



MINUTES of a Meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust, held at Langtree School, Woodcote, RG8 0RA on Thursday 7th July 2022 at 7.00 pm

Present:

Simon Bamford (SB)
Alan Broomhead (AB)
Linda Burton (LB)
Jesse Cleverly (JC)
Vicki Hamilton (VH)
Sarah Parish (SP)

Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR)
Nima Zarrabi (NZ)
Catherine Roche (CR)
Annie Temple (AT)
Clive Watts (CW)
Graham Webber (GW) - Chair of Meeting

Apologies:

Alan Dunstan (AD)
Lucy Phipps (LP)
Kirsty Rogers (KR)

In attendance:

Karen Barker (KB) – School Business Manager
Jo Cundy (JCu) – Clerk
Ashley Pearce
Christine Reeves

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.

Signed

Date

2. ATB meeting, 12th May 2022

2.1. Minutes which had been circulated were approved as an accurate record and will be signed by AD. 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) – This is almost complete by JC

Action: JC

- Confirm KCSIE has been read and understood **Action:** JC to confirm
- The wording of the SEND policy was discussed at the C&S committee meeting. A small update to 5.11 has been made. **How does the new wording differ to what school is already doing?** The new wording reflects what is already in place, it is just documented now. The policy was approved by the full governing board.
- SB said that the exploration of a Counsellor/Mental Health Practitioner is ongoing. A full time counsellor is cost prohibitive. Other options being explored are training current staff, or employing a part time practitioner.

3. Headteacher's Section: SB presented the report which had previously been circulated. Discussion raised the following points:

- Attendance continues to recover, but more slowly than had hoped due to the ongoing pandemic. Students are being encouraged to test for Covid, particularly if they have lessons with vulnerable staff. VH noted that there are a lot of intervention strategies in place to help persistent absence students; the attendance officer was happy with the attendance figures. AT added that there is one pupil who only attends school for two hours a week, this skews the data.
- Staffing: There are a number of staffing changes for the new academic year, these are outlined in the Headteacher report. To note a couple of appointments:
 - School has previously struggled to source a competent science teacher. An agency that recruits overseas teachers has recently been used, they have found Chevitta Marshall-Richards who is joining Langtree from Jamaica. SB has interviewed Chevitta over Skype but has not seen her teach.
 - A couple of replacements have been made on the Senior Leadership Team.
 - Karen Barker is sadly leaving Langtree to take up a similar role at Gillots, Carolyn Ventress will replace Karen as School Business Manager. Karen has been transformational for the school and will be missed. Gillots are kindly allowing Karen to come back part time in September to help with the new financial year.
 - **Is there a sound induction programme to settle everyone in?** There is a strong induction programme but most of the new appointments already work at Langtree and are familiar with how things are done. Chevitta will be appointed with a mentor. **Where do things stand with the vacancies?** There are some internal moves which leaves a couple of vacancies but school is in a strong staffing position.
- Governor Involvement: Huge thanks to all governors for their incredible support, but particularly to Alan Dunstan, Catherine Roache and Clive Watts who have spent a lot of time in school over the last few months.
- **How would the closing of the gates during the school day work in practice?**

Signed

Date

Discussions on closing the gates are still on going. The gates are set back from the road so deliveries would still be enabled. The danger is that pupils are walking around the front of the school and are at risk of being hit by a vehicle, in addition to unwanted people coming on to school site. In September the one way system will be reversed so students won't be directed around the front of the school building. The LADO audited the school site a couple of years ago and was satisfied with what she saw.

- SB tabled the one and three year SDPs. Key areas of the three year plan are to Improve Outcomes for Vulnerable Learners, Achieve Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Secure the Long Term Future of the School, and Maintain High Quality Provision for Personal Development. The one year SDP is a summary of four Priorities, team leaders are charged with making appropriate developments and interventions within their subjects. Each of the aims has a two page action plan. **How will governors know if the plan is successful?** Success criteria, along with a RAG rating, will be included and presented to governors. Monitoring of students will be more formal and also centralised, enabling improved tracking.
- A governor open day will be arranged for October/November to include Focus Groups and Learning Walks in the morning, and address governor questions in the afternoon.

Action: SB to schedule governor open day.

- The exams went very well with high attendance. There are three students who don't attend Langtree but are still on roll, the results of these students will be included in the final data set.

4. School Budget 2022/23

KB reported that the 2022/23 budget has been reviewed by the Finance Committee twice. The budget has changed considering the different assumptions, for example, in a short time frame inflation has increased from 6 to 10%. A £100,000 DfE supplementary grant in 22/23 will help cover increased costs such as Electricity and Gas but there is a knock on effect in subsequent years where planned government funding is not sufficient. After removing the impact of the CIF Project a surplus is predicted for 22/23, but subsequent years are in deficit. Staffing assumptions have been made: Support staff are due another pay rise, the assumption is that there will be no additional funding from the government. Langtree currently has a healthy reserve, but years two and three are in deficit. **If there are reserves, why does the school's contribution to the CIF bid reduce the capital?** There was a lengthy discussion on this, the explanation by KB is that it is an accounting treatment.

AB noted that an alternative draft budget was drawn up using the assumption of another bulge year. If a bulge year were to be included the positive impact of £135,000 on the budget would be seen in the 4th year. A bulge year does not seem to be a likely scenario at present, but Langtree admissions are usually oversubscribed and a commercial decision may need to be considered in a year or two. It is an ongoing discussion at finance committee meetings.

Governors approved the 2023/23 budget for submission to ESFA.

5. Governor update

- Governors unanimously agreed to renew the term of office for Jan Seal-Roberts and Annie Temple for another 4 years. Their term of office will both start on 7th July 2022.
- Proposal for two new governors to join Langtree FGB:
 - Ashley Pearce is a teacher of Economics at a local secondary school, he is also an A level Economics examiner, has previously been a school governor, in addition to lead Councillor for Education in Reading. Governors unanimously voted Ashley onto the governing board. Ashley will join the C&S committee.
 - Christine Reeve was a social worker for 20 years specialising in Children's work. Christine was also the Children's Commissioning Manager for all Child Health Services for the NHS in Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster Health Authority. These are just a couple of highlights from Christine's career working with children. Governors unanimously voted Christine onto the governing board. Christine will join the P&C committee.
- Sadly, due to relocating back to Scotland Claire MacVicar is resigning from the governing body effective 21st July 2022. Governors thanked CM for all she has done for Langtree.
- AB informed the governing body that Graham Webber is also resigning from the governing body due to a house move, his last day as a governor will be 21st July 2022. Governors have had the benefit of GW's experience and expertise for a number of years and he will be missed. Governors thanked GW for all of his contributions to Langtree.
- VH said that with GW leaving the governing board are looking for someone to complete the Safer Recruitment training. CW kindly offered to complete the training.

Action: CW to complete Safer Recruitment training.

6. Committee reports

- **Finance and General Purposes:** Minutes of 22nd June 2022 had been circulated.
 - AB said all actions from the Financial Management and Governance Review have now been completed, excluding one best practice recommendation which was not accepted as it related to members being different to trustees. The ESFA have confirmed that they are satisfied that the mandatory requirements have been implemented sufficiently.
 - The catering contract is to be reviewed with Aspens, they want to increase their prices. The view from the F&GP committee is that the catering contract should go out to tender, governors agreed. The link between nutrition and learning and the importance of eating healthily was discussed, this should be a consideration when assessing a new caterer.
 - The forecasted in-year surplus has increased by £31,657 as the expected DfE supplementary grant of £42,044 for 21/22 has been confirmed.
 - Following the successful CIF bids for the Roof and Heating/Pipework projects, work has started with the two property consultants to progress the work programmes.
 - It was agreed not to buy in a Business Continuity Plan but instead Langtree will draw up its own plan, CW has kindly offered to help with this.
 - Policies approved were: Managing Sickness & Absence, Health & Safety, Register of Pecuniary & Other Interests.
 - Finally, a huge thank you to KB for her contribution to the Committee, and also to Claire MacVicar for her expertise over the last year.

Signed

Date

- **Curriculum and Standards:** Minutes of 21st June 2022 had been circulated.
 - The committee discussed the Ofsted questions which was a really helpful discussion
 - The nascent SDP structure was shared with governors and next steps were discussed
 - Policies approved were: Accessibility, ECT, Homework and SEND. The Target, Assessment and Reporting policy is currently undergoing significant change and was therefore deferred to September.
 - KR has kindly agreed to take over as Committee Chair

- **Pastoral & Community:** Minutes of 20th June 2022 had been circulated.
 - Attendance continues to be monitored, Sarah Burman is looking further into late arrivals.
 - Increased budget has been confirmed for incoming Year 7 EHCP pupils for further support from external tutors.
 - The uniform contract is still to be signed but agreement has been made with the girls PE kit.
 - The results from the school survey of pupils, staff and parents were discussed and suggestions were made on how improvements can be made. Staff results were rather disappointing compared with pre Covid results, believe this to be due to them giving their all during the pandemic but, also, some were unhappy that they were either not consulted or listened to when decisions had to be made quickly by SLT.
 - Sarah Burman is preparing a Mental Health Strategy programme/policy.
 - Policies approved were: Staff Code of Conduct, Designated Teacher for Looked After children, Collective Worship, and Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School. The latter policy was queried at the May FGB meeting. A full discussion of points raised by CW was held and clarification was made, this has been noted within the P&C minutes.

- **Drama Studio update**
 - JC said that there has been a slight delay due to the architect being on 3 month paternity leave. The marketing material has been re-written as it was felt that the fact that it will be a carbon negative building was a stronger selling point. JC is speaking with the architect tomorrow to discuss the bespoke plan which he hopes will be ready for September.

- **Approval of statutory policies**
 - The Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School had been reviewed and approved by the P&C committee. The policy was approved by the full governing board.
 - The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children had been reviewed and approved by the P&C committee. The policy was approved by the full governing board.
 - Based on the recent audit some minor amendments have been made to the Health and Safety policy. A link for the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) has been put into the policy, the policy will update throughout the year as and when the SOPs are reviewed. The change meets the audit recommendations. The policy was approved by the full governing board.
 - SEND policy was approved in 2.2.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 6th October, 7:00pm

Finally, GW thanked SB and all governors for their time and input, and closed the meeting at 21:00

ACTIONS LIST from FGB meeting, 7th July 2022:

Minute	Action	By whom?	By when?
2.2	Complete online Prevent and GDPR training and confirm when complete	JC	ASAP
2.2	Confirm KCSIE has been read and understood	JC	ASAP
3.6	Schedule Governor Open Day	SB	September
4.1	Amend the Complaints policy wording at the next review	VH/LB	September
5.5	Complete Safer Recruitment training	CW	ASAP
5.5	Approved Policies to go on school website, where appropriate: Children With Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School, Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, Health & Safety, SEND	JCu	ASAP
	Include Drama Studio update as standing item on FGB agendas	JCu	

Signed

Date