot currently provide. Aim to present a finalised proposal to Directors by late summer, targeting an autumn 2024 conversion date.</p> <p>Directors unanimously agreed to conditionally approve Derrymount’s conversion, with the conditions discussed.</p>	
8. POLICY UPDATE REPORT - TO TAKE A DECISION	
<p>The Policy Update Report had been updated with significant changes to the CCTV Policy and Information Governance & Data Protection Policy to reflect the best practice policy guidance published in The Key.</p> <p>Policy Update Report was unanimously approved by the Board.</p> <p>JH to issue a policy briefing to inform the workforce on the update.</p>	<p>Action: JH 29/02/2024</p>
<p>8.1 CCTV Policy</p> <p>Received.</p>	
<p>8.2 Information Governance & Data Protection Policy</p> <p>Received.</p>	
9. RE-APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTORS FOR A FURTHER TERM OF OFFICE (GA, NJ AND SS) – TO TAKE A DECISION	
<p>NJ and SS left the meeting for this item.</p> <p>The terms of office for GA and NJ end on 02.04.2024 and for SS ends on 31.05.2024 and the Chair recommended Directors confirm their re-appointment for a further four-year term of office.</p> <p>The Board unanimously approved the re-appointment of GA, NJ and SS for a further four-year term of office from the dates above, with three abstentions by GA, NJ and SS</p> <p>Clerking Services to facilitate GIAS updates and DBS check renewals.</p>	<p>Action: Clerking Services 29.02.2024</p>

<p>10. SIGNIFICANT CHANGE PROPOSAL - VERBAL</p>	
<p>JH informed Directors that The Department for Education had updated its Significant Change guidance for academies, with changes that come in from 1 April 2024.</p> <p>JH is intending to submit the significant change requests for both Becton @ Silverdale and Kenwood @ Enterprise Works using the new guidance. Directors noted this.</p>	
<p>11. PROVISION NAMING OUTCOMES: HOLGATE MEADOWS AND THE PENNINE VIEW HUB – FOR INFORMATION ONLY</p>	
<p>JH updated Directors on the provision naming outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holgate Meadows – Lotus Academy (at point of conversion) Pennine View Hub –Pennine View @ MacAulay (for the first 12 months). <p>Directors unanimously agreed the above naming outcomes.</p>	
<p>12. FINAL SRMA REPORT – FOR INFORMATION ONLY</p>	
<p>Report received.</p>	
<p>13. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JH informed the Directors about the recent introduction of several new requirements by Companies House, which came into effect on 4 March of this year. Additionally, all Directors will be required to verify their identities. However, no specific details regarding the timeline for completing this verification process have been provided. The CEO informed the Directors that Craggs Community School had received its initial grades after the completion of the inspection this evening. <p>The CEO will update the Directors on the detail of this in May, providing clarity on the reasons behind the school's judgment, identifying key areas for action, and offering recommendations for the next steps.</p>	<p>Action: CEO 27.03.2024</p>
<p>14. REVIEW OF RISK</p>	
<p>11.1 To consider any new risks identified during the meeting for referral to Trust Committees</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>15. CONFIDENTIALITY</p>	
<p>12.1 To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>16. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</p>	

Wednesday 27 th March 2024	17:00 – 19:30	Teams
Wednesday 24 th April 2024	17:00 – 19:30	Nexus HQ
Wednesday 22 nd May 2024	17:00 – 19:30	Teams
Wednesday 26 th June 2024	17:00 – 19:30	Nexus HQ
Wednesday 17 th July 2024	17:00 – 19:30	Teams

Minutes approved.

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE