

**York High School**  
**Minutes of the meeting of the Local Governing Board held on**  
**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 6pm held at the school**

**Present:**

Gavin Kumar (Principal)  
Andy Pope (Chair)  
Sally Gordon  
Clare Besant  
Sarah Hammond

Richard Lavell  
Andrew Waller  
Val Roddis  
Ian Savage

**In Attendance**

Ian Parnaby (School Business Manager), Sophie Triffitt (Clerk)

**Action**

**1. Welcome, Apologies for absence, Declarations of Interest**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest to note.

**2. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025 (previously circulated)**

**Resolution:** The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and approved.

**Matters Arising and Action Plan**

**Action 1:** The SBM reported that the impact to the budget of the change of national insurance contribution rate and categories was £87k, the government grant covers circa 83% (£72.5k) of that cost.

**Action 2:** Action was ongoing.

**3. SLT Feedback – Finance**

The SBM attended the meeting to provide an update to governors.

**Link Governor Report** (previously circulated)

**P7 Financial Summary** (previously circulated)

The SBM presented the budget, forecast position and variance.

The SBM informed governors that the budget monitoring was reporting in line with the budget plan with the reserve currently reporting at 2.5% against a Trust target of 4%.

**Consolidated Management Accounts Summary and Detailed** (previously circulated)

The SBM presented the management accounts summary noting that:

Income was up by £380k from an increase in:

- National Insurance grant.
- Looked After Child funding.
- Grants to cover teacher pay and pension contributions.
- Core schools budget grant.
- A donation.

Costs were up by £232k from an increase in:

- Pay award.
- Supply costs, a difficult area to predict as absence was an uncontrollable factor.
- High electricity costs due to being locked into a contract at a higher rate but a new contract had reduced that rate going forward.
- Higher uptake on Free School Meals but funding does not fully cover costs of the meal so was subsidised through the school budget.
- Additional marketing and school environment costs.
- Additional costs to the Trust levy at 5.6%.

**Challenge: A governor asked if the MAT had investigated absence insurance.** The SBM explained that it was available to all schools and there was an element of risk with the balance of claims and premiums. The Trust has agreed a contract with a supply agency to have a master agreement to manage supply across all schools which offers a discounted buy in rate and priority staff allocation.

**Challenge: A governor noted the discussion at a local trust on top slice and GAG funding and asked if the school were in a position to answer questions related to this in the instance of a Freedom of Information request.** The SBM confirmed that information was available if the question was asked and confirmed that the schools in Excel pay a small cost compared to others nationally and there was quality staff and services from the central team so was confident the school was getting good value from the levy.

**Challenge: A governor questioned if the 4% reserve expectation was likely to increase.** The SBM explained that there was a balance between spending the money on the pupils in school at the time but also a DfE expectation to hold a healthy reserve to ensure operational continuity in an unexpected scenario. The schools have been asked to create another 1% to the reserve and then once a school was at a satisfactory position there would only be a need to set a balanced budget not one in surplus.

The SBM explained that the detailed version of the accounts was provided for information as an example of what the SBM and link governor review each month.

#### **2025-26 Draft Start Budget** (tabled)

The SBM presented a tabled draft start budget noting that the final budget submission would be presented to the Trust Board in June 2025.

The SBM noted that:

- A teacher resignation could be submitted up to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025 which could have an impact on the budget.
- Inspire was included in the York High budget in 2024/25 but was extracted to a separate budget for 2025/26.
- The York Schools Sports Partnership budget is held in the York High budget but has no impact to the bottom line.

The SBM reported that the £202k reduction in staffing costs was driven by the Inspire budget being removed and Curriculum Financial Planning to maximise efficiencies in the timetabling model which led to the reduction in staffing in the PE and Geography departments. The SBM confirmed that the outgoing colleagues had secured other roles so there was no formal redundancy process. The support staff structure was reviewed, and admin hours reduced through natural turnover.

Overall, the budget delivers a 5% reserve position.

**Challenge: A governor noted that when there was a change in national funding the York schools lost deprivation funding and asked how the current funding compares with an equivalent school outside of York.** The SBM reported that the 2025/26 deprivation funding had increased by circa £110k but could investigate benchmarking.

**Action:** SBM to benchmark deprivation funding against schools with a similar cohort demographic outside of the Local Authority.

SBM

**Challenge: A governor asked why budget line 5165 Head Office Recharge had reduced.** The SBM explained that line was automatically calculated but he would double check it was correct.

**Challenge: A governor asked if it was realistic to reduce the staff development budget from £28.5k to £19.5k and what had driven that reduction.** The SBM explained that the TES contract for recruitment and training had been ended which delivered a significant cost saving. Vacancies would be advertised through a free DfE portal but there was the option to pay to place a one-off advert with TES if it was needed. The Principal added that it was the direction of travel nationally.

The link governor noted that the LGB don't approve the budget but proposed the link governor reviewed the budget with the SBM before final submission and report to governors. Governors were in agreement.

Governors recorded thanks to the SBM for his excellent work throughout the year, delivering a budget in line with the plan and the presentation to governors.

The SBM left the meeting at 6.38pm.

Governors recorded thanks to the link governor for his work reviewing the finance and support provided to the SBM.

#### **4. Inspire Provision Update**

The Principal reported that KS3 turnaround students had been unsuccessful when transitioning from a bespoke offer back to York High, school was working with Inspire to look at how they can have a more thorough reintegration.

**Challenge: A governor asked if there was a quantifiable measure for the level of improvement after a period of time in Inspire.** The Principal confirmed success was measurable around Social Emotional Mental Health need but the issues were with the young people coming back and engaging with education.

The Principal explained that the KS3 turnaround model could be difficult with students missing lessons and with a maximum of two student places for KS3 provision next academic year there was a need to

define how it could best work for the schools. Many schools were working towards having onsite hybrid provision and he was looking to define what the offer could be at York High.

**Challenge: A governor asked how the decision was made for children being placed at Inspire and if there was an admission policy.** The Principal explained that there was an application process and the Inspire Head of Service and Trust Director of SEND and Safeguarding would take a decision based on need.

**Challenge: A governor asked if there was a correlation between the number of students accepted and the cost to school.** The Principal explained that York High had more students placed in Inspire than Millthorpe and the Local Authority would buy in a place at a cost of £20k, other provisions charge £25-30k so Inspire was good value for money, but York High could fill the places ten times over so have to try and make it work for the right students. The Principal added that the new Ofsted framework centred around inclusion so there was a need to look at how they could make an alternative provision offer work in mainstream.

## 5. Principal Feedback

The Principal reported that GCSE examinations had started, and the invigilation team reported that the students had been the most positive, well behaved and engaged cohort they had seen. The Principal noted that the projected outcomes were strong. The English Eduqas exam board change would have impact this year and a KS3 Mastery Curriculum had been purchased for English.

The Principal reported that attendance was tracking 0.5% better than last year and was on track for a three-year improving trend but still needs to be better. The Principal noted disappointment with a group of circa 20 Year 10 students who, with parent support, chose not to attend school for a pre-arranged day at the beach.

**Challenge: A governor asked if the fining system was utilised in that instance.** The Principal confirmed not and explained that fines were issued for persistent absence or lengthier unauthorised absences.

The Principal reported that suspensions were tracking significantly better than the previous year but there was a cohort of circa 25 students that they needed to find a way to reach.

The Principal informed governors that the SENCO had secured a promotion position at an alternative provision. An Assistant Principal for Inclusion advert was published, and the Principal expected a strong field but noted it was not typical to advertise that type of role at this time of year. There was a shorter than normal recruitment period to align with resignation dates. The Principal assured governors that an appointment would only be made for the right person.

**Challenge: A governor noted that they could not question the amount and variety of work to address behaviour and attendance, but it could be helpful to have an external view on opportunities to improve the inclusive offer.**

The Principal informed governors that the level of challenge coming up through primary schools was increasing so there was a need to do something different.

**Challenge: A governor asked if there was a pattern of parental engagement within the cohort of challenge.** The Principal confirmed not.

The Principal referred to the Year 10 BRAG data and informed governors that they were a very different cohort to the current Year 11 and there was a need to intervene as soon as possible. The Associate Assistant Principal had completed a Pupil Premium tracker to identify all barriers to engagement and as expected it identified that the more barriers the greater the risk. Prework for those transitioning to Year 7 would be undertaken and there was a need to engage the students and families as early as possible.

The Chair noted that many of the students who chose to have a day off school to go to the beach had had an engagement process start in Year 8.

**A governor asked which cohorts were of greatest need.** The Principal reported that KS3 particularly Year 7 and Year 8 were groups of greatest need.

The Principal explained that literacy skills was a key barrier so any children on behaviour contract would be coming off timetable to do Reading Plus, but the logistics were difficult to manage.

**Challenge: A governor asked if the literacy issue stemmed from SEND or was a social issue.** The Principal explained that it was a mixed picture and the Covid impact had made the gap bigger. The New Group Reading Test was undertaken across the whole school to inform a review of the intervention offer.

**Challenge: A governor asked if there had been a measurable improvement from the Reading Plus assessments done in September 2024.** The Principal explained that the Reading Plus assessments

were done online and not in exam conditions so could not rely on that data. The NGRT assessment was done in exam conditions and the Principal had prefaced the assessments with an assembly to emphasise the importance of the tests so was confident that set of data was accurate. The school were working with different providers to identify the right reading platform for all students which would come with an additional cost.

**Challenge: A governor suggested that reading ability was an issue coming up from primary schools and asked how they were addressing it.** The Principal explained that SATs gave some information and from initial assessment they know who needs Phonics intervention, but it was important to get an accurate set of data for the whole school.

The Principal informed governors that a Literacy Group was established, and the first action had been to complete the reading assessment, the next was to establish an impactful reading strategy to be led by the English department and the departments enrichment offer would be reading / literacy intervention focused.

**Challenge: A governor suggested that there was a cohort of children who don't flourish with Phonics at primary school.** The Principal explained that Fresh Start Phonics and Lexonic Phonics were delivered in different ways, so they were trying to ensure they have the right platforms for different literacy levels.

**Challenge: A governor noted the headline in the local press around historic suspension data which was disappointing and presented a historic narrative that the school were trying hard to change. The governor proposed providing some positive news stories for the local press.** The Principal explained that the local press had published a story linked to the 2023 DfE data. The Principal reported that the suspensions for the following year had reduced by 38%. The school had written to the reporter to provide positive context of the school and explain that it was old and misleading information, but they still published. The Principal acknowledged that the suspensions were too high but at every Local Authority Fair Access Meeting the work on suspensions at York High School was highlighted as best practice. The Principal informed governors that he had walked seven potential Assistant Principal candidates around school, and they all commented on what a great school York High was.

The Principal informed governors of a member of staff, Cheryl Alexander, who had won a Master Educator Award and Look North were scheduled to visit school to film a news segment on her.

The Principal reported that one member of staff had moved on for a fulltime role and a PE member of staff had moved to be closer to home. He was not expecting further movement.

**Pulse Update** (previously circulated)

The Chair referred governors to the attendance, behaviour and Year 11 BRAG data.

**Checkpoint Data and Predictions**

**School Evaluation**

**School Improvement Plan**

There were no updates to record.

6. **Chair Feedback**

**School Improvement Plan**

**Attendance**

**BRAG Pulse Trends**

There were no updates to record.

7. **Governing Feedback Deep Learning**

**Teaching and Learning** (link governor report previously circulated)

The link governor proposed inviting Mr Hardy to a governor meeting.

**Resolution:** Governors agreed for Mr Hardy to be invited to the July 2025 or September 2025 meeting.

**Reading and Literacy**

Update provided as part of the Principal's update.

8. **Governor Feedback – Deep Experience**

**Assessment and Destinations**

**Careers and Education**

There were no updates to record.

9. **Governor Feedback Deep Support**

**Child Protection and Safeguarding** (link governor Report previously circulated)

The link governor reiterated that safeguarding must retain priority across the school.

**SEND**  
**Community**  
**Pupil Premium and Disadvantaged**  
**Behaviour**

There were no updates to record.

**10. Finance Report**

**Link Governor Report** (previously circulated)

**P7 Financial Summary** (previously circulated)

**Consolidated Management Accounts Summary and Detailed** (previously circulated)

**2025-26 Draft Start Budget** (tabled)

Items taken earlier under agenda item 3.

**11. School Policies**

**Parent and Visitor Behaviour Policy** (previously circulated)

**Resolution:** Governors approved the Parent and Visitor Behaviour Policy subject to 'there should' being amended to 'there is' a zero-tolerance approach.

**RSE Policy** (previously circulated)

**Challenge:** A governor asked if there had been any organised resistance to the RSE offer. The Principal confirmed not.

**Resolution:** Governors approved the RSE Policy

**Exam Policies Summary** (previously circulated)

**Resolution:** Governors approved the Exams Policies Summary.

**Home School Agreement** (previously circulated)

**Resolution:** Governors approved the Home School Agreement.

**Homework Policy** (previously circulated)

**Resolution:** Governors approved the Homework Policy.

**Positive Behaviour Policy** (previously circulated)

**Resolution:** Governors approved the Positive Behaviour Policy.

**Challenge:** A governor noted that from discussions at suspension panels they had understood that there would be changes to the Behaviour Policy. The Principal explained that Class Charts was being used to engage parents and reduce administration. The planners would be retained and there would be a review of the way the systems were used in teaching and once that was confirmed this would feed through to policies.

**12. Governor CPD**

Governors were informed that they should have received an e mail to the new training platform, and it was confirmed that all completed training had transferred over.

**13. MAT Update**

Governors were reminded of the scheduled Governance Evening on Monday 7th July, from 5:30pm to 7:30pm and the drop-in session on Monday 7th July, between 2:30pm to 4:30pm.

**14. Any Other Business**

There were no items for discussion under AOB.

**15. Future Meeting Dates**

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – 6pm

The meeting closed at 7.31pm.

**Approved at LGB on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2025.**

Approval

<b><u>ACTION POINTS</u></b> <b><u>From the meeting of the Local Governing Board held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025</u></b>				
	<b><u>ACTION</u></b>	<b><u>ITEM</u></b>	<b><u>WHO</u></b>	<b><u>WHEN</u></b>
1.	Chair to request fobs for governors.	1 (18.03.25)	Andy Pope	April 2025
2.	Benchmark deprivation funding against schools with a similar cohort demographic outside of the Local Authority.	3	SBM	June 2025

**July meeting:**

Mr Hardy – Teaching and Learning Update.