



**MINUTES of a Meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust,
held via video conference on Thursday 13th May 2021 at 7.00 pm**

Present:

Simon Bamford (SB)
Geoff Braham (GB)
Will Bromage (WB)
Alan Broomhead (AB)
Linda Burton (LB)
Ken Coveney (KC)
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
Catherine Roche (CR)
Annie Temple (AT)
Clive Watts (CB)
Graham Webber (GW)

Apologies:

Dawn Challis (DC) – School Business Manager
Jesse Cleverley (JC)

Vicki Hamilton (VH) had previously sent apologies that she would have to leave at 19.30

In attendance:

Jo Cundy (JCu) – Clerk

Governor challenge is shown in red

1. Introduction

- Quorum was confirmed.
- Apologies tendered were accepted.
- No substantive items were notified for AOB.
- No governor declared a material interest in any agenda item.
- 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.

Signed

Date

2. ATB meeting, 18th March 2021

- 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) – JC has nearly completed the training. **Action:** JSR to check if JC if has completed the training
 - Governors thanked WB for his very kind donation of a piano to Langtree, and also for delivering it. This will allow pupils to practise piano independently.

4. Governor update

- a. Governor Skills Audit: VH advised that the purpose of the audit had been to identify any gaps for individuals and/or the board as a whole. Almost all governors (16/17) had completed the confidential skills audit, and overall, the analysis shows that there is a good spread of expertise across the board. It was however noted that with only 16 respondents the data could easily be skewed. Some areas were identified as being slightly weaker, for example marketing, but one governor is exceedingly strong in this area. Other areas which could be improved upon are: Making relationships within the board', 'interpreting data', and 'factual knowledge'. To target these, a governor social event is being planned (when social distancing allows), and SB will arrange for a briefing on interpreting data and also how teachers are recruited, in the next school year. It was also noted that it would be useful to have a list of skills and governors put their names next to areas they were particularly proficient at. Governors thanked VH for all her work on this.

Action: SB to arrange briefing; VH to work on creating a skills list

VH left the meeting at 19.30

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

- Assessment and grading arrangements: Year 11 students are finishing off their assessments. These are being used to help with grading, alongside other evidence taken from coursework and tests completed in class. Teachers will complete forms, and can note any issues that a student may have experienced, perhaps due to Covid. All teachers will meet with SB or Chris Nonweiler to ensure assessment consistency. There will also be a robust quality assurance process, with data being mapped against other years and prior attainment; Fischer Family Trust (now known as FFT) will also conduct quality assurance. A Centre Policy, based on the JCQ sample document, has been submitted to JCQ.
- Plans for final weeks in school: After the assessments finish, Year 11 will stay in school and continue with tests and coursework for a further two weeks; some subjects have already finished their curriculum, these have enriching activities planned. On the last day of school there will be a traditional leavers' day with dressing up and signing shirts, a BBQ and rounders. Later in the year there will be a small prom for them on the school field. The Year 11 from 2020/21 will also be invited back for a reunion and prize-giving in the summer as they didn't have the opportunity last year.

Signed

Date

- School Recovery: This is having a great deal of impact and success, particularly the National Tutoring Programme which has 60 students enlisted on the weekly virtual tutoring. Langtree is reported to be achieving the highest attendance and engagement rates of all schools they are working with nationally. Governors noted their thanks to Jan Holroyd for all she is doing to support this.
- Options and Timetable: Due to the limitations of Covid over the past year, there had been a very low uptake for GCSE music resulting in uncertainty as to whether the subject could run – but thanks to some clever timetabling by Chris Nonweiler, and the flexibility of Stephen Henderson (Head of Music), this is now able to go ahead – albeit with a slightly reduced number of lessons. The two-week draft timetable has been produced and will soon be published more widely to all staff. The structure of the day is also being reviewed by a newly formed working party, and staff have been surveyed for their thoughts. Many would prefer a slightly earlier start and end to the day. Consultation with the community needs to take place but, assuming there are no major barriers, this may be implemented in September 2021.
Action: SB will provide an update at July 21 FGB meeting
- Covid Control: The testing programme is now offsite. A total of around 7200 test have now been taken with (so far!) not one positive result. Students are still being asked to wash their hands, and equipment is still being sanitized. The requirement to wear masks is being removed after half term in the light of revised government guidance, which is a relief as it has been detrimental to learning - however, students and staff can continue to wear these if they prefer. The staggered start times may also be removed after half term, once the Year 11 pupils have left. Assemblies with single year-groups are hopefully going to be reintroduced – but break and lunch will stay staggered for now.
- Strategic Planning: The SDP 2020-21 is in the early stages of review – and the 2021-22 SDP is expected to focus heavily on teaching and learning.
Action: SB to provide SDP update at July 21 meeting
- Behaviour and Safeguarding: The number of exclusions has increased, mainly due to a small number of challenging individuals – but some of these students are expected to be transferring to other (first-choice) schools shortly.
- Attendance: Since March the attendance average has been 96%, which is higher than in a normal year (perhaps due to all the hand-washing and mask-wearing) - although attendance for PP and SEN children is currently slightly lower. **How does the persistent absentees differ to previous years?** SB replied that he would need to review the data to confirm but believes that it is similar. There are a number of Year 10 children who have always presented a problem getting into school - and, as they get older this is becoming harder still, particularly for the less academic children. Langtree has tried to offer more vocational courses, including Prince's Trust, a non-certified Technology course and a Travel and Tourism course. LP noted that additionally, some students have chosen to shield because their parents are vulnerable to Covid – but that it wasn't possible for these to be authorised because they weren't on the register to allow it. There are also a number of students with mental health struggles. Langtree is working on putting support networks in place to help with resilience. Work experience opportunities for those students who are less engaged, and the challenges to finding appropriate work experience, was discussed. The P&C committee will follow up this discussion at their next committee meeting.
Action: P&C committee to include this on their June agenda.

- Summer schools: These are being financed by the government and are not obligatory. Unfortunately, the type of summer school Langtree believes would yield the most benefits would not attract government funding. The guidance is that the whole cohort should attend for 1 week, or half the cohort for 2 weeks.

B. Ofsted – Update Briefing – Part 1

SB Provided an overview of the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and Governor Role. A second session will be presented at the July FGB meeting and will include a closer look at the new framework, specifically the categories the inspectors will review and the judgment areas they will cover.

4. Governor updates

- After Duncan French's resignation from the board earlier this year a governor vacancy still exists. SB suggested using Inspiring Governance to search for a new governor, with which he has had success at another school. After some discussion, governors were happy for SB to go ahead with the advert.

Action: SB to liaise with JSR, and then to advertise the vacancy on Inspiring Governance

- CW informed governors that he has reviewed both the Health and Safety and First Aid policies, making changes where necessary. CW said that the outstanding actions from the last Health & Safety audit have been worked through and that, were there to be a Health & Safety audit in the near future, he is confident that Langtree would pass.
- GB said that he and VH had attended a Governors for Schools webinar on 'Safeguarding - what governors need to know in 2021'. GB had concluded that Langtree is acting in accordance with the guidance, that the safeguarding information from Sarah Burman is appropriate, and that issues are being managed in accordance with policies and procedures.
- JSR provided an update on the Drama studio project in JC's absence. Although the project by necessity was put on hold in 2020 (due to Covid), the hope is that we will be able to bring this back for final consideration early in the next academic year (from September 21). However, given the time that has elapsed, and in accordance with best practice (not least regarding potential reputational and financial risk to Langtree due to a number of assumptions being made), it was agreed that a feasibility study should first be conducted so that all key expectations from the school and from governors could be recognized and appreciated right from the start, and that the true costs likely to be involved were clearly understood. As the next step, the proposal is that a small team of governors be formed as a Working Group to review the project – to be led by AD, and involving AB. Governors thanked JC, AB and AD for the risk assessment work that has already completed, and are looking forward hearing more in due course.

Action: Governors to let JSR/ AB know if they are interested in joining the Working Group.

NM left at 21.20

5. Committee reports

- **Finance and General Purposes:** Minutes of 29th April 21 had been circulated.
 - An in-year surplus of £54,000 is currently showing, with the view that this could be slightly higher by year end.
 - It is currently proving difficult to obtain quotes for the required heating and pipework project – although the plan had been for the work to be done during the upcoming summer holidays is now looking unlikely. **If this summer is missed, will this have to wait until next summer - and if so, can it wait?** The work required is so invasive we believe summer holidays is the ideal time. So yes - hopefully it can wait.
 - Budget for school year 21/22 shows a deficit in years 24/25 and 25/26 which is due to staff pay increases - and additionally the bulge year will have left by then, reducing funding. SB said that although further bulge years may be a possibility in the future, this is currently looking less likely in the light of the demographics currently predicted for S. Oxfordshire. The budget will come to July FGB for final sign off.
 - Heating - biomass is falling out of favour and it is getting harder to source fuel. The current lease is due up in three years - and at the end of the lease the boilers will be sent back to the lessee. Heating options will continue to be reviewed.
 - Five policies had been approved:
 - First Aid (statutory)
 - Health & Safety (statutory)
 - Investment policy
 - Charging & Remissions (statutory)
 - Staff disciplinary (statutory)
 - SRMSA tool review: the checklist has been completed and the committee are comfortable with the variances.
 - SB is currently applying to the Wolfson Foundation, a charitable trust which provides grants for high performing secondary schools, seeking a grant for the science lab refurbishment. CR advised that she already has contacts there - can she help? SB confirmed that he would be very grateful. **Action:** SB to follow up with CR.
- **Curriculum and Standards:** Minutes of 27th April 21 had been circulated.
 - The Curriculum policy was amended and approved.
 - A lengthy discussion on PP was held, and JF is now following up with SB direct.
 - New timetable, Centre policy and School Recovery were all discussed.
 - The date of the next C&S committee meeting has moved to 15th June.
- **Pastoral & Community:** Minutes of 26th April 21 had been circulated.
 - Staff morale in general seems to be good. A student survey has been conducted, tutors are following up with students who have not yet responded.
 - Children with health needs who cannot attend school (a statutory policy) had been provisionally approved and was being presented at FGB. The Designated Teacher for LAC Students policy has been drafted and should be reviewed at the June P&C committee meeting. The Staff Code of Conduct policy will also be reviewed at the June P&C meeting.

- There is a great deal of pastoral and mental health provision taking place at Langtree, CR and Sarah Burman are working on pulling everything together to form a mental health framework.
- **Approval of statutory policies**
 - **The Charging & Remission** Policy was presented by the Finance and General Purposes committee. No changes have been made to the policy. The full governing body approved the policy.
 - **The Health & Safety** policy was presented by the Finance and General Purposes committee. The only change is the added reference to the new First Aid policy. The Health & Safety policy was approved by the full governing body.
 - **Staff Disciplinary** was presented by the Finance and General Purposes committee. Various edits have been made. The full governing body approved the policy.
 - **First Aid in Schools** was presented by the Finance and General Purposes committee, it has also been reviewed by VH. The full governing body approved the policy.
 - **Children With Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School** was presented by the Pastoral and Community committee. This is a new statutory policy based on the DfE template. *Is the policy workable?* SB replied that yes, it was. The policy was ratified by the full governing body.

AOB: Following discussion, JSR confirmed that the July 21 FGB meeting will be virtual – but expressed the hope that by October all governor meetings will be in school, and that face-to-face meetings will also be able to resume. However, it is appreciated that one or two governors might not be able to attend in person, in which case alternative provision will be considered for them.

It was also agreed that a social event would be great – ideally at VH's house / garden in July (before the end of term) in the late afternoon / early evening. Everyone to bring a plate of food.

Action: JSR to advise VH, and ask her to suggest some possible dates for governor consideration.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 8th July, 7:00pm

JSR thanked all governors for their time and input, and especially thanked all the school staff attending. JSR closed the meeting at 22:02.

Signed

Date

ACTIONS LIST from FGB meeting, 13th May 2021:

Minute	Action	By whom?	By when?
2.2	Complete online Prevent and GDPR training and confirm when complete	JSR/JC	July 2021
3	Update on timetable and earlier start to school day	SB	July 2021
3	P&C committee to discuss pupil work experience opportunities	VH	June 2021
3	SDP update at July FGB meeting	SB	July 2021
4	Arrange briefing on Interpreting Data and Recruiting Teachers	SB	2021/22
4	Look at creating a skills list for governors to note their expertise	VH	July 2021
4	Advertise governor vacancy on Inspiring Governance	SB	June 2021
4	Governors to let JSR if interested in joining Drama Studio working group	All	July 2021
5	Follow up with CR regarding Wolfson Foundation	SB	ASAP
5.1	Approved Polices to go on school website	JCu	ASAP
	Ofsted Inspection Framework Informational Sessions	SB	July 2021
	Report on progress of PP students	SB	July 2021
	Provide update on LEAF's student initiative. <i>Subsequent to the May FGB meeting SB noted that, since lockdown 1, LEAF seems to have disbanded. This action will, therefore, be removed.</i>	SB	

Signed

Date