



**MINUTES of a Meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust, held at Langtree School,
Woodcote, RG8 0RA on Thursday 26th January 2023 at 7.00 pm**

Present:

Simon Bamford (SB)

Alan Broomhead (AB)

Linda Burton (LB)

Jesse Cleverly (JC)

Alan Dunstan (AD) – Chair of Meeting

Vicki Hamilton (VH)

Sarah Parish (SP)

Lucy Phipps (LP)

Christine Reeves (CRe)

Catherine Roche (CRo)

Kirsty Rogers (KR)

Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR)

Clive Watts (CW)

Nima Zarrabi (NZ)

Apologies:

Hayley Scott (HS)

In attendance:

Sarah Burman (SBu) - Deputy Headteacher

Jo Cundy (JCu) – Clerk

Carolyn Ventress (CV) - School Business Manager

Governor challenge is shown in red

1. Introduction

- Quorum was confirmed.
- Apologies tendered were accepted.
- No governor declared a material interest in any agenda item.

2. ATB meeting, 12th December 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.

Signed

Date

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

- Admissions policy has gone to public consultation, still waiting to hear back from OCC
- 6.1 AB said that the Finance Committee had discussed whether there was a better offering for Langtree's money held on account. It had been agreed that, while the CIF bids are in progress, having flexibility with multiple, large, transactions was important. **Is it possible to receive a better interest rate elsewhere?** CV replied that, for the amount of money held, and the flexibility required, she did not believe it was worthwhile moving at the moment.

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

- Teacher strike action: Currently, the plans are that Langtree school will close on the 1st February. For the second strike date, 2nd March, school will be closed to all but vulnerable and key worker children. For the third date, the hope is that school will also be open for Year 11 children. The main reasons for school closure are lack of time to plan, risk assess and safeguard appropriately. **Can remote learning take place?** Teachers cannot be asked to cover for others, nor can they set work for days they are not working, it may be possible to set some generic work.
- The year 11 mocks and predictions reveal that, while year 11 are on course to achieve results in line with previous years, the higher average attainment of this cohort means that they are not currently heading for the progress measures Langtree has come to expect in recent years.
- A decision has been made to put the catering contract out to tender, school would very much like to have governors' input into the process. The current offering from Aspens has been disappointing, a major improvement is sought. **Langtree has been in the same position before but improvements weren't made, are there going to be feasible alternatives? Companies who can provide a more forward thinking approach?** CV said that there would be greater emphasis on Key Performance Indicators, from the start, with greater monitoring. School has decided to employ a professional consultant to manage the re-tender and believe that suitable alternatives, including smaller, non-industrial companies, exist.
- The heating system project continues. Surface mounted copper piping is being installed which is a better solution than going under the ground, the piping will be boxed in.
- Langtree was shocked to hear of the sudden death of Ruth Perry, Head Teacher of Caversham Primary School. Although not a designated feeder school there are a number of students who attended Ruth's school. Langtree has passed on condolences to everyone at Caversham Primary School and spoken to students who attended there.
- Attendance took a huge dip before Christmas due to a virus and also a stomach bug which swept through the school.
- **Staff wellbeing - is there anything governors can be doing to support staff?** LP said that, with Ofsted looming, it is a very stressful time. It is appreciated that governors recognise this and show their support, as they are doing.

5. Governance Updates

a) SB - PMR update:

AB explained the Performance Management Review process. The review is carried out by the Pay Committee JS, AB and AD, and the School Improvement Partner. AB reported that SB had done a great job against his objectives, achieving all of them, and has inspired the committee with further work above and beyond his objectives.

b) Governance Review - Progress Update:

AD said that all of the requested governance documents had been sent to Lynne (NGA), and an online survey had been sent out to all governors. A few governors noted that they had either not received the survey or that the deadline was too short (1 day) and they were unable to complete it in time. **Action:** JCu to coordinate re-sending the surveys to governors who have not yet completed them. Once the surveys are completed, the next steps will be to gather the feedback. Lynne will then report her findings back to governors. **Action:** AD to phone Lynne for a status update.

c) Finance governor recruitment:

AB said that since NZ moved to the Curriculum & Standards committee, the Finance & General Purposes committee are searching for a new governor. Someone with a finance background, who can apply those skills to Langtree, would be ideal.

d) Link Governors:

Safeguarding Case Studies:

SBU provided an overview of Safeguarding at Langtree. Some of the items discussed were:

- Safeguarding is not managed by 1 person, it involves everybody in school
- Demonstration of how staff report a concern
- Staff training - every 3 years and drip fed on an ongoing basis
- Case studies, and how they were dealt with, were discussed
- Data is captured to allow tracking of various groupings (such as year groups, or gender), common types of concerns, and patterns for individuals.

Questions from governors included:

Who has access to the data, and what will you do with the data after a child leaves school? SBU, SB, Bev Belcher and Susannah Wood are the only people with access to the data, two passwords are required. The data has to be retained for 7 years, after which it is deleted.

What percentage of children are of concern? 108 concerns were reported, with 27 priority cases. **A lot of data is captured which helps show building patterns, do you get an appropriate response from Social Services?** Most of the time, yes. The evidence is based on fact, which helps.

Governors thanked SBU for the great job that she is doing, along with Bev Belcher.

e) Young Carers - new appointment - Christine Reeves:

AD informed governors that CR had kindly volunteered for the Young Carers role. Governors thanked CR for putting herself forward.

6. Committee reports

Finance and General Purposes: Minutes of 16th January 2023 had been circulated.

- The 2022/23 budget had initially shown a £38,000 surplus however, as a worst case scenario, this is now looking like a potential deficit of £28,000.
- Additional funding of £28,000 has been received from the government, to be spent on projects to improve the energy efficiency of the buildings. If this is not possible it can be spent as normal capital expenditure.
- Per pupil funding for 2023/24 has increased by 3%. Different scenarios have been reviewed, including with/without a bulge year. Looking at the projections the F&GP committee agreed that the bulge year approach should be retained going forwards. ***Do the local demographics and population allow for a bulge year to take place?*** It is believed that they do, yes. ***What issues does a bulge year bring with it?*** School trips are oversubscribed and the Prom will need to take place in a different venue. SB noted that there are significant timetabling complications, extra courses need to be devised and there is a perception that the bulge years bring additional behaviour and SEND challenges. LP, as Head of Year (which is a current bulge year) said that from her perspective, there are more children to manage but otherwise there is very little difference. ***All governors took a vote on whether a bulge year should go ahead, they unanimously agreed that it should.***
- The F&GP Terms of Reference, and Financial Schemes of Delegation were also updated with an additional item relating to contracts. ***All governors agreed to the updated F&GP Terms of Reference and Financial Schemes of Delegation.***
- Policies approved were: Lettings.

Curriculum and Standards: Minutes of 10th January 2023 had been circulated.

- Susannah Wood had presented up to date context on SEN, included in the presentation were: The EHCP process and how much time this takes; Underfunding; Triangulating student information; Removing students from the SEN register.
- A review of year group data took place. The mock results are on a par in terms of achievement but, as they are a brighter year group, progress is lower. Strategies are being put in place to address an element of complacency in the year group.
- FFT data and IDSR data were reviewed. Results were good last year. PP and PE were identified as areas requiring further support.
- The Target-Setting, Assessment and Reporting policy is still being worked on.

Pastoral & Community: Minutes of 15th January 2023 had been circulated.

- Welcomed Hayley Scott who is proving to be an asset to the committee. Thanks were expressed to Annie Temple for her sterling work for the school in so many roles.
- Cost of living crisis was discussed. VH has written to the PTA chairs regarding whether they had noticed an impact on fund raising and the well-being of pupils, parents and staff. VH to report back with her findings.
- Communications with the wider community, for example via media platforms, are being monitored. VH is looking into what already takes place and what more should be done.
- The annual Equality Report was discussed at length, it is available for governors to review

on the Google drive.

- Policies approved were: Anti Bullying, and Supporting Students with Medical Conditions.

Drama Studio update

- The potential name for the Drama Studio is The Beacon. A very professional brochure has been prepared, it explains the brief and vision.
- The plan is that the drama studio would be the first ever building that puts more back into the environment than it takes out, it would be a world first.
- The rising cost of living has adversely impacted the estimated price of the project. The architects, who are global players in sustainable buildings, have been slightly less engaged than they were; however, more recently, they appear to be back on board. Updated costings are being prepared by HayworthTompkins (HT) to allow us to approach lead sponsors. An approach to BP may not be acceptable to HT as it could be considered 'greenwashing'.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 16th March, 7:00pm

Finally, AD thanked SB and all governors for their time and input, and closed the meeting at 21:05

ACTIONS LIST from FGB meeting, 26th January 2023:

Minute	Action	By whom?	By when?
2.2	Admissions policy has gone to public consultation, waiting to hear further		Ongoing
5b	Contact Lynne (NGA) for a status update. Coordinate re-sending the questionnaires.	AD/JCu	February 2023
	Report Online Concerns within the Headteacher's report	SB	Ongoing
6.5	Approved Policies to go on school website, where appropriate: Anti Bullying	JCu	ASAP
	Include Drama Studio update as standing item on FGB agendas	JCu	Ongoing
	Committees to review the FGB Scheme of Delegation at the start of the Academic year (alongside Terms of Reference)	Committees	September 2023