

**MINUTES**  
**YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACADEMY AND THE SKILLS HUB**  
**LOCAL GOVERNING BODY (LGB) MEETING ON**  
**WEDNESDAY 25 NOVEMBER AT 3 PM (VIRTUALLY)**

**Members present:** Amy Thoreau, Chair (AT)  
Kathrine Everett, Vice-Chair (KE)  
Paul Chambers, Principal, The Skills Hub (PC)  
Kayser Izard, Principal, Young People's Academy (KI)  
Sarah Brooks (SB)  
Isobel Callaby (IC)  
Michele Gibbons (MG)  
Chike Nnalue (CN)

**In attendance:** Kayleigh Franklin, OHCAT Management Accountant, NW  
London Hub (KF)  
Belle Thomas, Deputy Principal, YPA (BT)  
Susanne Wicks, Clerk (SW)

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

AT opened the meeting and welcomed all present. She outlined some ground rules to ensure the virtual meeting runs smoothly.

AT welcomed KI to the Orchard Hill Family as the new Principal of YPA and gave thanks to AT for her hard work covering the role.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were apologies for absence from Melissa McLean. Sunny Kumar and Tom Crowe did not attend the meeting.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The clerk would contact those who have not already completed a form this academic year.

**4. SKILLS AUDIT**

The clerk would contact those who have not already completed a form this academic year.

**5. CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENTS**

- i The clerk will liaise with PC about recruitment of a parent governor.
- ii The LGB noted that AT was appointed Chair of the LGB for this academic year by the Board in July.
- iii The LGB recommended the appointment of KE as vice-chair for the academic year 2020-21.

**6. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2020 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and would be signed by the chair at the earliest opportunity.

## 7. **MATTERS NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA**

- i SW to circulate the Covid-19 appendices to the Safeguarding Policy and Local Offer for each school.
- ii CN hasn't been able to meet with IC due to Covid-19 restrictions and undertook to arrange a meeting as soon as possible.

## 8. **FINANCE AND FUNDING**

### i. Young People's Academy Final Accounts 2019-20

KF noted that the final accounts remain draft until they had been audited but were unlikely to change a great deal.

KF reported that the school ended the year in a positive position, with a surplus of £176K, which was not budgeted but was due to a range of factors, largely income exceeding budget by £64K. KF advised that this was due to successful negotiations with the local authority around rates of funding for out of borough students. There was also some further income for off-site provision of alternative education.

KF also outlined the savings made, largely due to the measures in place to minimise the risks around Covid-19. There were savings on curriculum, staffing, CPD and other operating costs.

At year-end, £335K was added to the reserves leading to a total of £597K. A contribution of £30K has been added to the OHCAT reserves in accordance with the revised Reserves Policy. This amounts to 101 days against a target of 45-60 days. Although the Trust is not required to give a financial health rating for Academies, its policy is to do so for internal use and the grade for YPA is Outstanding.

### ii. Young People's Academy Management Accounts September 2020

KF introduced the September management accounts, flagging that it was only the first month of the budget. She noted that the budget is showing a £9K surplus against a budgeted deficit of £6K but encouraged Governors to keep in mind that this will be a very challenging year for the school's finances with spending on students needed to re-engage them into learning.

KF advised that student number are currently at 57 against 58 set in the budget which is very positive for this school which tends to have larger numbers in higher year groups. The local authority has agreed additional funding for specific students amounting to £21K and commended the school for its pro-active approach to consulting with the local authority.

The staffing costs ratio is slightly low this month at 66% due to levels of agency staff. KF explained that the premises budget is slightly overspent due to works needed at the start of term which had to be addressed immediately.

KF advised that the OHCAT Finance Team is implementing new finance software which is experiencing some inevitable teething problems. She confirmed that there were no issues causing concern at this stage. BT

added that it is hoped that there will be 60 students on roll by February half-term.

iii. The Skills Hub Final Accounts 2019-20

KF reported that the year ended with a surplus of £143K against a budgeted £7K surplus. The total income was lower than budgeted, with fewer students admitted than the 113 in the budget. The school must have between 68 to 71 students to avoid a clawback in funding from the local authority and they were successful in that regard, with 98 students on roll at the end of the year.

KF reminded Governors of the challenge for a setting such as this to manage their budget, but although income was £110K lower than budgeted, there were savings made due to Covid-19, such as curriculum, premises, staffing and operating costs.

At year-end, £143K was added to the reserves leading to a total of £859K. amounts to 158 days against a target of 45-60 days, with a financial health grade of Outstanding.

iv. The Skills Hub Management Accounts September 2020

KF introduced the September management accounts, flagging that it was only the first month of the budget. She noted that the budget is showing a £9K surplus against a budgeted deficit of £17K.

KF reminded Governors that a deficit budget had been set for 2020-21 due to the uncertainty around student numbers. In September there were 64 on roll, 37 of whom were students who had been permanently excluded. The forecast has been appropriately adjusted and engagement with LB Hillingdon is much more positive. They have agreed to fund 64 placed during this term, and the school will contribute some costs from their reserves.

KF reported that salary expenditure is at 75% against a budgeted 80%, as the school has deliberately not sought to recruit to some vacancies. The premises and curriculum budgets are on target. KF and PC meet every two weeks to go through the budget and monitor the risks.

AT thanked KF for her very thorough reports.

Reports received.

## 9. **PRINCIPAL'S REPORTS**

i. Young People's Academy

KI presented her report and particularly highlighted the "what is working well" and "how do we move forwards" sections under each of the five categories. She also pointed Governors' attention to the data supplied in the appendices and welcomed comments and questions.

CN asked if there is normally a spike in the number of bullying incidents in the autumn term and BT confirmed that there was in a normal year. Given the extraordinary circumstances this year, there had been a higher than average spike as students settle back into school after, for some, a long period of absence. She also flagged that the majority of incidents could be attributed to three specific students, and appropriate action has been taken to address this. BT explained that there can also be incidents of bullying among new Year 7 students as they settle in. She reassured Governors that there has been great improvement as the term has progressed. IC added that all incidents are recorded on the MyConcern software and undertook to demonstrate to CN how this is done when they are next able to meet.

KI explained how Classroom Monitor is being used to ensure that evidence can be captured on students' progress and the impact of any interventions. BT also reported that she is finalising a Social and Emotional Development matrix which will enable even better analysis of students' progress.

MG commended staff for all the work done during the lockdown and asked for an update on staff morale and wellbeing. KI reassured Governors that expectations of staff are realistic, and SLT make efforts to reduce their workload where possible. KI and BT are working on a 'Covid ready' plan to ensure that learning can continue should a student or member of staff be forced to self-isolate.

Noting the negative impact that Covid-19 has had on attendance across the country, CN asked what interventions and measures the school has put in place to meet this challenge. KI explained that the Skills Coaches make daily contact with those not attending schools, and there have been home visits with those who are hard to reach. Where needed, the school maintains contact with outside agencies, such as Social Care. BT added that attendance this term compares well with last year, and students seem to welcome being back in school. KI acknowledged the challenge in monitoring students' work when they are not in school and support is given where needed, such as supplying IT devices.

ii. The Skills Hub

PC gave a detailed introduction to his report, highlighting the focus, commitment and resilience of all staff at the Skills Hub who have gone beyond the call of duty during this very challenging time.

PC advised that the Transitions Co-ordinator has had a positive impact and organised an event in August for results day, with students accessing careers advice and support. There is now increased focus on the Year 11 cohort who are understandably anxious about their future beyond school. Staff are looking at how best to work with those students struggling to engage and access education due to challenging issues outside school and are trying to make the most of the support and guidance available, such as access to sporting or music facilities.

PC flagged the work that has been done by the Safeguarding Team during this time, explaining that some students were contacted on a daily basis with support given to them and, in some cases, their family. Staff at both schools have observed with increasing concern a link between young people with complex SEN and mental health issues and are considering the appointment of a joint SENCO across both schools.

Attendance so far this term has been 86% which compares well against the national average for a PRU which is 74%. As with the YPA, students seem to want to be in school and are pleased to be in a safe space. Behaviour was better than expected with a friendly atmosphere in school. Assemblies have been re-introduced as they are integral to school life and are well received by the learners.

PC reported that young people are being offered the opportunity to undertake short AQA courses, with those most suitable being identified by the Assistant Principal.

PC described a recent visit to the school by the singer Mica Paris and the impact it had on the young people. Governors will be able to see the film on 'Songs of Praise' on 27 December 2020.

PC welcomed comments and questions. KE commended PC and all of his staff for their hard work which is evident in the improvements made and asked how this is celebrated with staff. PC advised that staff are celebrated every day, but at the end of the first half-term there was a Halloween event for staff, with food and music. IC added that PC has an open-door policy for staff, with all confident to approach him for guidance and support.

PC shared an excerpt from a short film which is being developed for prospective parents who may have some concerns about their child attending the school. The film also celebrates staff and gives them a chance to share their stories. Governors were very pleased to view the film and look forward to watching the final version.

AT reported that she was able to visit this school this term and was welcomed by all.

AT thanked KI and PC for their very thorough reports.

Reports received.

## **10. GOVERNOR VISITS, DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**

### Portfolio Management

AT asked all Governors to indicate, by email to the clerk, their preferred portfolio area by Friday 5 December. She would then review all the allocations and report back to everyone.

Training and Development

AT confirmed that an induction session would be arranged at the earliest suitable date.

**11. PAY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

AT confirmed that the Pay Committee met on 23 October 2020 and received detailed reports from AT and PC to support their recommendations on teacher pay for this academic year. AT confirmed that the process was robust and thorough scrutiny had taken place.

**12. POLICES AND PROCEDURES**

Governors noted the policies and procedures approved via authority delegated to the Chairs of the OHC&AT Board on 3 July 2020

**13. KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION 2020**

Governors noted that 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' has been updated with effect from September 2020. The latest version is available on GovernorHub. All relevant OHC&AT policies have been amended to reflect the changes and a summary of the changes has been circulated to Safeguarding Portfolio governors.

**14. GOVERNANCE HANDBOOK OCTOBER 2020**

Governors noted that the Governance Handbook has been updated with effect from October 2020. The latest version is available on GovernorHub.

**15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No items were raised.

**16. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

- Wednesday 17 March 2021 at 3 pm
- Wednesday 16 June 2021 at 3 pm

**17. CONFIDENTIALITY**

No items were deemed confidential.

The meeting ended at: 4.50 pm

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Amy Thoreau, Chair**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_