



**MINUTES of a Meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust, held at Langtree School,
Woodcote, RG8 0RA on Thursday 11th May 2023 at 7.00 pm**

Present:

Simon Bamford (SB)

Alan Broomhead (AB) (remote)

Linda Burton (LB)

Jesse Cleverly (JC)

Alan Dunstan (AD) – Chair of Meeting

Vicki Hamilton (VH)

Lucy Phipps (LP)

Christine Reeves (CRe)

Catherine Roche (CRo)

Kirsty Rogers (KR) (remote)

Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR)

Clive Watts (CW) (remote)

Apologies:

Sarah Parish (SP)

Hayley Scott (HS)

In attendance:

Jo Cundy (JCu) – Clerk

Trustee challenge is shown in red

1. Introduction

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

Signed

Date

Langtree School, Woodcote, Reading, Berkshire RG8 0RA
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Headteacher: Mr S. Bamford Deputy Headteacher: Ms S Burman
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Company Registration Number: 07980335 Registered Office: Langtree School. Woodcote. Reading. RG8 0RA

2. ATB meeting, 16th March 2023

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:

- Admissions policy went to public consultation, still waiting to hear back from OCC. **Action:** SB to confirm policy approval

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

Discussion raised the following points:

- Industrial action continues: Since the last FGB meeting there have been two further, single, strike days. The Unions have now gone back to ballot to vote on whether any further industrial action is required. We are not expecting any further strike action during the summer's public exams.
- Attendance continues to be a concern particularly with persistent absence and attendance of vulnerable students. The pastoral team and attendance officer are doing everything possible to ensure students attend school.
- **The PE department has been doing really well, does Garry Clark's resignation as PE Team Leader pose a threat for the department? How easy will it be to replace him?** We do not believe the standards of the department will lower. PE teachers are more abundant than some other subjects, such as science, there have already been two applications for the PE teacher position.
- **It's good to see staff development, is succession planning considered?** Sarah Burman is completing her National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH). Sarah says she has no plans to move on at the moment but, should she want to, Langtree would support that. Succession planning for key members of staff is considered.
- **Should Trustees have better engagement with the PTA?** HS is engaging with the PTA.

4. NGA External Governance review

The NGA report was released on 14th April, a list of numerous action points was included in the report. There were a lot more recommendations than initially envisaged. AD has gone through the report and grouped the recommendations into high, medium and low priority. The Senior Trustees met last week to discuss the report and next steps.

The aim is that in approximately one year's time many of the recommendations will be completed, but in particular the high priority items. The two key items appear to be strategic planning - where Langtree is heading in terms of its Multi Academy Trust (MAT) structure of a single school, and moving towards having a Governance Professional, as opposed to the legacy Clerk role. Some of the recommendations are very quick and easy to put in place.

There was a lengthy discussion on the strategic planning element. The Trustees have a varied understanding of the governance structure, what evolving into a MAT (with other schools included in the Trust), could mean for Langtree, but also what might happen if Langtree stays as it is. AD is researching the topic further and will provide the Trustees with information on the positives and negatives of the various paths open to Langtree, he aims to complete this before the July FGB meeting. This fact-finding mission will help the Trustees to be in a position to make informed decisions going forward. **Action:** AD to complete his fact-finding paper on this topic

before July FGB.

Trustees were reminded that, while the report highlighted a number of recommendations, the board is doing a great job and to not lose sight of that. Keeping the best interest of the pupils in mind should always remain the key focus.

5. Governor Updates

- a) Finance trustee recruitment: AB said that little progress has been made. There is a potential candidate who has governance experience as they are a governor at another school. CR has also contacted a number of large corporations in order to explore other options.
- b) Staff trustee replacement: Lucy Phipps' term of office ends on 14th May 2023. The position has been advertised to all staff but there has been little interest. LP agreed to another term of office if nobody else steps forward.
Unfortunately, there are still no candidates for the Support Staff Trustee vacancy. **Is it possible to have two Teacher Trustees?** **Action:** AB to review the Articles of Association.
- c) Careers Link Trustee Replacement: This position still remains vacant, hopefully an appropriate person will be found in the coming months.

6. Committee reports

Finance and General Purposes: Minutes of 27th April 2023 had been circulated.

- The annual budget submission date has been pushed back to August; it is believed that this is to accommodate staff pay negotiations. The F&GP committee will review the draft budget in their June meeting, it will then go to FGB for final approval in July, as originally planned, but there could be some assumptions built in.
- The budget is looking healthy with a £65,886 surplus (before CIF funding) at the end of the financial year.
- The site team have decorated a language room and will complete remaining humanities rooms during the summer break.
- Many lights were replaced with LED fittings, this was funded by the additional capital funding for energy saving measures.
- Langtree has been informed that maintenance on the library is the liability of Langtree, not Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), resulting in unexpected additional expenses.
When Langtree academized, the understanding was that maintenance would be a shared responsibility, why the change? It seems that there is a covenant that states Langtree has sole liability. Carolyn Ventress (Business Manager) is working to clarify the situation.
- The auditors have informed Langtree that they are increasing their prices. At this point in time we will have to continue with them but will look around for alternatives for the next set of financial accounts.
- The Trustee Working Group looking at the catering contract are continuing their good work. VH had lunch in the canteen and reported that, while there were some logistical issues, it was impressive. Three companies have tendered for the new contract, including Aspens. VH will visit two schools, in Guildford and Leamington Spa, to sample their meals in situ. VH reported that she now has a much greater understanding of the

contract and the catering offering is limited due to the size of the contract; it is difficult to provide any more than what Langtree is currently being offered. SB said that Aspens, the current contractor, have worked on improving the offering. This is largely due to the increased monitoring and improved communication that Carolyn Ventress has brought to the relationship.

- **Is progress on the CIF bid being made?** SB said that Six have looked at the science block and believe there is a strong opportunity to apply for funding to re-develop the labs. The roof CIF is in hand.
- **The F&GP minutes state that Pupil Premium (PP) funds were incorrectly calculated, what does that mean – is it significant?** The PP fund was double counted, therefore an overestimation of £39,000 was made.
- **The Schoolspace contract is up for renewal with new terms, resulting in less profit being made on lettings, how much profit does Langtree currently make?** The current contract is 60/40, with Langtree earning 40% on lettings. However, this doesn't include overheads such as heating and electricity. It is envisaged that the new contract might be for a 75/25 split, with rising energy costs this could result in a loss to Langtree. AB said that the lettings rates should be reviewed in view of rising overheads. **Action:** SB to make enquiries about Oratory school - do they use a different contractor to manage their facilities
- Policies approved were: Charging & Remissions, First Aid, Staff Disciplinary, Investment. Work on the Critical Incident Plan is ongoing, SB and Carolyn continue their work on this.

Curriculum and Standards: Minutes of 20th April 2023 had been circulated.

- A thorough review of the Options process was discussed.
- The curriculum offering was reviewed, assessing whether it was meeting the needs of every child at Langtree. Viability of courses offered was also discussed.
- The Ofsted actions were discussed, and how they feed into the School Development Plan (SDP).
- Policies: The Target-Setting, Assessment and Reporting Policy has been split into three policies: Assessment; Target Setting & Reporting; and Marking and Feedback. The first two policies have been approved; the latter will be reviewed in September 2023.

Pastoral & Community: Minutes of 3rd May 2023 had been circulated.

- The new school nurse is only a temporary cover, she will be coming into school one day a week.
- Behaviour was discussed with great detail, along with attendance.
- A review of the Mental Health provision will take place before the June committee meeting.
- VH has researched the Cost-of-Living crisis and written an excellent paper on the topic. There are a couple of local charities who are keen to support families in the area. Information on this will be included in Langtree's Weekly Bulletin.
- The proposal by the PTA to run a Second-Hand Uniform shop is being investigated. Although the current process of second hand uniform being sold from the reception seems to work well.
- To promote the work of Langtree, SLT would like local press exposure, but need someone to help coordinate the process. There is currently little capacity for current staff to take

responsibility for this.

- Susannah Wood, SENCO, provided a brief update on PP. CR is due to meet with Susannah, a formal report will be provided ahead of the June P&C committee meeting.
- Policies approved were: Behaviour Written Statement and Behaviour Policy.

Drama Studio update

JC has recently had an informative meeting with Amanda Cropper, a local professional fundraiser, to discuss the task of raising £1.7million. Amanda was recommended by the architect and has experience working on big projects. To employ Amanda as a fundraiser would cost £110,000, with a view of raising the total sum of £1.7million over two years. Raising £110,000 to employ a fundraiser appears to be an easier task than raising the full £1.7million. Further questions need to be answered. **Action:** JC to set up a meeting with Amanda and a group of Trustees(AD, JS-R, SM, AB, SB).

Approval of statutory policies

- Both the Behaviour Written Statement and Behaviour Policy have been reviewed and approved by the P&C committee. VH said that it is recommended that Academies have a written statement, which VH has written. It was agreed that, going forward, the Behaviour Policy would be reviewed and approved by the P&C committee but the Written Statement would be reviewed/approved by the full board. Both the Behaviour Written Statement, and Behaviour Policy, were approved.
- The First Aid in Schools policy had been reviewed and approved by the F&GP committee. VH inquired about the frequency of staff training as this was not stated. SB said that frequency depends on the type and qualification of training. The First Aid in Schools Policy was approved.

AOB

- AD proposed that Langtree subscribe to the NGA membership. The annual cost is £400 and, with an additional £139.p.a. Trustees will have access to all of the training modules. Trustees agreed to the membership.
- VH is willing to organise the end of year Trustee get together if Trustees would like to go ahead this year? Trustees agreed that they would and thanked VH for volunteering. **Action:** VH will look into potential dates.
- Trustees thanked those involved for running the Open Morning, it was an excellent event.

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

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

ACTIONS LIST from FGB meeting, 11th May 2023:

| Minute | Action | By whom? | By when? |
|--------|---|------------|----------------|
| 2.2 | Admissions policy went to public consultation earlier this school year, confirm approval | SB | July |
| 4.0 | Complete fact-finding paper on Strategic Planning, Threats and Opportunities, and potential next steps for Langtree | AD | July |
| 5.2 | Review the Articles of Association regarding number/type of Staff Trustees | AB | July |
| 6.1 | Make enquiries about SchoolSpace | SB | July |
| 6.4 | Set up a meeting with Amanda re. Fund raising | JC | July |
| 6.5 | Approved Policies to go on school website, where appropriate: Behaviour Policy and Behaviour Principles Written Statement, and Charging & Remissions. | JCu | ASAP |
| AOB | Look into dates for the annual get together | VH | June |
| | 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 |