



Nexus MAT Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday 29th June 2022 5 - 7.30 pm Nexus HQ

Attendees:		
Andrew Child	Director/Member & Chair of Trust Board of Directors	Chair
Steve Booth	Director	SB
Peter Castleton	Director	PC
Naveen Judah	Director	NJ
Rachel Potts	Director/Vice Chair of Trust Board of Directors	RP
Ray Palmer	Director	RPa
Sue Shelley	Director	SS
Gillian Askew	Director	GA
Mark Greenwood	Director	MG
Also Present:		
Warren Carratt	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Joel Hardwick	Assistant CEO – Strategy & Partnerships	JH
Barry-John Simmons	MAT Clerk	Clerk
Karen Smith	Chief Finance Officer	KS
Apologies:		
Jacky Tattershall	Assistant CEO – Quality Assurance & Improvement	JT

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	ACTIONS
<p>1.1 Welcome & receive apologies for absence</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the new director MG who gave a brief overview of his background and all those attending introduced themselves.</p> <p>Apologies were received for JT.</p>	
<p>1.2 To accept apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were accepted for JT.</p>	
2. ITEMS OF AOB	
<p>Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered</p> <p>GA asked for the following items to be raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update regards the DfE procurement award and involvement potential <p>The CEO asked for the following items to be raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ David Burdett retirement event ▪ KCSIE update 	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
<p>3.1. Individual Directors to declare any personal, business/governance interests on any item on the agenda</p> <p>The Chair declared an interest in any discussions around Beech and Harlow due to his involvement with the board at Evolve.</p> <p>KS declared an interest in item 7, given it mentioned Maltby Learning Trust where KS is a Director of the trust.</p>	
4. TRUST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES	
<p>4.1. To approve the minutes of the following meeting:</p> <p>The minutes of the meetings held on 25th May 2022 were reviewed and agreed.</p>	
<p>4.2. Review of Action Tracker</p> <p>The outstanding actions on the tracker were reviewed and updated. All actions were reported as complete.</p>	
<p>4.3. Matters arising from the Minutes</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
5. GOVERNANCE CHANGES - LGB CONSULTATION FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REVISIONS TO THE TRUST MODEL FOR	

2022/23 – (To approve)	
<p>The CEO gave an overview of how the consultation with LGBs had gone and shared that although there had been a number of questions asked during the consultation process there had been no concerns raised, which means the CEO is proposing that all schools moving to an academy council model from September, except Becton who would remain as a transition board to complete the de-amalgamation process.</p> <p>The Chair wanted to check Abbey were happy making this move? JH confirmed there were no concerns at Abbey and governors were re-assured that they have an option to change the model if it doesn't work.</p> <p>SS asked has anybody stood down due to the process? The CEO confirmed there have been changes in governors but not related to moving to an academy council.</p> <p>Directors voted unanimously in favour of approving the revisions in the governance model.</p>	
6. BEECH, FOUNTAINDALE, HILLTOP & KELFORD GOVERNANCE CHAIRS 2022-23 (verbal) - To approve	
<p>The CEO gave the background of why it is difficult to secure Chairs long term and explained the position of Chairs at the named schools, along with Pennine View and North Ridge. The CEO recommended to solve the issues at the schools without Chairs that they appoint the new Executive Regional Directors to act as Chairs for the schools where they don't line manage the Headteacher.</p> <p>GA asked will the new Executive Regional Directors want to do it? The CEO wasn't sure but believes there is capacity for them to cover it in September.</p> <p>PC asked if there is any training for Chairs? The CEO confirmed they have network meetings, and a CPD offer is in place, but there is a balancing act in not wanting to add more bureaucracy to the role.</p> <p>SB asked do Chairs get involved in the appraisal of the Headteachers at present? The CEO confirmed it is presently the case, though the CEO is the line manager.</p> <p>RPa asked is this a temporary change or will it be reviewed after a period of time? The CEO explained the Chairs would be appointed on a 4-year term and the preferred model would be someone independent of the Trust. Keeping the model to annual review may be sensible.</p> <p>SS agreed it would help continuity having the new Executive Regional Directors undertake the role.</p> <p>PC questioned whether it would be an issue having less governors from the community taking the role of a Chair. The CEO reassured the board that Vice Chairs will still be from the community, although reiterated the difficulty in recruiting governors local to school.</p> <p>The Chair asked is there a document of who are governors at each school to show where the gaps are in governing bodies? The CEO confirmed that can be made available.</p>	

<p>Directors voted unanimously in favour of approving the proposal with a review in 12 months</p> <p>ACTION: CEO to provide a June 2023 evaluation report on the effectiveness of the Executive Regional Directors Chair Academy Councils.</p>	<p>CEO June 2023</p>
<p>7. 2021-22 STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE REPORT – TO RECEIVE & SCRUTINISE</p>	
<p>The CEO gave an update on the situation regards Maltby Learning Trust (MLT) serving notice on the use of Redwood and how MLT have approached Nexus for a different shared initiative. JH then explained they had focussed on discussing a pathway of blending mainstream and SEND to create an offering for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and to discuss what packages were needed and to identify space for the support. JH confirmed they were aiming to visit Abbey and Horizon to see how a similar arrangement worked.</p> <p>RP asked if there was any progress regards a building space being offered from the local authority to help meet the need of Hilltop in September 2023? JH confirmed they are continuing discussions with the local authority and that he has also had meetings with a cabinet member to try and help this along.</p> <p>NJ asked who the cabinet member was? JH confirmed it was Victoria Cusworth.</p> <p>The CEO gave an update on Holgate and how it has become inadequate and that he is waiting to see what the DfE see as the future of it regards potential help from the Trust. The CEO confirmed they could help the school and that he has written to the DfE to try and ascertain their vision for the school.</p> <p>PC asked about the terminology in the report around Holgate and the system change needed? The CEO explained the background to Holgate and Heritage Park and how the Trust had a proposal to re-designate the schools and create new provision so pupils are within an appropriate provision across the City.</p> <p>RP asked if the Trust are proposing to be an academy sponsor for Holgate why are they not for Heritage Park? The CEO clarified that it was dependent on an inspection grading for Heritage Park, which is currently RI.</p> <p>The Chair asked what is the next step? The CEO confirmed he needs to get an idea of what approach the DfE are wanting and follow this up with a plan of improvement.</p> <p>The Chair asked when will they likely hear from the DfE on this? The CEO confirmed he was at a meeting next Thursday where he is hoping to get a timescale on it, after which he would provide an update.</p> <p>SS asked what HR are putting in place for well-being in September for school staff? The CEO agreed to follow up on this via an agenda item for the next meeting.</p> <p>NJ asked what are the reservations regards Doncaster Local Authority wanting the Bridge to be an Independent college. The CEO confirmed they were in discussion</p>	

with Doncaster Local Authority around this, particularly regards transport.

SB asked for more detail and progress around the grant application of £307k? The CEO explained this was TCaF (Trust Capacity Fund) and how they are hoping for at least 50% of what's been applied for.

GA asked if she could have a look at the application and the CEO agreed to pass it on.

SB asked could the Trust provide further information on the Tendering for an asset Partner? JH confirmed that interviews were scheduled for next week for a partner to support the team as an external partner for tendering purposes.

PC asked if the Trust had any responses to the letters sent to various local authorities regarding care leavers and employment pathways?

The CEO gave an update of the responses from those that had got back to them. Sadly, Doncaster haven't yet responded.

PC asked out of the 20-30 new schools they aimed to grow to, how many would be mainstream schools. The CEO mentioned they have 6 possible mainstream schools within this and new central team staff will help facilitate the growth in mainstream, particularly schools rated as at least Good.

GA asked if they achieve the 20-30 what size would they be considered as a Trust? The CEO replied that they would need to have at least 30 schools to be considered a (small) large Trust. GA asked does the large size mean more funding? The CEO confirmed that the capital allocation increases with the size of a Trust.

GA then asked what extent of the new schools be classed as rural based? The CEO explained rural areas would be more prevalent in Nottinghamshire but more would still be classed as in urban areas.

PC asked if they have any links with Derbyshire? The CEO mentioned that one of the new regional directors have links to Derbyshire Local Authority.

The Chair asked when will we get TCaF result. The CEO said there was no timescale but that JH will check in his meeting with Claire Smith (DfE) tomorrow.

The Chair asked if West Riding was still on track for a 1st September opening? JH explained the issue they have around the OFSTED pre- opening inspection being different to what they have experienced to date, as they require the building to be ready to go before inspecting.

The Chair questioned how the transfer from Evolve to Nexus is going for Beech and Harlow? The CEO reported it was going well, and explained they are still working towards 1st September conversion date.

RP asked is it not a negative amount of carry forward coming over from Evolve? The CEO explained it was a positive rather than negative amount.

GA asked if it was a struggle for the ICT team to provide a more resilient service? JH explained that the ICT team have managed to cover across the schools well.

GA followed this up by asking how embedded was technology in schools? The CEO explained that it is variable across the schools which is an area which is being looked at on the forthcoming away day and that schools with a surplus may need to invest more in technology. The CEO also discussed how Nathan Bingham is looking at improvement across the board.

GA asked about the sustainable / eco schools award and wanted to check if there was more information on this? JH agreed to forward the presentation with the background to this.

GA asked were they aiming to be Carbon net zero by 2030? JH confirmed this was the case.

SS asked should carbon net zero sit in the Asset and Risk Committee? JH agreed it would be a good place to look at how they can monitor and report on it.

The CEO mentioned there was a staffing structure appendix, which generated no questions was commented on as helpful.

8. SCHOOLS DASHBOARD – TO RECEIVE & SCRUTINISE

The CEO gave an overview of any changes and highlighted how they have explanations in the covering report.

RP asked about the Craggs external review? The CEO confirmed it had taken place and that phonics was seen as a strength and that feedback so far had been very complimentary.

RP asked about staffing and sickness and how successful was the new TA staff-bank? The CEO confirmed they were still struggling to attract staff and how they need to be clearer on expectations of the absence of staff to help in this area.

RP asked were there any common threads with the 3 open complaints at Kelford. JH agreed there was a common thread regards parents not wanting a specific child in the same class. JH also explained it was a learning process for the Headteacher regards calming and managing the situation earlier. JH also mentioned all 3 complaints have been supported well and not ignored.

9. MAT DASHBOARD – TO RECEIVE & SCRUTINISE

The CEO mentioned there are not many changes in the report and how a strength was the clarity of the Strategic plan along with the strategic partnerships they have forged nationally. The CEO also mentioned how they have made huge strides with key strategic posts growing in number.

The Chair asked whether SRMSA is a tool and if it was useful? The CEO confirmed it was a tool and KS confirmed she was clear on how it worked and what it involved.

GA asked what does SRMSA stand for? KS confirmed it stood for School Resource Management Self-Assessment.

10. BUDGET MONITORING – TO RECEIVE & SCRUTINISE	
<p>KS gave an overview of forecasts at end of April and how there had been few movements, and gave figures regards surplus and carry forward, whilst assuring the Board they were in a strong budget position overall. KS went on to give headlines on specific schools, financial risks and mitigations.</p> <p>GA asked is negative good? KS confirmed it was.</p> <p>The Chair asked can they change this numerical designation? KS agreed it would help if green could represent a good position with red the opposite as well as positive representing good.</p> <p>KS to review the budget report format and consult with the A&R committee members over July/August on a revised format for 2022-23. Update to be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p>ACTION:KS</p> <p>SS asked about the increase in utility costs and how we are managing it? KS explained that they had forecasts built that were based on local authority estimates.</p> <p>PC asked is there anything we provide to support to families with hardships? The CEO said from a fair funding standpoint it is difficult to do this within an education setting, although pastoral support and family support and creative funding for those who need it most is always looked at.</p> <p>RP asked about the table on page 9 having a long list of outstanding amounts, and whether this was inevitable? KS made reassurances that there were no big risks from any of those listed.</p> <p>RPa questioned if the Trust have had fixed energy deals in the past? The CEO confirmed they had local authority collective agreements.</p> <p>NJ asked when budgeting would it be advisable to have small provisions at school levels for bad debts? KS agreed she will have a look at the extent of the debts.</p> <p>SB questioned whether the graph provided was useful anymore? KS was happy to not include it in future reporting.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that the layout of future reports might be worth looking at. The CEO agreed they can include this in the next Audit and Risk meeting.</p> <p>MG asked about asset review maintenance of buildings. JH confirmed this was being looked at.</p> <p>SB asked why the four schools with a predicted deficit in year showed nothing negative on the cashflow? KS confirmed the cashflow was more at a Trust level. KS also added as they have one central bank account the auditors are happy with a consolidated cashflow.</p> <p>NJ questioned why on the balance sheet do you not see restricted and unrestricted</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">KS 20/07/23</p>

<p>reserves? KS explained it was difficult to split the two until year end but that she could speak to auditors regards this.</p> <p>SS asked about revenue in reserves? The CEO explained they were historical reserves from schools being inherited and went on to explain how they need to be used.</p> <p>SB passed on thanks to KS for the report.</p>	
<p>11. POLICY UPDATE REPORT – TO APPROVE</p>	
<p>SS wanted clarification on whether access to all the relevant policies had been provided. The CEO explained only those with material changes were included</p> <p>Directors voted unanimously in favour of approving the relevant Policies.</p>	
<p>12. EXTERNAL REVIEW – PHASE 1 FOCUS – TO RECEIVE</p>	
<p>The CEO gave an overview of the external review and how it would take place and who was covering which area.</p>	
<p>13. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS – (Discussion ahead of July Meeting)</p>	
<p>The CEO recommended MG to be part of the Standards committee and advised MG will attend next meeting as an observer.</p> <p>The CEO asked for directors to put themselves forward to the two committee Chair roles.</p>	
<p>14. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</p>	
<p>GA updated the Board on the DfE commercial capability and multi academy trust project and explained the two different options they could apply to be part of (procurement diagnostic or procurement excellence programme). GA confirmed she had signalled her interest in Nexus taking part to the DfE, with a particular interest in the procurement diagnostic focus and went on to explain the benefit of taking part in this when applying for grants and awards etc and the other values of undertaking it.</p> <p>The Chair commented that he was excited about the option to take part and that it should tighten up procurement process. GA explained how it would fill gaps and provide real vigour to their processes. GA said she would keep the Board updated until the point they needed to give it the go ahead or not.</p> <p>SB asked how much will it cost and GA confirmed it was fully funded but that it would require time and effort.</p> <p>The CEO explained there was a strategic leadership away day at Aston Hall planned on the Friday 8th July and at the end of the day (2.30pm) they were going to celebrate Dave Burdett’s retirement and that all directors would be welcome if available.</p> <p>The CEO explained the KCSIE has been updated and stated that governors do not need the same level of safeguard training as staff and that an update regards safeguarding will be given to directors.</p>	

SS asked has the academies handbook been updated. The CEO confirmed this had not yet happened.	
15. REVIEW OF RISK	
To consider any new risks identified during the meeting for referral to Trust Committees. No specific items raised.	
16. CONFIDENTIALITY	
To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting.	
17. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS	

Wednesday 20 th July 2022	17:00 – 19:30	Via Teams
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Minutes approved

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE