



Nexus Board of Directors
Wednesday 19th May 2021 5 - 7.30pm
via MS Teams

Attendees:		
Andrew Child	Director / Member & Chair of Trust Board of Directors	Chair
Gill Askew	Director	GA
Steve Booth	Director	SB
Peter Castleton	Director	PC
John Coleman	Director	JC
Ray Palmer	Director	RPa
Rachel Potts	Director/Vice Chair of Trust Board of Directors	RP
Sue Shelley	Director	SS
Also Present:		
Warren Carratt	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Joel Hardwick	Assistant CEO – Strategy & Partnerships	JH
Emma Sheedy	Governance Clerk	Clerk
Jacky Tattershall	Assistant CEO – School Improvement	JT
Apologies:		
Naveen Judah	Director	NJ
Jo Smith	Director	JS

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	ACTIONS
1.1 Welcome & receive apologies for absence Apologies were received from JS and NJ.	
1.2 To accept apologies for absence Apologies were accepted from JS and NJ.	
2. ITEMS OF AOB	
Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered. None.	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
3.1. Individual Directors to declare any personal, business/governance interests on any item on the agenda None.	
4. TRUST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES	
4.1. To approve the minutes of the following meeting: The minutes of the meeting held on 28 th April 2021 were reviewed and agreed.	
4.2. Review of Action Tracker The outstanding actions on the tracker were reviewed and updated.	
4.3. Matters arising from the Minutes There were no matters arising.	
5. VOYAGER ACADEMY UPDATE	
The CEO provided a verbal update and advised that Doncaster LA are supportive of the Trust taking the identified site on but cannot provide certainty for September 2021. The LA would also want to involve elected members to understand their views. JH is in the process of further discussions with Barnsley & Sheffield LAs to try and meet their sufficiency needs and is exploring possibilities with Knight Frank, around a property developed scheme at J36 of the M1. It was agreed this item would only reappear on future agendas if appropriate. SS requested the Risk Log be updated with the latest position for information. ACTION: JH to update the Risk Log regarding Voyager Academy.	JH 23/06/21
6. SWOT ANALYSIS – DISCUSSION	
AC provided context around the analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, prepared by the CEO, JH and JT, and explained this is Part 1 of a two-part exercise. Discussion and challenge was as follows: Strengths The Chair queried why connections and partnerships with Parent Carer Forums, Schools Forum, Confederation of School Trusts, National Governance	

Association, Doncaster Opportunity Area, South Yorkshire Futures/Sheffield Hallam, Headteacher Board, regular meetings with LA commissioners, partnership with Landmarks to strengthen 19+ is a strength. The CEO spoke positively about opportunities to improve connections and partnerships following recent structure and personnel changes. **RP further queried connections and partnerships and asked if these are with the key influencers** and the CEO agreed they are and provided several examples to support this.

SB queried minimal standardisation of teaching and learning processes as a strength, weakness, opportunity and threat and the CEO provided context and explained this appealed to many of the schools that elected to join the Trust because it's not 'one size fits all'. Others could view this as; a strength for the Trust, a weakness by the DfE, an opportunity to co-create alignment and a threat because future schools could want to join after that alignment has taken place collegiately.

GA asked if a stakeholder mapping exercise has been carried out and if the word 'strong' has been defined and the CEO explained this has not been carried out as a formal exercise. The CEO provided context regarding his definition of a strong relationship with the LAs, which is an LA willing to work with the Trust so we can grow our offer to help meet their increase in need and demand for places. JH provided input and context. **SS supported GA's challenge and asked about the judgement of others and our reputation.**

GA asked if the Trust has relationships with parent/carer forums in Barnsley and the CEO explained the Trust is not an established provider in Barnsley but we do have positive relationships with the families we serve there.

GA queried the mix of academies, not just special schools, and we cover the wider range of SEND including hospitals schools = diverse mix of expertise as a strength and JT provided context.

RPa queried financial security in the medium term and for this to be qualified and the CEO defined 'medium term' as three to five years. **RPa further queried if this then becomes a threat** and the CEO highlighted the high needs funding pressures, and talked about where this is captured in Threats.

RPa queried the addition of Investors in People as a strength and the CEO noted this and referred to the strong retention rates of staff.

JC talked about our collaborative SI approach as a strength and that we could use this for wider good and JH spoke about the Trust's values and ethos.

JC asked whether we, or our partners, knew what our approach to major contemporary issues was: 1. Mental Health; 2. Education and Employability; 3. Diversity and Inclusion; 4. Environment and sustainability and this was noted.

RP asked about the proposed scale of the Trust and the CEO shared his opinion.

PC asked for somebody to expand on the standardisation of T&L processes and if the principles of pedagogy could be defined and then shared and JT spoke about the core tasks of Network and Mandate Groups who define the guiding principles,

which informs minimal expectation across the Trust and a series of documents to define curriculum. **JC commented that it would be wonderful to capture and publish our process** and a lengthy conversation followed regarding this diluting our USP if we publish all we do for other MATs to co-opt as their own.

Weaknesses

RP queried perceptions of central school improvement capacity, or lack therefore and the CEO advised he believes this is the RSC's office perception. **JC added the perceptions of others is important.**

SB asked what an NLE is and the CEO advised it is a National Leader of Education, which is a license to go into other schools to provide improvement support. **SB queried if this should be defined as a weakness** and the CEO explained this could reduce opportunities.

GA asked about the supply of new Directors and LGB members and the CEO spoke about the difficulties with LGB members, as some meetings take place during the day to support caring commitments. The CEO added he does not believe this weakness is unique to the Trust.

Opportunities

SB asked what opportunities flow from strong connections to two South Yorkshire Teaching School Hubs and the CEO explained it provides opportunity to broaden our partnerships and networks.

GA spoke about the social media opportunity to develop innovative, forward-thinking communications strategy and provide context regarding discussion at a Craggs LGB recently.

Threats

GA asked why some Trusts have been defined as a threat and the CEO explained his rationale. **JC queried if their reputation is stronger than ours is** and the CEO provided context.

RP queried the recent high profile of special school safeguarding failings and Ofsted concerns and JT provided context.

SB queried population decline and JH explained about the decline in school rolls nationally linked to the post war birth rate profile and projections by the ONS.

The Chair asked about the perceived isolation of Craggs as sole mainstream primary and if this could be perceived as an opportunity and the CEO believes the RSC would push back on approval for individual additional mainstream schools, unless the MAT had more defined resource and capacity centrally.

SS queried unwillingness of other MATs to give up what they have created, leading to a market place of would be acquirers and the CEO provided context.

It was agreed for discussion to resume at the July Board Meeting.

7. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS		
7.1. There was a discussion regarding the vacant Director position and it was agreed to keep the position open and review in six months. ACTION: Review the vacant Director position.		ALL 24/11/2021
7.2. Following discussion, it was agreed for the June meeting to take place face-to-face with the option for people to Teams in, but this will be confirmed nearer the time based on Government guidance. The CEO explained that if social distancing is in place then the meeting room would only accommodate three directors. The CEO felt a hybrid model could only work if the Chair was physically present. ACTION: CEO to update Directors regarding the next meeting – if face-to-face or hybrid.		CEO 21/06/21
8. REVIEW OF RISK		
To consider any new risks identified during the meeting for referral to Trust Committees.		
There were no items deemed as a risk beyond those discussed in the covering reports.		
9. CONFIDENTIALITY		
To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting.		
None.		
10. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS		
Wednesday 23rd June 2021	17:00 – 19:30	Nexus Headquarters - TBC
Wednesday 28th July 2021	17:00 – 19:30	Nexus Headquarters

Minutes approved

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE