

**MINUTES OF THE SCHOOLS' TRANSFORMATION BOARD**  
**WEDNESDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2008**

**MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOLS TRANSFORMATION BOARD**

**\* INDICATES MEMBERS PRESENT**

Name	Title	Organisation
*Cllr Liz Santry	Chair of STB & Cabinet Member for Children & Young People	LB Haringey
Cllr Kaushika Amin	Councillor	LB Haringey
*Cllr Gail Engert	Councillor	LB Haringey
*Cllr Bob Harris	Councillor	LB Haringey
Roz Hudson	Head Teacher	Alexandra Park School
*Stephanie Gold	Chair of Governors	Alexandra Park School
Keith Horrell	Head Teacher	Blanche Nevile School
Martyn Henson (substituting for A. Onac)	Deputy Head Teacher	Fortismere School
Jane Farrell	Chair of Governors	Fortismere School
*Tony Hartney	Head Teacher	Gladesmore School
Vacancy	Governor	Gladesmore School
*Patrick Cozier	Head Teacher	Highgate Wood School
Chris Parr	Governor	Highgate Wood School
Andy Yarrow	Head Teacher	Hornsey School
Karen Christie	Chair of Governors	Hornsey School
June Alexis	Head Teacher	John Loughborough School
Keith Davidson	Governor	John Loughborough School
Yolande Burgess	Area Manager	LSC
*Andy Kilpatrick	Head Teacher	Northumberland Park School
Vacancy	Governor	Northumberland Park School
*Alex Atherton	Head teacher	Park View Academy
Vacancy	Governor	Park View Academy
Michael Edwards	PfS Project Director	Partnership for Schools
*Bev Randall	Acting Head of Centre	Pupil Support Centre
June Jarrett	Principal	Sixth Form Centre
*Dr Edgar Neufeld	Chair of Governors	Sixth Form Centre
Colm Hickey	Head Teacher	St Thomas More School
*Mark Rowland	Deputy Head teacher	St Thomas More School
Vacancy	Governor	St Thomas More School
Nigel Spears	Representative	Archdiocese of Westminster
*Margaret Sumner	Head teacher	William C Harvey School
Joan McVittie	Head teacher	Woodside High School
Vacancy	Governor	Woodside High School
*Tony Brockman	Representative	Haringey Teacher's

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		Panel
<b>Also present</b>		
Bernadette Serieux	DCSF	
Tom Richardson	DCSF	
*Linda Townsend	Deputy Head	Woodside High School
*Martin Doyle	Head Teacher	Moselle School
* Paul Guenault	ICT Forum Rep	
<b>OFFICERS SUPPORTING THE STB</b>		
*Sharon Shoesmith	Director of Children and Young People's Service	LB Haringey
*Gordon Smith	Project Director - BSF	LB Haringey
*David Williamson	Head of Secondary Innovations	LB Haringey
*Janette Karklins	Deputy Director of Schools Standards	LB Haringey
*Clifford Hart	Clerk to the Board - Member Services – OD& L	LB Haringey

**LC15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Joan McVittie, Colm Hickey, Nigel Spears, June Jarrett, Michael Edwards, Aydin Onac, Cllr Amin, Andy Yarrow, and Roz Hudson, and for lateness from Cllr Bob Harris.

**LC16. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business.

**NOTED**

**LC17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interests.

**NOTED**

**LC18. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 JANUARY 2008**

The Chair asked if there were any points of clarification.

Mr Brockman referred to Minute LC6 – page 4 – and commented that it was his recollection that he thought that the proposals had been agreed subject to wider consultation and that this was a subtle difference to what had been actually stated.

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Mr Williamson responded that his recollection was the minute was correct as stated and that in the sense of Mr Brockman's recollections the matter was covered by 'any other points that emerged.....' It was the case that further discussions/consultation had taken place and feedback had been received and taken account of.

Mr Brockman referred to page 6, para 5 and asked that in respect of his comments the 1st sentence be replaced by:

"In reference to a number of points raised Tony Brockman indicated that the Haringey Teachers' Panel generally opposed hard federations and particularly those with an Executive Head. Other types of federations could deliver educational benefits."

The Chair accepted the amendment as detailed by Mr Brockman.

### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Schools' Transformation Board held on 30 January be agreed subject to the following amendment:

Page 6, para 5 and 1st sentence be replaced by:

"In reference to a number of points raised Tony Brockman indicated that the Haringey Teachers' Panel generally opposed hard federations and particularly those with an Executive Head. Other types of federations could deliver educational benefits."

### **MATTERS ARISING**

- i. Mr Williamson advised that there had been a full ICT briefing the previous day which had been extremely useful and comments arising from the briefing had been taken account of by officers.

Both Mr Atherton and Mr Kilpatrick commented that the presentation had been both polished and informative and that the briefing was exactly what was required.

### **LC19. CHOICE, DIVERSITY AND FAIR ACCESS - PRESENTATION BY BERNADETTE SERIEUX AND TOM RICHARDSON - DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES.**

In a brief introduction of the item Sharon Shoesmith welcomed Bernadette Serieux and Tom Richardson from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to the meeting. Ms Shoesmith informed the Board of her discussions with both Ms Serieux and Mr Richardson previously where a range of ideas had been discussed in relation to specialist, hard federation, and Trust status. In advising that it was the case that every school with the exception of John Loughborough, was a specialist school, the idea of federation – both hard and soft had been the subject of some considerable discussion at the previous meeting where a number of views had been expressed. As a result it was felt appropriate to have the issues further aired by the DCSF as the SFC II was due for submission on 29 February 2008, and would be reflective of those discussions. Ms Shoesmith asked that both Ms Serieux and Mr Richardson to outline their roles and talk a little about Trust and Foundation status.

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Bernadette Serieux outlined her role and responsibilities within the Schools Commissioning service of the DCSF, as lead policy manager for Trusts/Foundations implementation in line with Government's Children's Plan. In respect of Trust schools Ms Serieux advised that the concept was not new and in essence they were Foundation schools, but as defined under the provisions of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The Act clearly defined what a Trust school could do, and the status, role and function of the Governing Body. Ms Serieux further commented on the assistance given by the DCSF in conjunction with Office of the Schools Commissioner to assist schools in reaching a decision in terms of trust status the need to dispel myths and misunderstandings, which she also hoped Mr Richardson and she would be able to do this evening. In assisting schools through this process the DCSF helped schools to come to a conclusion as to what was right from the school's perspective.

Tom Richardson advised the Board that he worked in the same division as Ms Serieux and led on Federations. In terms of federation status Mr Richardson highlighted diversity, benefits for schools in having shared facilities and staff, and allowing specialism. There were similarities with Trust status in that schools would be working together.

Ms Serieux commented that what this meant was that it was accepted that schools currently worked in collaboration with each other informally or otherwise. Federation status would cement that collaboration arrangement and also allow a federation to go externally in seeking funding, partnership and working with local businesses. Whilst it was accepted that this was done informally it was often at the driving of one or two individuals, and it had been found to be the case that when certain 'drivers' either moved on or retired then these loose arrangements faltered. By entering into federation status this formalised loose arrangements and the commitment to carrying on the process collectively whether main players remained or not.

Ms Serieux commented that Trust status was a formal recognition of the Federation process and locked in the range and skills of schools. It enabled schools to have expansion of external partnerships and Trust status could be applied for singularly or collectively. There could also be a range of different trust schools having such status with informal/formal partnerships, common goals, and built in expansion of particular specialism. Schools in a 'hard' federation could allow for 1 Head Teacher with 1 single governing body, and shared resources and core budgets. Schools could work together collectively to acquire trust status without being federated. Schools could also federate without a Trust, and equally a Trust can support several schools with no federation. However, federations would find it helpful to have a Trust who could reinforce the long-term agreement between schools.

With regard to the introduction of Trust Schools 30 had come into being in 2007 with 70 expected to acquire Trust status shortly. With Trust status partnership was able to be forged with external parties – both locally and nationally. In terms of the Trust's relationship with the Local Authority a Trust school would remain part of the family of local authority maintained schools, and unlike old Grant Maintained (GM) schools a Trust school did not opt out, whereas GM schools 'opted out' and were funded directly. In terms of selection, Trust schools would have to act in accordance with the Admissions Code and would not be able to introduce any new selection unlike the GM schools that could. Trust schools would also be required to play their full part in taking

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hard to place pupils, having fair admissions and working with other schools in admissions forums and co-ordinated admissions arrangements.

In terms of a Trust School's Governing Body's functions Ms Serieux advised that the governing body would be the employer of staff rather than the local authority, and the governing body would be responsible for setting admissions arrangements (in accordance with the law and the Admissions Code). In addition the governing body would continue to have day to day control of the school's land and assets (which the Trust would hold on trust for the school). A Trust would appoint some of the governors which would mean that a school was able to strengthen its relationship with partners, and their energy and expertise could support the school's leadership and direction.

The Chair thanked Ms Serieux and Mr Richardson for their succinct briefing.

The Board then undertook a wide ranging discussion in respect of the briefing, the main points being:-

- The positives for federation status were clear whilst the advantages for Trust status were not so clear and that it was a fact that schools, whether it be individually or through the current federation arrangements already did have external links with working partnerships with private sector organisations, as well as with other schools in terms of specialism and the question was what could a trust actually do that a school did not do, or could not do already. Responses reiterated the introductory comments in relationship to benefits and the difference between federation and trust status. The decision to go for Trust status would be a voluntary one for the current governing body of a school, after consulting with parents and other local stakeholders and publishing formal proposals.
- The general lack of local businesses as partners and clarification that the Office of the Schools Commissioner (OSC) would assist in identifying partners from an already established pool of businesses, and that the OSC would act as brokers to ensure there were opportunities. It was the case that unlike Academies there would not be requests made to businesses to fund or put money in to the trust but more so to put in time/expertise/business acumen
- That the Greig Academy was not currently part of the STB and whether it should actually be invited to be, and responses that the Academy status was directly funded by DCSF and therefore in a different category to Trust schools, but that it was possible for an Academy school to cease being an academy school and acquire trust status but the foundation of each concept legally did not allow for both, and that it was an either/or choice
- The likely conflicts occurring in respect of disagreements between Trusts and their Governing bodies over a strategy if the Governing body were not to agree with the Trust's approach, and also the financial status of those external partners and how the Trust would ensure their suitability. Responses given were that it would be the case that the Governing body would agree the strategic approach and direction of travel and then the school would undertake to pursue that direction. It would be for the Governing body to identify strategic partners and the school would then agree. Such partners could include the local PCT, GPs etc, as well as other businesses in the local area and the

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partnerships would be managed through and by the Trust. As with any partnership link there would have to be full assessment of a partner's viability etc.

- The partnership arrangements with Universities and whether there would be any likely restrictions and confirmation that there no restrictions placed on such links and that different models of partnership could be forged
- The question of financial arrangements and how would funding etc be channelled though and confirmation that this would be via the Local Authority to the schools directly, but not through the Trust. The establishment of the Trust would require clearance through the normal processes via Company's House and the Charity Commission with proper safeguards to any proposed arrangements
- The current general difficulties that schools may have in attempting have full governing body participation and how this would be overcome by Trust status, and that little was likely to change in terms of willingness to participate
- That in terms of the 30 odd established Trusts there had been little evidence or information, and that the fundamental issue was the effects of such arrangements on the children and young people attending schools and the consequential benefits. Clarification was given that the 30 trusts were in existence under different models and that encouragement was given to having dialogue with the Head Teachers at the established Trust schools so they could assist in dispelling concerns and also how partnerships had been formed, as well as the actual benefits for pupils. It had been the case that those schools that had pursued trust status had fully involved pupils in the process and were assisted in doing so by the DCSF and OSC to ensure that pupils were appraised and supportive of the trust status.
- In response to a number of concerns in relation to the likely falling in standards as a result of establishing a Trust, and whether the focus of the trust might more be on financial as opposed to academic achievement, it was the case that Trusts themselves would not be involved in the raising of standards and that this would still remain in the remit of schools, and the Governing body of a school would still be the body that considered performance and academic achievement. The role of the DCSF/OSC was to ensure that schools had before them the clear positives and negatives of Trust status as part of the Government's overall Strategy for Change.
- With regard to further concerns of the possible self interests of a Governing body and the safeguards to ensure that a Governing body would not pursue a route not favoured by the school it was confirmed that the Local Authority would remain as challenger to such actions and that the current overall role of the Local Authority would not alter if a school adopted Trust status
- With regard to concerns regarding land sale it was advised that if a Trust wanted to dispose of land then it would have to consult the governing body of the school. If the governing body wished to dispose of land it must ask the Trust to agree – in practice as the governing body would include Trust appointed governors this should be a fairly automatic process. The Trust must

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then inform the local authority of their plans to dispose of non-playing field land. Local authorities would be able object to proposals if it was felt that it was not in the interest of the school in the long term, or would disadvantage the wider community. The Local authority would also be able to object to reinvestment proposals and to claim a share of the proceeds attributable to public investment in the land. Where local agreement cannot be reached, the matter would be referred to the schools adjudicator for resolution. Local authorities would not be able to force a Trust to sell any surplus land to raise money

The Chair, in drawing the discussion to a close commented that it had been a useful exercise in answering a number of the concerns expressed.

Ms Shoesmith commented that there had been some considerable commitment to federation status in the soft guise and that in taking the process forward to hard status the concept of Trust status and benefits would be explored. The SFC II document would detail in full and be reflective of the hard federation status concept. Ms Shoesmith advised that in terms of the a Choice/Diversity agenda a Champion had been appointed who would take the process forward, and it was important to keep the dialogue open in terms of Trust status.

The Chair and Ms Shoesmith thanked both Ms Serieux and Mr Richardson for their attendance.

**LC20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

NIL.

**LC21. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chair advised that the next meeting of the Board would take place on Wednesday 26 March 2008 at 18.00hrs.

**NOTED**

The meeting ended at 19.40hrs.

**Councillor Liz Santry**  
**Chair**