

**Date** 9 November 2011  
**Subject** Young People's Learning Agency Board Minutes  
**Location** Barnfield South Academy  
**Time** 09.00 - 12.30  
**Publication intent** NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

---

**Present**

- Les Walton (Chair)
- Pete Birkett
- Dexter Hutt
- Peter Lauener
- John Merry
- David Pearmain
- Emma Pearson-Winstone
- Mark Sanders
- Observers
- Ian Ferguson
- Julian Gravatt (for Lesley Davies)
- David Igoe
- Donald Rae
- Jo Thomas
- Malcolm Trobe
- Executive
- Sue Baldwin
- Neil Flint
- Sophie Hume-Wright
- Ruth Medlock (Clerk)
- Jane Cowell

**Apologies** Apologies have been received from:

- Peter Box
- Gareth Dawkins
- Helen Sexton
- Michele Sutton
- David Wootton
- Lesley Davies
- Frankie Sulke

## **Item 1. Welcome and opening comments**

- 1.1 The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave particular thanks to Barnfield West and South Academies for hosting the meetings. The hospitality and detailed planning for the Board's visit had been excellent.
- 1.2 Jane Cowell, Director of Funding Policy, was welcomed to the meeting.

## **Item 2. Declaration of interests**

- 2.1 There were no declarations of any interests specifically relating to the meeting agenda.

## **Item 3. Minutes of the last meeting**

- 3.1 These were agreed as an accurate record.

## **Item 4. Matters arising**

- 4.1 Item 5.4. Now ready to move to external recruitment and letters to local authorities will be sent at the end of this week, with copies going to LGA colleagues.

## **Item 5. Updates**

### **Chair (Paper YPLA 74a/2011)**

- 5.1 Lord Hill has confirmed in a letter to Les Walton that there will be an advisory group for the Education Funding Agency (EFA). Peter Lauener as Chief Executive designate of the EFA and Andrew McCully (Acting Director General at the DfE) have asked Les to Chair the advisory group which Les has agreed to do until July 2012.
- 5.2 The next steps will be to develop terms of reference for the group that complement the formal governance arrangements which include:
  - an Audit Committee reporting to the DfE Board's Audit Committee;
  - regular performance reviews with the Director General and a nominated DfE Board non-executive director, who has been named as Theodore Agnew.
- 5.3 The process for confirming members of the advisory group will begin after Christmas.

### **Chief Executive (Paper YPLA 74b/2011)**

- 5.4 Capacity to deliver the Academies programme remains high on the agenda. Internal resource has been redeployed to boost the leadership team and develop new systems but recruitment is still underway to secure further capacity for external assurance and analytical support. The Board will

continue to monitor the situation until vacancies have been filled and staff inducted.

- 5.5 The number of appeal cases on Academies application processes received by the YPLA has increased. This has created additional pressure on YPLA resources over the summer. Board members advised the executive to be aware of potential 'scope creep' and suggested ways to reduce the number of cases that YPLA should process such as a triage system to assess validity of complaints.
- 5.6 Another area which will stretch external assurance staff resource is the next round of free school business plan assessments for checking. Again, this will need to be monitored. Peter Lauener reported that John Rawsthorne had now been allocated full time to lead the external assurance team (he had previously been 50% on this area of work).
- 5.7 A summary of the NAO report '*Oversight of special education for young people aged 16-25*' was tabled for information. Peter was attending the Public Account Committee hearing on this report following the meeting and took suggestions from Board members on the YPLA's response to the report. Feedback would be given at the next meeting.

**Action: Peter Lauener**

- 5.8 Peter invited comments from Board members on the EFA mission, vision and values. This will be followed up at a future Board evening session.

**Action: Peter Lauener/Sophie Hume-Wright**

#### **Item 6. Draft Funding Statement for 2012/13, 16-19 Allocations (Paper YPLA 75/2011)**

- 6.1 Sue Baldwin outlined the factors and assumptions that had been built in to the Funding Statement. The total number of learners to be funded will take account of demographic projections and a trajectory to meet the targets for raising the participation age to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015. Also reflected is the expected growth in apprenticeships; the contributions made to participation through foundation learning and the impact of EMA replacement by the bursary allocations.
- 6.2 The Board recognised potential pressures that may arise in some local areas that could not be resolved through the lagged methodology. They strongly supported the proposal to retain some learner numbers for additional places for local identification of need and the funding of niche provision for those young people who are not currently participating.
- 6.3 The Board asked for further investigation into retention between years 12 and 13.
- 6.4 The Board's comments on the tone and content of the statement and Chair's foreword would be welcome. Les stressed that he wanted the document to be honest, straightforward, not patronising and clear about the detail. A draft copy of the foreword would be circulated after the meeting.

**Action: Sophie Hume-Wright**

- 6.5 The Board asked if a slide set could be produced to support Principals, Headteachers and Chief Executives in sharing the detail with their staff and encouraging engagement. A comprehensive Q&A document to follow as soon as possible after sending out the document would also be helpful.

**Action: Sue Baldwin**

#### **Item 7. Bursaries 2012/13 (Paper YPLA 76/2011)**

- 7.1 The submission to ministers would follow the Board meeting. Sue Baldwin will include feedback on comments from the Board.
- 7.2 The allocations for 2012/13 will be a transitional year as there is only initial data on key issues such as the number of vulnerable learners in the current year to inform subsequent year's allocations.
- 7.3 The option recommended to the Board reflected one of minimal change for the benefit of providers and learners. The Board asked for options one and four to be re-modelled. A decision would be made following this further modelling work.

**Action: Sue Baldwin**

- 7.4 The Board asked that the bursary process is clearly communicated to all providers receiving these funds and that there are no delays to payment as this may impact on a young person's ability to make informed decisions.
- 7.5 The Board noted that DfE have commissioned an evaluation of the bursary scheme and requested that it should include an analysis on the impact of bursary offers from providers on the choices of learners.

#### **Item 8. Education in youth custody (Paper YPLA 77/2011)**

- 8.1 Donald Rae summarised the paper.
- 8.2 There are new duties on local authorities for young offender and for those who have completed time in custody or secure residential homes. Evidence suggests that education for young offenders still does not enable sufficient progression into further education or employment. More needs to be done to understand the context in which this education is provided in order to influence the delivery and content of a curriculum for young offenders.
- 8.3 The Board agreed to revisit this issue in an evening session to discuss how funding can be used to bring about improvements for young offenders and what the next steps for the Board should be. Sue Baldwin agreed to see whether the Virtual Campus (currently aimed at adults) could also be set up for Board members to look during this session.

**Action: Sue Baldwin/Sophie Hume-Wright**

#### **Item 9. Communication plan for Academies allocations (Paper YPLA 78/2011)**

- 9.1 Neil Flint reported that a letter is being sent to all Academies this week setting out the overall approach. This includes:

- letters to individual academies by 31 December for checking data;
  - indicative funding calculations to all Academies in January/February for further checking;
  - briefings and roadshows;
  - final funding letters to be sent out by 31 March.
- 9.2 Ruth Bullen will be managing the communications for this allocation process and there will be significantly more engagement with stakeholders on the content and timing of material sent to Academies. Partnerships with the major membership bodies will be used to test and disseminate messages.
- 9.3 The process for grant calculations is tight and challenging to deliver. YPLA staff are building the replication models from local authority systems and submissions are with ministers on start up grants and the minimum funding guarantee. Peter Lauener will chair a high-level checkpoint group that includes DfE colleagues to ensure oversight of the end to end process.

### **Item 10. Any other business and meeting review**

- 10.1 There was no other business.
- 10.2 Thanks were once again given to Pete Birkett – the Chair asked that thanks were passed on to Barnfield colleagues and students.
- 10.3 The Chair summarised the meeting’s main action points or points to note:
- The advisory group for the EFA had now been confirmed. The Chair and Chief Executive would work on finalising the terms of reference.
  - Academy capacity issues remain high on the agenda.
  - There is a need to increase the size of the external assurance team.
  - Key messages on the funding statement received from Members – a small group would continue to work on drafting with Sue Baldwin.
  - The draft Chair’s foreword would be sent to Members for comments.
  - A slide set would be produced as supporting materials for the funding statement
  - Option one and four on bursary allocations would be remodelled
  - Education in Youth Custody remains on the agenda and an evening session would be planned on this issue

### **Actions from the November Board Meeting**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Status</b>
5	An evening session to cover EFA mission, vision and values	Peter Lauener/Sophie Hume-Wright	

5	Feedback from PAC hearing on NAO report on Special Education to be included in the CE update in December	Peter Lauener	December meeting
6	Circulate Chair's foreword to the Funding Statement to the full Board for comment	Sophie Hume-Wright	Completed
6	Funding Statement supporting materials (slide set and Q&A) to be developed	Sue Baldwin	
7	Bursary allocations - option one and four to be modelled	Sue Baldwin	December meeting
8	Plan evening session to continue discussion on education for young offenders. Include introduction to Virtual Campus online system.	Sophie Hume-Wright/Sue Baldwin	

**There are no actions from previous meetings outstanding**