



## Nexus MAT Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023 5 pm - 7.30 pm Via Teams

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

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	ACTIONS
<p>1.1 Welcome &amp; receive apologies for absence.</p> <p>Apologies were received for RA, MG and TH.</p>	
<p>1.2 To accept apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were accepted for RA, MG and TH.</p>	
2. ITEMS OF AOB	
<p>Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes to Members</li> <li>▪ Changes to Confidential Reporting policy</li> <li>▪ Director CVs</li> </ul>	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
<p>3.1. Individual Directors to declare any personal, business/governance interests on any item on the agenda.</p> <p>None raised.</p>	
4. TRUST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES	
<p>a. To approve the minutes of the following meetings: Trust Board Meeting held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023.</p> <p>The minutes were approved as a correct record.</p>	
<p>b. Review of Action Tracker</p> <p>Action Tracker was updated as appropriate.</p>	
<p>c. Matters arising from the Minutes.</p> <p>None raised.</p>	
5. Academies Dashboard report – to receive and scrutinise	
<p><b>5.1 Dashboard Summary Report</b></p> <p>Directors noted that Kenwood and Hilltop have several arrows going in the wrong direction. CEO explained that Kenwood has recently separated from Becton and this has led the school to review its curriculum. Kenwood’s own self-evaluation is better than it should be. However, there are no concerns about Kenwood which has seen significant growth following its separation from Becton.</p> <p>The situation at Hilltop has improved markedly and the issues around staffing have now been resolved. Hilltop has a much healthier budget and staff morale has improved. More work is still needed to make best use of the school building and</p>	

<p>work is underway to address this. The move to Forest View (formerly Rowan) will make a big difference in terms of the space the school has.</p> <p><b>5.2 Academies in Receipt of Intervention Report</b></p> <p>CEO explained that there have been some changes to the schools subject to early intervention since the report was circulated, which are covered in confidential appendix 1.</p>	
<p><b>6. Annual Safeguarding Assurance Statement – to scrutinise and approve</b></p>	
<p>PC explained that this report results from a series of discussions which take place at the Standards Committee.</p> <p>PC noted that he has been unable to meet with Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) this year and will aim to re-implement this for next year. GA has expressed an interest in being part of these meetings too, to talk to DSLs about the issues they are facing.</p> <p>PC noted that, on the whole, there are no major safeguarding issues that are of concern at present.</p> <p>PC pointed out that the report shows that there has been a significant increase in the number of children at Child Protection (CP) and Child In Need (CIN). PC also noted that the threshold for children becoming LAC has risen and we need to ensure that this does not create a disproportionate burden on our schools.</p> <p><b>GA asked: Item 11 relating to staff undertaking safeguarding training. Is there any frequency by which Directors should undergo safeguarding training?</b> There is no prescribed refresher training in statutory guidance, but the Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE) document is updated annually. We will include safeguarding updates into the Directors’ Development Day in October, as in previous years.</p> <p><b>Approval to publish the report was unanimously given by the Board.</b></p>	
<p><b>7. A&amp;R Committee Annual Conclusions report – to scrutinise and approve.</b></p>	
<p>SS explained that the Audit and Risk Committee will be splitting into two separate committees in September with a different chair for each committee.</p> <p>SS feels that Directors on the committee have worked with JH to ensure that they are asking the right questions to ensure that they are familiar with any issues related to the Trust estate. Directors are asked to consider what other training or information they might need to support them in their role.</p> <p><b>CB asked: Item 3.5 relates to actions being recorded on the Trust Audit Action Tracker. Is this different to the Action Tracker sent out with the</b></p>	

<p><b>agenda and papers for this meeting?</b> CEO stated yes, the Trust Audit Action Tracker is available on Governor Hub in the A&amp;R papers folder.</p> <p><b>The report was accepted unanimously by the Board.</b></p>	
<p><b>8. Local Governance structure and chairing arrangements 2023/24 – to scrutinise and approve.</b></p>	
<p>CEO talked through the recommendations in the report.</p> <p>Willows School has elected to install an Academy Council (AC) rather than a Local Governing Body.</p> <p>Chairing arrangements for ACs are being reviewed and the CEO explained the difficulties in appointing and maintaining chairs for these councils.</p> <p><b>The report and all of its recommendations were accepted unanimously by the Board.</b></p>	
<p><b>9. 2023-24 Budget and ESFA 3-year Budget Forecast, Appendix A and B - – to scrutinise and approve.</b></p>	
<p>This report has already been scrutinised in detail by the Audit &amp; Risk Committee.</p> <p>KS explained that the assumptions made aim to ensure the report is balanced in terms of positive and negative issues.</p> <p>KS noted that there have been a significant number of changes since the Audit &amp; Risk Committee; namely the teachers’ pay award has now been announced and detail has been given on how this will be funded. There remains a lot of uncertainty around the support staff pay award.</p> <p>KS stated that Trust officers have made strong assumptions based on the best evidence available. The Trust is in a strong financial position with significant reserves in place.</p> <p><b>CB asked: What is Income from Traded Activities which is included in the top slice?</b> KS explained that this relates to the internal charge to support the Trust Central Team. Schools pay around 5% from their budget for the central team function.</p> <p>SB reiterated that the Audit and Risk Committee had interrogated this report in some depth two weeks ago. Directors acknowledged the huge amount of work that has gone into this and thanked KS and her team for their work on this document.</p> <p><b>CB asked: Is the target of 10% reserves set by the Board?</b> CEO stated no, for cash reserves we have a range of between 2-5%. KS stated that we are expecting to see a slight reduction in our reserves in the next few years.</p> <p>CEO explained that a large proportion of the reserves has come from schools that have joined the academy with large surpluses.</p>	

<p><b>The 2023-24 Budget and ESFA 3-year Budget Forecast, Appendix A and B were unanimously approved by the Board.</b></p>	
<p><b>10. Internal and External Scrutiny Report – for Directors to take a decision.</b></p>	
<p>The CEO talked through the recommendations in the report and explained these had been agreed with the Audit &amp; Risk Committee. No questions were raised on this report.</p> <p><b>All three recommendations were unanimously approved by the Board.</b></p>	
<p><b>11. Director 360° meetings feedback – to scrutinise.</b></p>	
<p>Chair explained the background to this exercise. Following a recent survey of Headteachers in the Trust a small working group was formed to analyse the outcomes and meet with a cross-section of senior staff.</p> <p>The outcomes provided valuable information for Directors and gave a broad insight into the culture of the Trust.</p> <p>The responses clearly showed that the Trust has created a safe and nurturing environment for both our staff and pupils.</p> <p>The survey revealed that staff have a clear loyalty to Nexus MAT as a supportive and caring employer. Leadership is viewed as ambitious, and staff feel they have a voice in the Trust. Staff were positive about the evidence-based school improvement system and that they were allowed to develop and grow in their roles.</p> <p>Staff felt that they have the space to reflect on their performance and that their views are listened to. Staff have pride in working for Nexus MAT and have a clear understanding of the new line management and support and challenge system.</p> <p>Chair thanked RP, GA and SS for their input into this interview process. RP reinforced all the comments made above. SS felt that relationships between staff are strong and staff were honest in their responses. Staff were supported in taking risks and being creative and were not afraid to try out new ideas. PC echoed all the comments made above but cautioned that the Trust should not become complacent and must continue to ensure that we secure the right balance for the Trust.</p> <p><b>PC asked: Were there any conversations with staff that hinted at some of the challenges we might face?</b> AC referred to the final summary in the report which outlines learning points from these interviews. These will be discussed with the CEO and colleagues to see whether these can and should be implemented.</p> <p>The CEO referred to the Generation NeXt programme which will start its second cohort of prospective future headteachers in September. CEO stated that a number of staff who took part in the first cohort have now progressed to more senior roles.</p>	

<p>AC, RP and SS will meet with CEO in the Autumn term to discuss the learning points and feed back to the Board in due course.</p>	<p><b>AC/RP/SS/CEO 18/10/23</b></p>
<p><b>12. Policy Review Report – for Directors to take a decision</b></p>	
<p>The policy review report was considered and no question were asked.</p> <p>Item 12.1 - Procurement Policy was reviewed with no questions asked.</p> <p><b>Both documents were approved unanimously by the Board.</b></p>	
<p><b>13. Academy Trust Handbook – to receive for information.</b></p>	
<p>For information.</p> <p>Changes were noted. No action required.</p>	
<p><b>14. Rowan Centre Update (verbal)</b></p>	
<p>JH updated on the current situation relating to The Source and The Rowan Centre.</p> <p>Contractors and funding are now in place for the Rowan Centre and we have secured a Tenancy at Will agreement with RMBC to ensure that we can have occupancy of the site.</p> <p>Work has now commenced and we expect to open the new centre in the first week of September. Hilltop and Kelford schools will move 25 of their post 14/Post-16 children to the new provision. We have just received confirmation from Rotherham LA of £370k of capital investments to get the site operational plus £65k in revenue. The site will be renamed Forest View.</p> <p><b>The Source</b> - JH explained the background to this initiative. The centre is being proposed as a new post-16 base for a number of special schools. In addition, we are seeking larger office space to house the Central Trust team.</p> <p>JH and LS have been in discussions with the owners of The Source building (British Land) and this building will become vacant in September. The rental cost for this building is reasonable, given its central proximity to our schools, Meadowhall and public transport.</p> <p>An agreement has been reached with British Land to allow us to rent one third of the building in the first year with a view to taking on the longer-term rental of the entire building in future.</p> <p><b>RP asked: Would this building need much alteration and would we be allowed to do this?</b> JH explained that the building is in good condition and is ideally laid out for educational use. There is a café and gym space on the ground floor.</p> <p><b>SB asked: Would parking be an issue at this site?</b> The site itself has around 40 parking spaces and we would also have access to free parking at the Meadowhall staff car park which is close by.</p>	

Directors noted the update	
<b>15. Any other urgent business</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Changes to members</b> – CEO explained that he had received resignations from two of our members, C Hall and A Ahmed. RP has been appointed as a member to replace C Hall. Chair recommended that Seamus Oates CBE be appointed as a Member. CEO explained that SO is recently retired but brings a wealth of experience and shares the values and ethos of the Trust. SO has agreed to take on this role from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023.</li> <li>▪ Changes to Confidential Reporting policy – CEO asked permission to add an appendix to the current policy which outlines a protocol for raising concerns where there is perceived or actual conflict of interest with senior leader. <b>Directors unanimously approved this change.</b></li> <li>▪ CVs – JH requested that Directors send their updated CVs to him by 11<sup>th</sup> August 2023.</li> </ul> <p><b>Chair asked: Has a venue been agreed for the Directors’ Development Day in October?</b> CEO replied that this is currently being investigated. Hopefully The Source will be available. However, if this is not the case then the Boardroom at A06 will be used.</p> <p>CEO thanked all Directors for their valuable contributions over this school year.</p>	<b>DIRECTORS 11/8/23</b>
<b>16. Review of Risk</b>	
<p>15.1 To consider any new risks identified during the meeting for referral to Trust Committees.</p> <p>None raised.</p>	
<b>17. CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	
<p>16.1 To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting.</p> <p>The updated on schools of intervention will be included as a confidential appendix.</p>	
<b>18. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</b>	

Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	10:00 – 15:00	<b>Directors’ Development Day Venue to be confirmed.</b>
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	17:00 – 19:30	Nexus HQ
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2023	17:00 – 19:30	Teams
<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>