

**MINUTES OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACADEMY (YPA) / THE SKILLS HUB
(TSH) LOCAL GOVERNING BODY (LGB) MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8TH
NOVEMBER 2017 at 11.00am**

Members: Mr E Lumley (Chair)
* Ms K Everett (Vice Chair)
Miss L Cornwell (Headteacher)
Mrs I Callaby
Councillor P Davis
* Ms T Oatway

* Denotes absence

Also Present: Ms S Challenger – Clerk
Mrs B Scott – Head of Finance (Academies)
Miss M Gibbons – Observer / potential new LGB member

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Ms Everett. Ms Oatway did not attend.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Governors welcomed Miss Gibbons to the meeting. Miss Gibbons leads on teacher training at Harlington School and had been recommended by outgoing governor Liz Horrigan. Mr Lumley thanked Miss Gibbons for bringing her expertise to the LGB. Governors introduced themselves.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no new declarations of interest. Ms Challenger circulated declaration of interest forms to governors who had not yet completed one.

4. SKILLS AUDIT

Ms Challenger circulated skills audit forms to governors who had not yet completed one.

5. CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENTS

- i) Mr Lumley confirmed that he is happy to stand again as Chair of Governors. No other nominations were received. Governors unanimously **APPROVED** the appointment. This will be ratified by the OHCAT Board of Directors on 15.12.17.
- ii) Ms Challenger said that Ms Everett has indicated that she will be happy to stand again as Vice Chair. There were no other nominations. Governors unanimously **APPROVED** the appointment. This will be ratified by the OHCAT Board of Directors on 15.12.17.

- iii) Governors **NOTED** that no nominations for staff governor at YPA have been received. Miss Cornwell said she would re-advertise the vacancy and Mrs Callaby said she would talk to staff about the role.
- iv) Governors **NOTED** that again no nominations have been received for parent governor at TSH. Miss Cornwell said that it is always very difficult to secure parent governors for TSH due to the transience of the student population. Tracey Goodsell, OHC&AT Governance Manager, has confirmed that in this situation any parent of a child of school age, not necessarily a child at the school, may fulfil this role. Mrs Callaby suggested approaching Linda Dines. Miss Cornwell asked about the allowable percentage of LGB members with ties to the local authority – Linda retired from the LA in April, so may not be eligible just yet, but would be an excellent addition in future.

Action: Ms Challenger to check regulations regarding the grace period for potential governors with ties to LAs, and update at the next LGB meeting.

- v) Mr Lumley confirmed that Miss Gibbons has agreed to join the LGB. Governors **APPROVED** her appointment, subject to ratification by the OHCAT Board of Directors on 15.12.17. Another potential governor, Chike Nnalue, has expressed an interest – he currently works for Achieving for Children in Kingston as a senior EHCP coordinator, so would bring a strong skillset to the LGB. Governors **AGREED** that Mr Lumley should meet with Mr Nnalue to discuss the role.

Action: Mr Lumley to arrange a meeting with Mr Nnalue and update at the next LGB meeting.

6. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Governors **AGREED** and the Chair signed the minutes of the last meeting held on 14th June 2017.

7. MATTERS ARISING

- i) Further to minute 6ii, governors **NOTED** that Russha Sellings, Governance Support Officer, manages access to the governors' portal.
- ii) Further to minutes 7.11 and 7.20, Mrs Callaby said she has not yet been able to meet with Ms Oatway. She will keep trying and will update governors at the next meeting.

Action: Mrs Callaby and Ms Oatway to update governors on their meeting.

- iii) Further to minute 7.17, governors **NOTED** that the Pupil Premium report for TSH is available to view on the school website.

iv) Further to minute 7.20, governors **NOTED** that the request for a dashboard acronym key has been passed to John Prior (OHC&AT Executive Head, Quality & Development/Deputy CEO) to inform wider development discussions with the MIS team.

v) Mr Lumley confirmed that Ms Everett had carried out the Ethos Vision & Strategy portfolio last term, and a copy of her written report is available to view on the portal.

8. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT AND DASHBOARDS

YPA

8.1 Student matters

There are currently 68 students on roll, which inevitably brings greater pressure on school resources. Some students are presenting with increasingly complex issues, to the point where the school can no longer meet their needs despite concentrated efforts to do so.

There are currently seven students in the interim 6th form which is co-delivered with Orchard Hill College. Hosting the 6th form within the school means that the number of available breakout and therapy spaces is reduced, which is an extra pressure on resources. However, Miss Cornwell said that she is happy with the interim arrangement as all seven students would otherwise have become NEET.

Miss Cornwell spoke frankly about current pressures facing the school: students are presenting with increasingly complex needs and without adequate support from all the usual external agencies e.g. health, social care, police. She cited the management of a serious allegation of peer on peer abuse at YPA as an example, noting that both students were still on site and there was a lack of involvement from external services.

Miss Cornwell continues to liaise with external agencies including local LADOs. YPA's room allocation will also be rejigged in order to make best use of what is available, maximise breakout space and provide more suitable space for the 6th form.

8.2 Budget

Mrs Scott said she would update governors fully during item 10.

8.3 Staff and personnel

The support staff restructure has noticeably improved the quality of provision, with a strong positive ethos within the team. Miss Cornwell said that inevitably there is still a certain amount of trust building happening between the new staff and the students, but she is confident these relationships will strengthen over time.

Teacher recruitment remains a struggle. Miss Cornwell noted that YPA still has a majority of unqualified teaching staff, but said this remains a great opportunity to develop the right people in the right way. Several staff are being supported through qualification by the OHC&AT Training School.

Miss Cornwell said that additional staffing at YPA would definitely help to ease some of the pressure around students' needs. At TSH, the LSAs support learning and the Skills Coaches do pastoral support, and Miss Cornwell would like to introduce the Skills Coach concept at YPA.

8.4 School improvement (action planning and self-evaluation)

Governors **AGREED** that the YPA School Development Plan is a clear and comprehensive document. Miss Cornwell said there is more to do but it provides a strong base on which to build. There is a big drive on improving the performance management system and ensuring that all staff learn from each other and share good practice. This includes replicating the TES for support staff in order to increase the visibility of their work among the whole staff team e.g. support staff will produce a case study to share during CPD sessions.

8.5 CPD

A thorough CPD programme is in place, including working with Harlington School. Additionally, staff are asked to complete half-termly online modules including mental health training. Miss Cornwell reported that feedback on these has been positive. Mrs Callaby recommended one particular resource, Inside the Box, to anyone who works with students. Miss Cornwell said she would circulate the link to governors after the meeting.

Action: LC to send SC the link to Inside the Box.

8.6 Update on additional funding streams (Pupil Premium and Yr 7 catch up)

Governors **NOTED** that Pupil Premium statements for 15/16 and 16/17 are now available to view on the YPA website. The majority of students at YPA are eligible for PPG and Miss Cornwell acknowledged that her aim in distributing PPG funds is to ensure the best provision for all. Every student gets breakfast and lunch paid for, as well as school trips; while the school does charge for uniform, Miss Cornwell said that she will always provide it free of charge to students in need. PPG is used to meet basic needs so that students are able to learn, which ultimately benefits the whole school community.

8.7 Health and safety

Miss Cornwell apprised governors of the recent fire at YPA, saying that despite the disruption she was impressed with how the evacuation proceeded and how well staff and students handled the situation. The school was closed for a day and a half, which will be absorbed into INSET planning so as not to lose education time. An action plan arising from the incident is in place. Miss Cornwell is expecting a follow-up inspection from fire services but said she is positive that appropriate measures have been taken. Governors **NOTED** that the fire clearly demonstrates that the school building is not fit for purpose, particularly for YPA's students.

Incidence of students climbing onto the roof has increased recently and roll bars will shortly be installed in order to safeguard students.

8.8 Compliments and complaints

Miss Cornwell said she is delighted that the school's work around mental health is being recognised externally. YPA will be holding a Teach Meet event to which all governors are invited, which will showcase the school's work around mental health support for staff and students. There is already a lot of external interest in this event. Ms Challenger noted that mental health support in schools is currently on the national agenda with other trusts also flagging up their work, so now is a good time for YPA to shine its light.

Governors congratulated Miss Cornwell for being invited to give the keynote speech at an upcoming Keele University event.

Mrs Callaby asked Miss Cornwell how she is protecting her own wellbeing, given the current challenges. Miss Cornwell acknowledged that things are extremely difficult at YPA at the moment, but that TSH is in a strong position which provides some stability. The overall ethos Miss Cornwell promotes throughout her staff teams is "If not you, who?", not just in terms of managing day to day responsibilities but being aware that supporting these very vulnerable children and young people is valuable and important work.

Mr Lumley noted that governors all have a responsibility to Miss Cornwell. Cllr Davis asked about support mechanisms, including those from the Trust. Miss Cornwell said that OHCAT is always supportive e.g. helping to action the room move and providing responsive safeguarding support; colleagues are great at supporting each other also. Mrs Callaby agreed, saying that there is a very open, trusting relationship among staff, especially at SLT level, meaning that staff feel free to speak and share without fear. Miss Cornwell said this enables the use of reflective practice, which in turn allows staff to move forward.

Mr Lumley noted that Miss Cornwell now has a PA as well as a Senior Deputy Head in place, and asked whether this has lifted some of the burden from her. Miss Cornwell confirmed that both appointments have made a huge difference: the Senior Deputy Head put a lot of work into the SDP, for example, and the PA support helps to ensure that everyone who needs time with Miss Cornwell is able to get it. Both Mrs Callaby and Ms Challenger observed that Miss Cornwell never turns a child away.

Mr Lumley asked Miss Cornwell to pass on governors' thanks to both staff teams for their continuing hard work.

8.9 School events

Governors **NOTED** the upcoming school events and Mr Lumley encouraged them to attend where possible/appropriate.

Governors **RECEIVED** the YPA Headteacher's report.

The Skills Hub

8.10 Student matters

Numbers on roll remain high. There are two Year 11 groups at present, and likely to be two Year 10 groups in the near future, an unprecedented situation. Again, there is a need for additional staffing and space in order to manage this intake. Funding for AP students is retrospective and pro rata'd which creates additional pressure around budgeting and staffing, and takes up a lot of staff time in negotiation with local authorities.

Miss Cornwell highlighted the range of adverse experiences that students coming to TSH might have had, and how those might impact on their ability to be in school and to learn. She said it was reflective of the very difficult situations that her staff regularly manage with skill and sensitivity, as well as a testament to the resilience of the young people attending the school.

Overall TSH is in a strong position – it is not without issues, but as Ms Everett's portfolio visit report attests, there is an impressive atmosphere of maturity and engagement among the students.

8.11 Budget

Again, Mrs Scott said she would update governors fully during item 10.

8.12 Staff and personnel

There are currently two good agency staff, one who is near to completing a PGCE and one with QTS. Miss Cornwell said she is hopeful that both will become permanent in the near future.

8.13 School improvement (action planning and self-evaluation)

The SDP for TSH is currently in development. Miss Cornwell reported that it is broadly similar to YPA's plan due to the close working and crossover between the two schools.

8.14 CPD

There is a CPD programme in place at TSH. Again, there is some crossover with YPA in terms of content and delivery, which helps embed the reflective and restorative ethos across both schools.

8.15 Update on additional funding streams (Pupil Premium and Yr 7 catch up)

As with YPA, there are high numbers of students eligible for Pupil Premium funding at TSH and the money is spent accordingly. Miss Cornwell noted that PPG at TSH is affected by the way AP students are funded, so reporting is not straightforward.

8.16 Health and safety

Miss Cornwell drew governors' attention to the recent H&S audits of both schools, saying they are quite positive considering the age of the buildings. An action plan is in place. TSH has now appointed a caretaker which will help with managing health and safety, including site security, going forward.

8.17 School events

Governors **NOTED** the upcoming school events and Mr Lumley encouraged them to attend where possible/appropriate.

In addition to the events noted in the report, Mrs Callaby said she will be starting a Positive Parenting Programme every Tuesday evening (6-pm) till the end of term. Governors asked what the driver is for this programme, and Mrs Callaby said that for children on Child Protection Plans (CPPs) parenting classes are often recommended by the courts. While attendance is required for parents of children on CPPs, the programme is open to all although Mrs Callaby acknowledged that it is difficult to get parents on board voluntarily.

Governors **RECEIVED** the TSH Headteacher's report.

8.18 Dashboards

Miss Cornwell said that discussions are ongoing to personalise the dashboards in order to make them more relevant e.g. removing unnecessary year groups from Pupils On Roll chart.

YPA

Attendance is significantly low at the moment and work is ongoing to bring it back up to a reasonable level. Miss Cornwell noted that there is a problem with LAs naming students and funding the school for them in the knowledge they will never attend, thus reframing the problem as one of attendance rather than provision. Miss Cornwell is pushing back on this. Attendance at YPA is also disproportionately affected by issues such as care placements breaking down or changing at short notice. Miss Cornwell said she is not happy with the current level of attendance but recognises that it reflects the complexity of the cohort.

Behaviour incidents are running fairly high at present, which Miss Cornwell said is not unusual for this point in the year – she would expect this to decrease as students settle in. Similarly, the exclusions data illustrates how serious things are at YPA at present, as school policy remains never to issue fixed term exclusions (FTEs) unless all other options have been exhausted.

Staff typicality has dropped since the summer, which Miss Cornwell ascribed to new staff coming on board and good staff moving into management positions. She would expect quality to rise throughout the year, particularly since Miss Gibbons continues to provide valuable teaching and learning support to YPA staff. As an example of the impact of Miss Gibbons' support, the recent Health & Safety audit singled out YPA's

science teacher for specific praise regarding the safe management of a potentially dangerous environment.

Miss Cornwell noted that safeguarding figures do not show the number of children taken off CPPs, and said she would like to include this in the personalisation of the dashboards. Another useful addition would be numbers of looked-after children (LAC) as supporting these students through specific circumstances such as the breakdown of long term care placements can impact significantly on the school.

Miss Cornwell apologised for the lack of staff sickness data, explaining that a technical issue prevented drawdown of the figures. However, staff absence is low at present, which is good as the absence of a familiar teacher often has a disproportionate effect on students at YPA, as well as impacting on staff morale.

TSH

Miss Cornwell said that TSH has a new attendance officer in post who is doing a fantastic job; the lack of attendance data is due to a training need that has not yet been fulfilled. Exclusions data is correct – there have been no FTEs, in line with school policy, which Miss Cornwell said speaks to the positive atmosphere at TSH. Behaviour data does show some incidents but Miss Cornwell said she is happy that behaviours are being de-escalated before reaching crisis point.

Staff typicality again has dipped since the summer term, which again is attributable to new staff coming in. There were also previously two agency staff who were unsatisfactory; these have now been replaced with two good agency staff.

Mr Lumley said the staff sickness absence figures is acceptable as a percentage of all possible staff sickness days. Miss Cornwell said generally absence has been low but there have been a couple of longer term sickness absences which have affected the figures. She reiterated that the “If not you, who?” ethos has permeated the working culture, so staff are aware of the impact any absence will have on their colleagues and are keen to minimise this wherever possible. Staff morale is a key area of development at TSH, with half termly staff socials organised as well as the school’s first staff Christmas party.

Governors thanked Miss Cornwell for her reports and the dashboard data.

9. PORTFOLIO GOVERNOR VISITS

Governors chose to discuss the portfolio visit reports as a group.

Ethos, Vision and Strategy. Mr Lumley gave a verbal report to governors. He visited both schools on Friday 3rd November and said that the PRIDE values are writ large across school culture; TSH students were respectful and hardworking, and staff behaviour embodies the ethos of reflective practice and restorative justice. Mr Lumley praised Miss Cornwell for taking this approach, saying it is evidently much needed. As previously noted by governors, YPA’s students currently have a high level of complex needs. Mr Lumley witnessed an incident being managed during his visit and said the level of calm displayed by staff in a very high pressure environment was extraordinary,

across the board. Mrs Callaby added that students at both schools are hyperaware of any 'new people' in the school and it is great when visitors engage with them.

Teaching and Learning: governors were pleased to note the positive report from Ms Everett. Miss Gibbons added that she has observed all staff espousing the shared values across both schools during her visits.

Finance and Resources: Cllr Davis said he is satisfied that financial management remains strong at both schools, despite the many challenges within the sector.

Health and Safety, Child Protection and Safeguarding: Mr Lumley noted that he and Michele Lentes had discussed the complex peer on peer abuse allegation that is ongoing at YPA, noting that Ms Lentes works calmly and capably with other agencies to support students. However, Mr Lumley said he was deeply concerned by the apparent withdrawal of agencies as described by Miss Cornwell earlier in the meeting.

Miss Cornwell has recently met with the LBH SEN team and is working to establish regular cross-party meetings with Health, Social Care, Youth Offending Team, SEN etc. in order to effectively flag this type of complex case to all relevant agencies. Mrs Callaby noted that the recent reforms to the SEND system, moving from Statements to EHCPs, were driven by the desire to see greater Health involvement but that this is still missing from most EHCPs. She asked whether Cllr Davis could feed this back to LBH and he said he would do so.

Action: Cllr Davis to feedback to LBH re. the need for greater Health involvement in EHCP process.

Ms Challenger said that this problem seems to be a national one, as highlighted in Ofsted and CQC's recent report *Local area SEND inspections: one year on*. Mrs Callaby agreed that the issue is real and said that cuts to all services make it impossible for any single service to bear the brunt of supporting these vulnerable young people.

Mr Lumley said safeguarding support at both schools remains excellent. He noted that TSH had admitted 14 new students within a fortnight, which gave him an opportunity to observe strong assessment practice including CAT and TOWL testing. The appointment of a caretaker will also help strengthen safeguarding of students through ensuring a safe and secure environment.

Marketing and Business Development: governors **NOTED** that there is no portfolio holder for BDM at present, therefore no visit took place this term. Ms Challenger said that once the LGB is back up to full strength, portfolio assignments can be looked at again. Cllr Davis said he would like to see a portfolio holder in post once more as it is an interesting area, particularly around curriculum development to help students succeed in the real world.

HR and Organisational Development: Ms Everett's reports were agreed to be helpful and detailed in their assessment of current strengths and areas for development.

Governors **RECEIVED** the portfolio visit reports.

10. FINANCE AND FUNDING

- i) Governors **APPROVED** the Core Services SLAs. Mr Lumley signed on behalf of governors.
- ii) Mrs Scott updated governors on Final Accounts Year End and Management Accounts for both schools.

TSH – Year End

Funding for TSH is complex: money is allocated to individual students under a variety of different categories and the LA requires that each student is reported accurately, every day, before funding is delivered. This creates a lot of administrative work for school and Trust staff, including a lot of negotiation time. For example, TSH has an agreement with the LA that medical PST places are funded as a block; when the block of medical PST places is not full, the LA will often try and bundle non-medical PST students as part of the block rather than fund them separately.

Mrs Scott noted that despite these pressures, TSH was budgeted to end on a deficit in 16-17 and has finished on a surplus.

Retrospective funding makes the management of staffing very complex. Mr Lumley asked whether there is certainty that the funding will come. Mrs Scott said yes, if the students are at school, but that with AP you never know who or how many will be coming through the door. Mr Lumley asked whether there was potential for this to cause cashflow problems. Mrs Scott said that Miss Cornwell has built up significant reserves against this eventuality, and that she manages her budgets extremely well. Cllr Davis noted that the cashflow forecasts up to August 2018 look very positive.

YPA – Year End

YPA did not end the year on a surplus, although Mrs Scott is still in negotiation with LBH over certain areas of funding. Taking into account the impact of necessary actions such as the LSA restructure and a large redundancy payment, the overall picture is fairly healthy and Mrs Scott again congratulated Miss Cornwell on her excellent management of school budgets.

Governors **NOTED** that over numbers funding is in place, but that negotiations with the LA are ongoing regarding numbers at the school.

Mr Lumley asked whether YPA is place funded or funded per pupil. Mrs Scott said it is place funded; the original agreed number was 50, which then rose to 60, and now the school is at 68 NOR. However, LBH has moved to a banded funding model which is proving problematic. Miss Cornwell said she has flagged this to Schools Forum and is now part of a working party with other special schools in the area, looking to work with LBH and improve the model.

Mrs Scott said that LBH had tried to get YPA's Small School Weighting reinstated, but it did not get through Schools Forum. Miss Cornwell said Schools Forum has been preoccupied with the National Funding Formula (NFF) consultation and the impact on high needs. Mr Lumley asked whether both schools will be affected by the NFF. Miss Cornwell said that TSH will not be, as it is funded for 70 permanently excluded students, but YPA cannot sustain itself under the current banded funding model – the school needs to know what funding it will be receiving in order to operate successfully. Mrs Scott said that YPA's budget for 17-18 was set on assumption of the weighting from LBH which has not materialised. However, she has full confidence in Miss Cornwell's ability to manage and maximise impact of what is available.

Mr Lumley asked how the LGB can help. Miss Cornwell and Mrs Scott said the LA is being proactive in trying to work with the schools and OHCAT within the strictures imposed by its own reduced budget. Cllr Davis said that he would be happy to speak to Cllr David Simmonds, LBH's Cabinet Member for Education & Children's Services, if Miss Cornwell felt that would be helpful. Miss Cornwell said she was grateful for governors' support but felt that the issue is wider and more systemic, with cuts to services affecting every school and LA.

Mrs Callaby asked whether YPA is duty bound to admit a certain number of students from Hillingdon. Miss Cornwell said there is no set number and noted that the school can set its own charges for out of borough students, but that this brings its own set of issues to bear e.g. home visits to further flung places which take up more staff time, negotiating with many different LAs etc.

TSH – Management Accounts

Mrs Scott confirmed that TSH currently has a surplus of approximately £7k. Income is rising and costs are low, as expected at this point in the academic year.

YPA – Management Accounts

YPA currently has a deficit, which Mrs Scott ascribed to new students coming in who have not yet been invoiced for. She reiterated that both schools have good reserves. Miss Cornwell said that some of the reserve funding will need to be spent on essential works such as the room switch at YPA and fixing the heating at TSH.

Mr Lumley thanked Mrs Scott and her team on behalf of governors for their continuing hard work and support.

11. PAY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Governors **NOTED** that the Pay Committee meeting was positive and all recommendations have been actioned by OHC&AT HR and Payroll staff.

12. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- i) Governors **NOTED** the listed policies and procedures that were approved by the OHC&AT Board on 30th June 2017.

- ii) Governors discussed the Wellbeing Policy, saying it is comprehensive and clear. Miss Cornwell said that she has worked closely with the clinical psychologist to produce a good working document. They are now producing a family-friendly version to disseminate to students and parents/carers.

Action: Miss Cornwell to send Ms Challenger the family-friendly version when available.

Governors **APPROVED** the policy.

Action: Ms Challenger to upload policy to both school websites.

Ms Challenger asked if Miss Cornwell is happy for the policy to be rolled out to other Trust schools and Miss Cornwell said she is.

Action: Ms Challenger to liaise with John Prior re. rolling out to other Trust schools.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates were confirmed:

- Wednesday 14th March 2018
- Wednesday 13th June 2018
- Wednesday 7th November 2018

There was discussion about reviewing the days and/or times of LGB meetings, in order to fit around teaching commitments. Governors **AGREED** to hold the March 2018 meeting at 5pm and see whether this is a better fit.

15. CONFIDENTIALITY

None.

The meeting closed at 12.55pm.

CHAIR-----

DATE-----