



**MINUTES of a Meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust,
held via video conference on Thursday 8th October 2020 at 7.00 pm**

Present:

Simon Bamford (SB)
Geoff Braham (GB)
Alan Broomhead (AB)
Linda Burton (LB)
Ken Coveney (KC)*
Jesse Cleverly (JC)
Alan Dunstan (AD)
Jean-Francois Fava-Verde (JF)

Vicki Hamilton (VH)
Neil McIntosh (NM)
Sarah Parish (SP)
Lucy Phipps (LP)
Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR) – Chair
Annie Temple (AT)
Clive Watts (CW)
Graham Webber (GW)

*Joined at 8.10pm

** Left at 9.10pm

Apologies:

Duncan French (DF) - currently on 6-m leave
Will Bromage (WB)

In attendance:

Dawn Challis (DC) – School Business Manager**
Jo Cundy (JCu) – Clerk

Governor challenge is shown in red

1. Introduction

- Quorum was confirmed.
- Apologies tendered were accepted.
- As the first point of the meeting JSR asked governors if they were in agreement that this meeting could be held remotely - this was agreed by all governors.
- No governor declared a material interest in any agenda item.

Signed Date

2. ATB meeting, 9th July 2020

2.1. Minutes which had been circulated were approved as an accurate record, and were signed by JSR. These will be dropped into school for filing.

2.2. Review of Actions/matters arising: Unless otherwise discussed, assigned actions had been completed. Matters arising not covered by the current agenda were considered:

- Complete Prevent and GDPR training (item 2.2) - Not yet completed by one governor. **Action: JC**
- Ofqual document has been uploaded to Google Docs. *Are there many changes to the document?* Yes, the year 11 exam content will likely be reduced and exams will probably move back – formal decision by Ofqual is yet to be made.
- Governor Code of Conduct (CoC) should be signed by governors every year. **Action: JCu to email CoC to Governors, and all Governors to then email JCu to confirm that they have read and understood it.**

2. Budget meeting, 17th September 2020

2.3. Minutes which had been circulated were approved as an accurate record, and were signed by JSR. There were no Actions/matters arising. The minutes will be dropped into school for filing.

3. Headteacher's Section: SB presented his report which had been previously circulated.

- The Year 7 have generally settled in well. There is one student who is currently proving a challenge. *Are staff having to spend a lot of time with that child? Is it detrimental to other children?* It is taking up staff time but the poor behaviour is mostly outside of lessons.
- There has been one bullying incident recorded since the last report.
- The DfE have emphasised national concerns for pupil's mental health, especially after lockdown, with many students expected to struggle with the return to school. There are a handful of vulnerable students on the Langtree watch list who are being carefully monitored. Going forward, Simon will be reporting to gov's on the behaviour and wellbeing of students on this list, and the P+C committee will additionally monitor this in conjunction with Sarah Burman.
- There has already been a higher number of exclusions than usual – which reflects the difficulty of some children returning to school, but also our current difficulty with isolating students as a precursor to exclusion (as highlighted in the new addendum to the behaviour policy).
- In order to overcome the problem of maintaining social distancing during lunchtimes with poor weather, the school day has now been shortened by 30 minutes. This allows each year group to have a separate lunch (which can now be served by Aspens entirely from the hall).
- **GCSE grades for class of 2020:** The DfE won't be producing any league tables this year. A lot of work went into ensuring that grades were genuine and honest. Langtree is edging towards the top 10% of schools in the country for grades 4+ in English and Maths. *Is there anything that we should be looking at with regards to disadvantaged students?* A large proportion of disadvantaged students did relatively well this year. The C&S committee will be reviewing the FFT summary in further detail at their next meeting, and will report back to FGB. **Action: GW to add to next C&S agenda**

- **School Recovery:** Initial focus has naturally been on Year 11s, who have the least time left before their exams. Some assessments have already taken place to provide a clear picture of where the gaps are. Study groups have been set up at the end of the day to allow students to have supported study time if required. Conversations are taking place with regard to the best exam boards for each subject to achieve the best fit for our students and what has already been taught. *There are some very nervous parents - should we communicate more about what school is doing to catch-up the students?* SB has been waiting for Ofqual's decision re exam timing and structure before communicating to parents. **(NB: Since then, the announcements have been made, so our plans will now be shared.)**
- *What happens if there is another lockdown - what is the plan?* Several ideas are already being explored, including the additional use of TAs, perhaps buying in additional part-time teachers, employing a learning coach to re-engage students, targeted sessions after school, revision sessions. Generally speaking, the Year 10s are currently actually ahead of where they would normally be due to focusing on their option subjects earlier (at the end of Yr 9). *Is this something which should be considered for year 10 in the future?* Students learn skills from all subjects - and implementing a new timetable for the last term would involve a significant amount of work - but it's something that will be considered.
- *If there is another lockdown, how will teaching be delivered remotely?* There is a 4-tier contingency plan depending on the situation that is imposed on us (the decision will be out of our hands). However, school will do what we can to keep full-time attendance for vulnerable children, key worker children and also for Yr 11s (the decision may be out of our hands). The best strategy is to maintain good-quality classroom teaching as much as we can. A lot of research shows that live online lessons are not very effective. However, teachers have been tasked with creating at least one video for each class at least once a fortnight (although this won't necessarily be a whole lesson – and could be an introduction, a bit of background explanation to support work posted on SMHW or feedback on previous work completed). A lot of staff training has now been done on how to create videos, we have addressed the technological needs of staff and lots of staff seem quite excited by the potential of using video.
- *Should there be mention of student wellbeing in the School Development Plan?* We already do this well, so it's arguably not an area that needs to be developed. However, a survey has already been sent out to students in order for school to support them with their wellbeing (the results are currently being collated); a similar survey was also sent to staff.
- *Is there anything that governors should be aware with regards to staff wellbeing?* The restructuring of the school day, as well as double-lesson timings can result in very long days for staff. However, morale remains generally high.

4. Governor update

- Terms of office for parent governors Jesse Cleverley and Will Bromage are coming to an end. Jesse and Will have both confirmed that they are happy to continue as governors – but as Will is no longer a parent, he will now become a co-opted governor (filling the vacancy we already have).

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- It was agreed that the school will put out a call for one or possibly two new parent governors to see how much interest there is. If more than two names come forward, there may be the need for an election.- which the school will organise. NB: If two parents come forward, Jesse will have the option of becoming a co-opted gov too. **Action: Simon to ask MTL to add an item to the bulletin and, if required, run parent governor elections.**
- Alan B had been advised that a Wellbeing governor could be beneficial in order to oversee the wellbeing of staff, however the Pastoral & Community committee have agreed that as they already monitor staff and pupil wellbeing, that a dedicated Wellbeing governor would be unnecessary – but proposed that this now be formally included in the terms of reference. VH therefore proposed to the FGB this amendment to the committee Terms of Reference (ToR) to clearly outline this committee responsibility. Governors agreed with this approach.
Action: VH to amend the P+C ToR and forward copy to MTL for website
- There are three new governors who haven't been in to school yet due to Covid. AD and JF confirmed that they would welcome a tour and SP, who is the new SEND governor, asked for a call with the SENCo. **Action: SB to arrange school tours/meeting**
- All newly voted in governors have completed the induction training. All governors to log webinar/conference attendance in the Google Drive.
Action: VH to circulate link please – and all governors then to record their webinar/conference attendance going forward

5. Committee reports

- **Finance and General Purposes:** Minutes of 10th September had been circulated.
 - Existing ToR had been reviewed and approved as previously agreed.
 - The quote to replace the pipework within the back corridor is about £114,000.
 - The Risk Register has been reviewed by the auditors who have made some useful suggestions. This document is available on Google docs for governors to read. **There are just a handful of actions marked red – but should we be concerned about any of these?** No – these are all low-probability contingencies that would require high expenditure to work around – but naturally these will continue to be monitored.
 - A meeting has been arranged with Aspens to review the catering contract. The changes made to timetabling and lunch times will allow Aspens to serve lunch from the hall going forward. These changes should enable Aspens to break even from now on.
 - AB highlighted discussions around how large the reserves that Langtree holds should be (we currently hold two months – but are considering reducing these to just one month, which would free up money to spend on the school – e.g. Phase 1 of the pipe work). **Linda advised that she has experience here – and suggested that we consider carefully our obligations to pay staff in exceptional contingency (e.g. if the school were to close), and therefore consider not only our employees' salary, but also their length of contract.** AB wasn't sure what this would amount to – but will now look into it. **Action: AB to research contingency liability and report back to F+G / FGB.**

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- **Curriculum and Standards:** Minutes of 22nd September had been circulated.
 - Existing ToR had been reviewed and approved as previously agreed.
 - Two policies were approved: Careers Programme and Online Safety Policy. School had asked FGB to approve the Exam Policy ahead of the retake exam period (which are now scheduled for November). The C&S committee will review the policy first and recommend any changes before FGB approval – but this will have to be organised online.
Action: C&S to review the Exam Policy, and JSR to then circulate for FGB for approval.

- **Pastoral & Community:** Minutes of 21st September had been circulated.
 - Terms of Reference had been reviewed and an amendment proposed to reference Wellbeing (as noted earlier). This was approved by governors.
 - Four policies were approved: Exclusion Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy and the Covid amendment, and Safeguarding Policy. Within the Behaviour Policy it was noted that there was no reference to training for staff who might need to use physical restraint and that this should be added. **Action:** VH to liaise with SP and SB to agree on appropriate amendment to ‘using reasonable force’ section wording.

- **Drama studio update**
 - Since Covid, and with theatres being closed, the drama landscape has changed and the project’s plans are currently on hold – but governors remain keen to keep this on the agenda. AB, AD and JC to meet and discuss the plan to understand what the practical implications of the project are. **Action:** AB, AD and JC to meet and discuss

- **Approval of statutory policies**
 - Relationships and Sex Education was presented by the Pastoral & Community committee which they had reviewed and approved. It was also noted that it had already been sent out for parental consultation – and that there were no comments that were cause for concern. The Relationship and Sex Education policy was ratified by the full governing body.
 - Careers Programme Information was presented by the Curriculum & Standards committee which they had reviewed and approved. The Careers Programme was ratified by the full governing body.
 - The Behaviour Policy and Addendum were presented by the Pastoral & Community committee which they had reviewed and approved. SB noted that he was concerned with the ‘using reasonable force’ amendment, that it might mean that untrained staff would be unable to physically restrain when necessary. The Behaviour Policy and Addendum were ratified by the full governing body but VH, SP and SB to agree on appropriate amendment to ‘using reasonable force’ section wording.
 - Safeguarding Policy was presented by the Pastoral & Community committee which they had reviewed and approved. The Safeguarding Policy was ratified by the full governing body.
 - Exams Policy will go to Curriculum and Standards committee for thorough review before coming back to FGB for approval. (NB: Because of the tight timelines, this approval will need to be managed online.)

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AOB: SB expressed his thanks to JSR, VH, AB and GB for all their input and support during the summer – especially for the three summer calls. SB also wanted to record his thanks to the SLT and the Governing Body for all their help. SB also thanked Henley College Marketing staff for the Open Evening presentation, and also to CW who had alerted Langtree to a local business that was closing down; arranged for the school to acquire several of the items being disposed of and made a donation to cover the cost of some of these items. (Thanks, Clive!)

JSR expressed the thanks of all governors to SB and to all school staff for all they continue to do during these difficult times.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 3rd December, 7:00pm

Finally, JSR thanked all governors for their time and input, and closed the meeting at 21:46

ACTIONS LIST from FGB meeting, 8th October 2020:

Minute	Action	By whom?	By when?
2.2	Complete online Prevent and GDPR training and confirm when complete	JC	ASAP
2.2	JCu to circulate Code of Conduct to governors, all governors to confirm have read and understood it	All governors	ASAP
3.5	Add review of FTT to next C&S agenda	GW	November
4.2	Ask MTL to run parent governor elections	SB	ASAP
4.3	Amend P&C Terms of Reference and forward copy for the website	VH	ASAP
4.3	Arrange new governor's school tour/SENCo meeting	SB	ASAP
4.5	Circulate GoogleDrive record log for governor webinar/conference attendance	VH	ASAP
5.1	Research contingency liability and report back to F&G and FGB	AB	November 2020
5.2	Curriculum & Standards committee to review Exams Policy and then JSR to circulate for FGB approval	C&S	ASAP
5.2	Exams Policy to be reviewed by FGB	JSR	November 2020
5.3	VH, SP and SB to liaise and agree on appropriate amendment to 'using reasonable force' section wording	VH	ASAP
5.4	Meet and discuss Drama Studio plan	AB/AD/JC	November 2020
5.5	Approved Policies to go on school website: Exclusion Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, Relationships and Sex	JCu	ASAP

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	Education Policy, Online Safety Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Careers Programme		
	Ofsted Inspection Framework Informational Sessions	SB	Sept 2020
	SB to discuss the openness of the site with LADO and report back to governors	SB	October 2020
	Provide update on LEAF's student initiative regarding BP	SB	Late 2020
	Critchley's to attend FGB if medium or high risks reported during audit	JSR/DC	Ongoing
	Consider next steps of governor training	VH	Ongoing

Signed

Date