

Vale of York Academy

Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Local Governing Committee meeting held on Monday, 18th June 2018 at 4.30pm in the SLT Meeting Room

Present:

Helen Dowds (Principal)	Peter Hodge
John Kesterton (Chair)	Victoria Sanderson
Patrick Looker	Miriam Zulkarnain (until 5.12pm)

In Attendance:

Vanessa Smallwood (School Business Manager)
Liz Andrews-Wilson (Governance Support Officer - Clerk)

		Action
1.	<p>Welcome, apologies for absence, consent and declarations of interest</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence had been received from Alison Davies, Sarah Byrne and Emma Owens with consent. There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
2.	<p>LGC approval of the Start Budget</p> <p>The Principal reported that following the discussions at the recent LGC meeting held on 4th June 2018 she had met with the Finance Manager to further scrutinise the Start Budget. The budget was looked at line by line to assess the financial situation. She advised that they needed to try to find circa £100,000 each year in order to make the budget sustainable. She explained that some monies had been found through further cuts across the board and the Principal was satisfied that the only place left to cut was the Education Support staff budget. It was noted that this was not the preferred option, but under the current financial situation it was the only one available.</p> <p>Part of this item was recorded as a confidential minute - part 1.</p> <p>The Principal reported that the budget presented to the LGC had a much better prediction than had been expected and it was in a much better position than at the start of the academic year. She noted that once the cuts to the Education Support staff budget are accounted for, this would place the budget in a surplus position for the year ahead.</p> <p>The Chair advised that he and the Principal had to attend the Trust Board's Resources Committee on Monday 25th June 2018, to present the Start Budget. The Principal showed the LGC the presentation that she and the Chair were due to give at this meeting. The following headlines were captured:</p> <p>Budget assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The budget is in deficit for the year ahead by -£63,000 (-£19,000 better than expected) • The Start Budget assumes that the savings on the Education Support staff budget will have been applied. This budget includes the 25hrs TA saving • The Start Budget assumes the 2% staff cost increases • Pupil numbers are slightly less than expected (had predicted 140, have secured 122) • The monies from the sale of the old Clifton with Rawcliffe site are not included in the budget • VoYA will not be able to meet the requirement made by the Trust Board for a 4% reserve in the coming year, but the budget is increasing as the years go on <p>In-year surplus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018-19 is forecasting a -£60,000 deficit 	

- 2019-20 is forecasting a £7,000 surplus
- 2020-21 is forecasting a £63,000 surplus
- These figures assume that all staff will increment up the pay scale but does not account for the inevitable staff changes (a potential saving)

Other Budget assumptions

- GAG funding will have gone up by 5%, which is less than the National Funding Formula
- The school would not benefit massively from the NFF as the school was already benefiting from the deprivation funding elsewhere
- Income from lettings is likely to increase
- Other costs have gone up and this has been accounted for

The Principal highlighted that the school still has a very high staffing ratio of 16:1 (on the census figures, 17.1:1 on real figures). Governors acknowledged that the staff ratio included the multiple roles that a school has to have regardless of size, such as the Data Officer, Exams Officer and the technicians and so on.

The Principal highlighted that in 2018-19 the school would receive funding for 534 pupils, but 567 would actually be on roll. She explained that the school would therefore be experiencing lagged funding; governors noted that in some ways this was a good sign, as it showed that the school was growing.

Capital Expenditure

- Four classrooms are to be overhauled over summer
- The first floor carpeting was to be tackled in phases
- A quote had been accepted to cover the work needed to install the suspended ceiling (to modernise the ground floor). At £5,000 this quote had been lower than expected

The Principal highlighted how far the school has come to improve its reputation and push up the standards of the school: the new Year 7 cohort is taking in 53% of the catchment area children, which is notably higher than in previous years.

Risks

- Pension increases
- The potential risks associated with falling pupil numbers
- The financial impact of supporting staff on long-term sick
- Repair/replacement costs if the boilers have to be taken out of service
- Roof repair costs, if there is another bad winter and the roof leaks again

Opportunities

- The sale of the Clifton with Rawcliffe site, which should hopefully go through in 12 months
- A fifth of the Principal's salary is paid back to the school, due to the school to school support work she is undertaking

The Principal stressed how difficult it has been over the last year to get finance data out of the Central Team and that the data had often been released late.

The Principal asked if the governors had any questions:

Q: Is the Principal clear that the diligence has been done to look at staffing costs across the board?

A: The staffing ration is 16:1, because of the reasons given above. In KS3 all Humanities classes have class sizes of 32. English and Maths class sizes average 22 due to the importance of front loading the core subjects. There is also a nurture group which has a different ratio. Art and Design subjects sit above the recommended class size. In KS4 there are five classes in each block to allow pupils to have choice; their choices are widened by the courses that can be taken at MCEA. As VoYA offers more to MCEA pupils, the Trust reimburse VoYA the difference.

Q: If the school was to operate with similar class sizes in Year 8 and Year 9 would there be the

	<p>need for an additional teacher? A: There would be a need for a 0.5FTE teacher to support the three year KS4. There would be fewer choices if KS4 was to return to a two year programme.</p> <p>The Principal reminded governors that the curriculum model is the Trust's central model. A governor commented that there is a curriculum plan in place that has to be followed. He added that VoYA cannot reduce teaching hours any further as this would go against what the Trust want. Another governor commented that they were less concerned about the budget and the cuts to the Support Staff budget, following clarification that the cuts would see only a 10% reduction in TA hours.</p> <p>The LGC acknowledged that VoYA do not follow the Trust model for TA allocation. The Principal commented that as a school in Special Measures there is also the argument that more TAs are needed than the standard Trust model. The Principal advised that going forwards, TAs would be employed on 25 hours contract.</p> <p>The Principal commented that the TAs team do an important role. Three TAs run the Homework Club and another is responsible for the reading age tests in Year 7. One TA comes in to run the breakfast club. This is on top of their other TA duties.</p> <p>The Principal clarification that it was not the intention to make anyone redundant, but hours would have to be reduced. 25 hours needed to be clawed back through due process in consultation with the Unions.</p> <p>Q: Is there a real risk of numbers decreasing? A: That depends on the neighbouring schools. Joseph Rowntree School has already increased its PAN by 30. The Principal advised that she had received clarity from the Trust Board, advising that MCEA was looking to recoup lagged funding and not increase pupil numbers at this time.</p> <p>Q: Does VoYA have a growth plan? A: Yes, the aim is to increase the number of catchment children coming into the school.</p> <p>Q: Is there a view to how the Trust will receive this Start Budget, as presented? A: The Finance Director has seen the budget as presented and has not raised any concerns.</p> <p>The Principal stated that she still needs to go through the budget line by line in order to ensure that savings are made.</p> <p>Q: Can the Trust do anything to reduce energy costs, by making use of the Trust's purchasing power? A: The SBM advised that the Trust is looking into this. The Chair agreed to raise this point at the Chair's Forum meeting. The SBM added that the Trust is having to wait for SLAs to run out before contracts can be switched.</p> <p>The Chair noted the need to implement an action plan for 2019-20, when the surplus budget becomes more stable.</p> <p>Part of this item was recorded as a confidential minute - part 2.</p> <p><i>5.12pm - Miriam Zulkarnain left the meeting</i></p>	Chair
3.	Finance Director's summary of the 5% top slice Noted.	
4.	Items to raise with the Trust Board Nothing to raise.	
5.	Any Other Business See confidential minutes.	

