

# Vale of York Academy

## Minutes of the Local Governing Committee meeting held on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at 5pm in the SLT Meeting Room

**Present:**

Helen Dowds (Principal)	Peter Hodge	Miriam Zulkarnain
John Kesterton (Chair)	Sarah Byrne	Alison Davies
Patrick Looker	Emma Owens	Victoria Sanderson

**In Attendance:**

Matt Halifax (Vice Principal)  
 Vanessa Smallwood (School Business Manager) (until 6.22pm)  
 Sandra Cox (Finance Manager) (from 5.37pm until 6.22pm)  
 Liz Andrews-Wilson (Governance Support Officer - Clerk)

		Action
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome, apologies for absence, consent and declarations of interest</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He noted that there had been a long gap since the last meeting, but the Working Party had been meeting regularly in between meetings. The Chair extended a warm welcome to Victoria Sanderson.</p> <p>No apologies for absence had been received, as all governors were present. Helen Dowds (Principal) declared that she was on the Interim Executive Board at Pinder School (Scarborough); this declaration of interest was duly recorded.</p> <p>The Chair explained that this was the first time that the LGC had used the new online portal 'MinutePad' for the circulation of the agenda pack. He asked governors to be mindful of downloading governance documentation in the future, advising them to delete any governor's papers from their personal devices and securely dispose of any hard copies.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Trust Appointed - Governor appointments</b></p> <p>The Chair explained that Victoria Sanderson had met with himself and the Principal some time ago, having expressed an interest in joining the LGC, via the CYC Governance Service. The Clerk advised that Victoria's application had been approved by the Trust Board at their last meeting, so the LGC simply needed to welcome her to the Governing Body.</p> <p>Matt Halifax had been asked to stand for one of the Trust Appointed vacancies, in his capacity as Vice Principal. The Chair reiterated that it would be useful to have Mr Halifax on the LGC to cover for the Principal if she was working at another Trust supported school.</p> <p><b>Proposed by:</b> John Kesterton    <b>Seconded by:</b> Alison Davies    All governors were in favour</p> <p>The Clerk was to arrange for Victoria Sanderson to be registered with MinutePad and ensure that she was sent the Governance Service's Welcome Pack.</p> <p>The Clerk was to arrange for the Trust Board to ratify the LGC's recommendation that Matt Halifax</p>	<p><b>Clerk</b></p> <p><b>Clerk</b></p>

	becomes a Trust Appointed Governor.																										
3.	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018 - Previously distributed</b>  The minutes of the last meeting were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair. Sarah Byrne advised that she had been unable to attend the training session 'A Governor's Role in Overseeing Financial Performance', as it stated on page 8 of the minutes that she had been planning to attend.</p>																										
4.	<p><b>Action Plan</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Action</th> <th>Item</th> <th>Status</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td>The Vice Principal was to add 'Current data' to ADP targets (under BIG THEMES)</td> <td>3</td> <td>This had been superseded by 'School on a Page'</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td>Correct the budget report to show SIMs as already purchased</td> <td>5</td> <td>On this agenda</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td>Draft a response to the Governance Advisor regarding the LGC Reconstitution and circulate it to Governors for comment/approval.</td> <td>7.3</td> <td>A Parent Governor Election was to take place in September, taking the LGC membership up to 11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4.</td> <td>Contact Victoria Sanderson when appropriate to ascertain if she is still interested in becoming a Governor</td> <td>7.6</td> <td>Completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5.</td> <td>Send notes and papers from the Governors Termly Workshop to the Clerk for circulation to Governors.</td> <td>10</td> <td>Completed</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Matters Arising</b>  There were no matters arising.</p>				Action	Item	Status	1.	The Vice Principal was to add 'Current data' to ADP targets (under BIG THEMES)	3	This had been superseded by 'School on a Page'	2.	Correct the budget report to show SIMs as already purchased	5	On this agenda	3.	Draft a response to the Governance Advisor regarding the LGC Reconstitution and circulate it to Governors for comment/approval.	7.3	A Parent Governor Election was to take place in September, taking the LGC membership up to 11	4.	Contact Victoria Sanderson when appropriate to ascertain if she is still interested in becoming a Governor	7.6	Completed	5.	Send notes and papers from the Governors Termly Workshop to the Clerk for circulation to Governors.	10	Completed
	Action	Item	Status																								
1.	The Vice Principal was to add 'Current data' to ADP targets (under BIG THEMES)	3	This had been superseded by 'School on a Page'																								
2.	Correct the budget report to show SIMs as already purchased	5	On this agenda																								
3.	Draft a response to the Governance Advisor regarding the LGC Reconstitution and circulate it to Governors for comment/approval.	7.3	A Parent Governor Election was to take place in September, taking the LGC membership up to 11																								
4.	Contact Victoria Sanderson when appropriate to ascertain if she is still interested in becoming a Governor	7.6	Completed																								
5.	Send notes and papers from the Governors Termly Workshop to the Clerk for circulation to Governors.	10	Completed																								
5.	<p><b>Resources (Overseeing Financial Performance)</b>  Deferred to later in the meeting.</p>																										
6.	<p><b>Standards (Holding the Headteacher to Account)</b>  <b>Headteacher's Report (including School on a Page)</b>  The Principal's Report had been circulated with the agenda, along with the 'School on the Page'; both documents were taken as read. The Principal advised that Katherine Humpleby had joined the Central Team as the Secondary School Improvement Lead for HLTY. Following her appointment there was a clear drive from within the Central Team to start looking at holding the school leaders to account. She reported that the Trust want to move towards having secondary data presented in the same format; to these ends she had begun to pull together the 'School on the Page' format for the CEO and Katherine. The format was to include a snapshot of KS4 data, SEF summary judgements, School Improvement Plan headlines and Trust Board judgements. She noted that staff data had largely been removed.</p> <p>The Principal highlighted the following headlines from her report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 11 data was holding stable against their projections</li> <li>• Conversations had been held with departments which appeared to be struggling</li> </ul> <p>The Principal reported that Year 10 had been looking strong but the data was indicating a drop off. Curriculum Leaders, Year 10 Leaders and the SLT were meeting to discuss the pupil's PPG (predicted grades) and were to encourage staff to predict the higher grades where necessary. It was noted that staff are concerned about predicting higher grades than they feel comfortable with, as they are still uncertain about what the new grades look like. The Chair commented that the current Year 10 will be the first cohort to go through the numerical grades in its entirety. The Principal stated that Year 10 was a nationally average cohort and that attainment was key. Year 10 are a stronger year group, than the out-going Year 11 as they have the literacy skills to do well across the board.</p>																										

	<p>The Principal advised that predicted grades should be set at the end of Year 9 and pupils should remain on a stable flight path from then, with the predicted end point staying the same. She advised that the SLT were challenging the staff to see the bigger picture and move away from simply reacting to an individual test or assessment. Governors noted that the Year 10 data was very confusing; the Vice Principal advised that this was due to the lack of consistency in the data collection, as staff were being reactive. The Principal stated that she did have concerns around the changes in the data set. <b>A governor challenged the Principal to pinpoint where the focus needed to be;</b> to which she replied - English.</p> <p>In response to a question about the School on a Page, the Principal clarified that the SLT should complete the word document and she inputs the data. The Chair expressed his frustration at the basic word processing nature of the task and that the request from the Trust Board seemed to be an antiquated way to record data; he questioned why this data could not simply be presented through a system such as SISRA. Governors highlighted that the Page included identifiable staffing details, relating to contractual information. The Principal was to review this part of the content.</p> <p>The Principal drew governor's attention to the pupil:teacher ratio of 16:1, noting that the cloth had been cut very close, resulting in a very lean teaching structure. In order to obtain some meaningful benchmark data, the Principal reported that she had conversed with Trevor Burton (the Executive Headteacher for Millthorpe School and York High School). He had confirmed that the staff structure was very lean, reflecting the school's current budgetary difficulties.</p> <p>The Principal noted that the support staff absence rate had been high, with a couple of staff on long term sick. The Chair asked the Principal to confirm if due process was being followed, through the Trust's HR provision: she advised that it was. The Principal added that she was keen to support the staff to develop, through a CPD programme.</p> <p>The School on a Page document also contained the three top risks to the school:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Results - which could lead to a poor Ofsted rating</li> <li>2) Reputation - need to ensure the community continue to be changing their opinion about the school</li> <li>3) Finances and Premises - minimising a deficit budget</li> </ol> <p>The Principal advised that once a template had been finalised for the School on a Page, each school within the Trust would be submitting them regularly to the Trust Board Standards Committee for full scrutiny. The outcomes of their discussions would then be recorded in the Standards Committee minutes. <b>A governor challenged whether it was appropriate to compare VoYA to MCEA;</b> the Principal advised that the Scarborough schools and Barby High School were more comparable. Governors agreed it was a useful document.</p> <p><i>5.37pm - Sandra Cox entered the meeting</i></p> <p>The Chair asked Sandra to give her report, noting that the LGC would return to the Principal's report.</p>	<b>Principal</b>
5.	<p><b>Resources (Overseeing Financial Performance)</b></p> <p><b>Budget Monitoring Report Period 6 and 7</b></p> <p>The Finance Manager drew governors' attention to the Period 7 report. She highlighted that there was a -£104,000 in-year deficit, against a predicted -£82,000 forecasted deficit. The governors were advised that the Principal and the SBM had identified about £42,000 worth of savings from the budget, which was a very tight budget, but included a very cautious approach. The Finance Manager reported that with these savings the carry forward in-year deficit was -£63,000.</p> <p>The Principal reported that the main negative variance was resulting from supply costs and the main positive variance was due to the fact that the school had not been able to fill the Seclusion Manager</p>	

post. She informed governors that there had been a freeze on spending across all departments. The Chair asked if the purchase of 16 day absence insurance had been considered. The SBM advised that she had looked into this and it would cost £16,000 - £20,000 per year. She explained that the decision to pay for the insurance would be risky, as the school could pay out all that money and receive little back in return. He asked the SBM what supply budget had been set aside for the next year. The SBM advised that £45,000 had been budgeted, because historically the trend had been to get at least one big hit.

The Finance Manager advised that there was some ongoing cross-over between CYC and HLTY. She stated that the sway in the predicted deficit was a result of the school pulling back and being very careful with the budget. The Principal reported that the outgoing Year 11 cohort comprised 88 pupils. By contract the raising Year 7 cohort was expected to comprise 124 pupils. This increase in pupil numbers had meant that there had to be a growth in staffing. She added that the budget also takes into account the 2% salary uplift for staff. It was noted, with some relief, that the Trust Board had decided to remove the pensions uplift until further details were available. The Principal stated that the school needed to find an additional £100,000 each year. She noted that the sale of the Clifton with Rawcliffe building/site would help the budget, but only in the short term.

### **Start Budget**

The Finance Manager tabled a draft Start Budget scenario report for 2018-19 (tabled item 1).  
*Part of this item was recorded as a confidential minute.*

The Finance Manager advised that the LGC needed to recommend the Start Budget to the Trust Board by Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June. The governors agreed that they all wanted more time to drill into the budget and consider the impact of the possible scenarios, before committing to a Start Budget. The Chair noted the frustrations of the LGC by stating that governors were not in a position to recommend the Start Budget as circulated, as it had since been superseded and required further consideration. The governors discussed the possibility of delaying their decision to a future meeting. The Clerk advised that if a decision was to be made on the budget this would need to take place at an Extra Ordinary LGC.

Governors reiterated their concerns that the LGC had not had chance to fully scrutinise the detail in the Start Budget. A governor commented that the LGC would be wrong to rush into recommending a budget with such a big swing, just to meet a deadline imposed by the Trust Board and the Central Team. The Principal noted her frustrations at the fact that she had been asked to stop going through the budget line by line under the MAT structure, but in order to make the savings required to reduce the deficit she had needed to go back into the budget line by line.

The Chair proposed that the Working Party meet to scrutinise the budget, ahead of the Trust Board's meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> June, where he and the Principal have to present the budget to the Trust Board. Following further discussion, it was agreed that a single item Extra Ordinary LGC would be called on Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2018 4.30pm, for one hour, to discuss and approve the budget, so that it was ready to be recommended to the Trust Board. The Clerk was to schedule the meeting on MinutePad and circulate the Start Budget following the Finance Manager's meeting with the Principal.

### **Proposal to LGC and Trust Board for a reduction in PAN for September 2019**

No discussion was taken.

### **Additional update from the SBM**

The SBM reported that there had been a mains water leak in the 1940s building, in the concrete underneath the floor. The repair work cost £2,500 - £3,000 and the pipe work had been re-routed to avoid disturbing any asbestos.

The SBM reported that a Cleaner had suffered a fall while at work and was currently off sick. She

**Clerk**

	<p>confirmed that this had been logged through the correct CYC process.</p> <p><b>GDPR Compliance</b> The SBM reported that a shredding company had been on site, to destroy papers which were no longer needed and to facilitate a wholesale de-clutter. This was to be repeated over summer.</p> <p><i>6.22pm - Sandra Cox and Vanessa Smallwood left the meeting</i> <i>6.22pm - Matt Halifax stepped out of the meeting</i></p>	
6.	<p><b>Standards (Holding the Headteacher to Account)</b> The Principal referred governors back to her report and the image of the SLT Health Check.</p> <p><i>6.24pm - Matt Halifax re-entered the meeting</i></p> <p>She advised that the Health Check had enabled the SLT to have a close look at the actions that had been taken and the impact of each action. The Principal and Vice Principal did not speak during this exercise, to allow the other members of the SLT to input. The Principal stated that the school had made a massive impact on the areas which needed to be improved upon to move the school out of Requires Improvement, but there needs to be more consistency. She reported that the SLT were going to be having a strategic planning day off site, to look at next year.</p> <p>The Chair noted the strong team effort within the SLT. Governors agreed that the Health Check had been a useful exercise which had been very thought-provoking, providing the SLT with some time to reflect on where the school is heading and why. The Principal reported that the next SLT meeting was to focus on reviewing the ADP and priorities for the next year. A governor challenged the Principal by asking her if the SLT could benefit from comparing their Health Check to MCEA's. The Principal stated that if MCEA were to complete the same exercise it would be useful to compare the two outcomes.</p> <p>Governors noted that the Assistant Principal interviews had been very successful, with each of the candidates partaking in very detailed and robust tests. The successful candidate had been invited to join the SLT for the away day; this was dependant on him being released from his current school.</p> <p>Governors noted the curriculum reviews which had been circulated with the agenda. In response to a question, the Vice Principal advised that he had led on the reviews, which had received external validation. He stated that once the internal systems were established to quality assure this work, he would be able to develop this and he would be able to pull it all together with all of the different forms of evidence which had already been collated: feedback from staff, Teaching and Learning outcomes, Pupil Voice, Staff Voice, Curriculum Leaders meetings and book scrutiny. He would then collate this into an executive summary.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Local Governing Committee Strategic Direction</b></p> <p><b>7.1 Working Party Updates (minutes 21.02.18, 9.05.18 and 21.05.18)</b> The minutes were accepted into the record.</p> <p><b>7.2 Chair's Report</b> The Chair had no further report.</p> <p><b>7.3 Parent Governor Election</b> The Parent Governor Election was to take place in September.</p> <p><b>7.4 LGC to consider forming a Consideration Panel</b> Governors were asked to nominate themselves to sit on the so called 'Consideration Panel' to hear exclusion cases. The following governors volunteered: John Kesterton, Peter Hodge, Victoria Sanderson, Sarah Byrne and Alison Davies.</p>	

	<p><b>7.5 Review of the Scheme of Delegation</b> The Chair reminded governors that the Scheme of Delegation can be referred to as and when needed.</p>	
<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b>HLTY updates</b></p> <p><b>8.1 Board minutes (7<sup>th</sup> March 2018)</b> The LGC noted the content of the Board minutes from the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2018. The Clerk advised that she had received the Finance Director's report on the breakdown of how the 5% top slice is spent and she would circulate this with the EO LGC papers.</p> <p>The Chair highlighted that the minutes recorded that the CEO had taken on board the LGC's concerns about the Principal being taken away from VoYA, for School to School support. The Principal provided context around the setting up of a Sixth Form Working Party. The minutes had recorded that this was not going to take place as the DfE had said that the LA must approve its Sixth Form provision, due to a surfeit of places within the City. There would therefore be no allowance made to HLTY for the development of a Sixth Form.</p> <p>The Chair queried action point 15, which referred to MCEA's growth plan. Governors were concerned that this growth plan could take more children from VoYA's catchment, as parents opt to take up the additional places at MCEA. Governors were concerned about the risk that this growth plan posed to the school and its future Year 7 intake.</p> <p>The Principal expressed that she wanted to have some involvement in the CEO's review of the weaker subjects at VoYA.</p> <p>Governors noted that Talent Management was to become a standing item on the Head's Board meeting agenda. A governor asked if the trips to Canada, to recruit staff, had been of value. The Principal was of the opinion that it is more useful to run a national advert, as York remained an extremely popular part of the country, which still attracts people. She added that it is useful to have a pool of people to call on from the Canadian jobs market.</p> <p><b>8.2) Central Team Update</b> The LGC noted the content of the Central Team update.</p> <p><b>8.3) Risk Register</b> Discussed under Item 6.</p> <p><b>8.4) Health and Safety Group Update</b> The LGC noted that this Group seemed to have been phased out.</p>	
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b> The LGC noted the Safeguarding Governors Link Governor Report. Sarah Byrne was thanked for her thorough and detailed report, which was accepted into the record.</p>	
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>Governing Body Training</b></p> <p><b>Feedback from MinutePad demonstration and first impressions of MinutePad</b> Sarah Byrne had attended the MinutePad demonstration and was pleased to see that it had been adopted by HLTY. The Chair stated that governors need to move away from downloading governor's paper, advising that MinutePad provided the security and storage, which negated the need for papers to be downloaded or printed off. <b>The Clerk advised governors to log out of MinutePad, via the 'My Account' table when they finish their session.</b> Simply closing the browser with the top right hand corner cross could leave a governor's MinutePad account vulnerable to someone accessing it, via the back button.</p> <p>Governors reflected on the fact that the meeting had felt less interactive due to everyone being behind their screens. At the next meeting they were going to trial projecting the agenda papers.</p>	

	<p><b>Feedback from Governors' Termly Workshop 25th April 2018</b> No one had been available to attend the Termly Workshop.</p> <p><b>Feedback on the CYC Complaints Handling Training session and the Safeguarding session</b> The Complaints Handling training session had been very well received. A number of governors indicated that they would be attended the Safeguarding Training later in the week.</p> <p>The Clerk provided detail on the Trust specific 'Understanding Data' training sessions which was due to be held on Tuesday, 10th July 6-8pm (hosted by Manor). To book a place please email <a href="mailto:governance.service@york.gov.uk">governance.service@york.gov.uk</a></p>	
11.	<p><b>Policy updates</b> There were no policies for review.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Items to raise with the Trust Board</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Trust Board to ratify the LGC's recommendation that Matt Halifax becomes a Trust Appointed Governor</li> <li>2) Governors were frustrated by the finance deadlines imposed on them by the Central Team / Trust Board, and asked the same to consider the ramifications of the deadlines that are handed down. Governors wanted reassurances from the Trust Board that the same issues recorded at this meeting would not be repeated next year, with the Start Budget LGC being scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019</li> <li>3) VoYA governors would like to know the detail behind the MCEA expansion plans and how this may impact on the school's need to increase numbers</li> <li>4) The Principal wished to record that she wanted to be involved with the CEO's review of weaker subjects at VoYA</li> </ol>	
13.	<p><b>Action list for the Trust Board</b> Covered under Item 8.</p>	
14.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>First impressions of MinutePad</b> – discussed above.</p>	
15.	<p><b>Dates and time of next meeting</b></p> <p><b>Agree proposed LGC meeting dates for 2018/19</b> The proposed dates for the 2018-19 LGCs had been circulated with the agenda. The LGC agreed to the dates, pending confirmation from the Trust Board that the dates were aligned to the finance deadlines, with enough time built in for LGC scrutiny and to avoid the need for a rushed decision.</p> <p><b>DONM:</b> Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2018 at 5pm</p>	

**The meeting ended at 7.10pm**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Chair**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

**ACTION PLAN FROM THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING COMMITTEE  
HELD ON MONDAY, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Person</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.	Clerk to arrange for Victoria Sanderson to be registered with MinutePad & ensure she receives the Governance Welcome Pack	2	Clerk	Completed
2.	Trust Board to ratify the LGC's recommendation that Matt Halifax becomes a Trust Appointed Governor	2	Clerk	11.07.18
3.	The Principal was to review the 'School on a page' document considering what staffing detail to include	6	Principal	Autumn 2018
4.	The Clerk was to schedule the EO LGC meeting on MinutePad	5	Clerk	Completed