



**MINUTES of a Meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust, held at Langtree School,
Woodcote, RG8 0RA on Thursday 6th July 2023 at 7.00 pm**

Present:

Simon Bamford (SB)

Alan Broomhead (AB)

Linda Burton (LB)

Alan Dunstan (AD) – Chair of Meeting

Vicki Hamilton (VH)

Sarah Parish (SP)

Lucy Phipps (LP)

Christine Reeves (CRe)

Catherine Roche (CRo)

Kirsty Rogers (KR)

Hayley Scott (HS)

Apologies:

Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR)

Clive Watts (CW)

Jesse Cleverly (JC)

In attendance:

Jo Cundy (JCu) – Clerk

Carolyn Ventress – School Business Manager

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, 11th May 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 in October 2022. SB has followed up with OCC a number of times but have not heard back from them. It is now assumed that the policy has been approved, no further action required.
- AB had reviewed the Articles of Association. A maximum of 30 Trustees, with up to 10 Staff Trustees is allowed; there is no specification as to whether they are Teaching or Support staff. SB noted that a member of support staff is interested in a Staff Trustee position. AD noted that there is also a person potentially interested in a Co-opted Trustee role. More to come on both of these.
- SB made enquiries about School Space with a local school. The local school has extensive facilities to hire out, so not directly comparable, but they employ someone internally to solely look after their lettings.

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

- The catering contract is being re-tendered. The preferred provider has been selected; more details will be provided in 5a.
- There have been two further NEU teacher strikes. Based on a risk assessment, school was only open to year 7 on the first strike day, and year 9 on the second.
- Sarah Burman organised an anti-bullying conference with three other schools, it took place on 6th July. Good practice was shared; the event was very successful. Going forward it is hoped that this may become an annual event.
- The 2023/24 School Development Plan is being worked on; departments have also started thinking about appraisal and personal objectives.
- Langtree has been liaising with Wallingford school to forge links for interdepartmental collaboration. This could provide huge opportunity to collaborate with them on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Five staff members have left, which is slightly higher than usual, but they all have individual stories. School is fully staffed going into the next academic year.
- Attendance is an ongoing concern however, an upward trend is being maintained. Concern remains for a few vulnerable students. The pastoral and SEND teams continue to work hard on getting these students back into school.
- The recent Trustee Open session was very useful and encouraging, it received great feedback. It is hoped that another one will be held during the Autumn term.

4. School Budget

AB reported that the 2023/24 budget has been scrutinised, and approved, by the Finance Committee. For 2023/24, an in-year surplus (before CIF funding) of approximately £48,000 is anticipated. The following years are each forecasting an in-year deficit, increasing cumulatively year-on-year. These assumptions have been made:

- Bulge year: An additional class will be taken on every 5th year; this is now built into the budget going forward.
- Teacher's pay is inflated at 5% for next year, 3% for subsequent years. This is, of course, subject to change especially considering the current environment.
- Support staff pay inflated by 4% next year, 3% for subsequent years. Additional government funding towards potential pay rises haven't been included.

How much is committed to the CIF bid contribution? This is not included in the budget; until the consultants complete their roofing repair costs we are unable to recommend a contribution to the board until October. **What is driving the increasing deficit?** Inflation is not built into the income assumptions; a lot of the deficit is due to rising staffing costs. Costs are increasing but income is static.

Is the Drama Studio cost included in the budget? That is a separate entity, the plan is for 100% separate funding for that. The cost for the fundraiser, Amanda Cropper, will be paid out of the budget, but the hope is that this will be clawed back via fund-raising. A greater understanding of fundraising will be gained during the meeting with Amanda.

Trustees approved the 2023/24 budget for submission to the ESFA.

5. Trustee Updates

AD informed the Board that, sadly, Kirsty Rogers is stepping down from her role as Trustee due to taking on a new promotional role at a local school. Kirsty's last day as Trustee will be 21st July 2023. Trustees thanked Kirsty for her contributions to Langtree and wished her every success in the future. JSR has kindly agreed to be Acting Chair of the Curriculum and Standards Committee.

Catering Contract: AB reported that a lengthy re-tender process has been taking place. On the 26th June three companies presented to Trustees, they also provided food tasting for Trustees, school staff and students. Subsequently two Trustees also visited two other school sites to glean additional information. Trustees thanked all those involved, with a special mention for Carolyn Ventress, for their work on the re-tender. The chosen company had a lot more to offer, good meal deals, the food looked more appetising and, while not the cheapest, the finance proposal was more credible. The annual cost to Langtree will be about £30,000 for the first three years, if there are any surpluses these will be shared with Langtree. The new contract will start in September 2023, it is for three years, and can be extended by one year and then a further year.

Science Labs Refurbishment (CIF Bid): AB said that these are in need of updating; for example, getting water, gas and electricity to the labs is a struggle. According to usage, five labs are required however, there are only four, with one teaching room. If nothing is done soon the rooms could become unusable. A quote has been received of approximately £750,000. In order to maximise Langtree's chance of securing the CIF funding, a contribution in the region of 30% has been recommended. The hope is that the Section 106 funds can be used towards the contribution cost, however Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) are yet to confirm how the funds can be used.

External Governance Review: AD reported that good progress is being made towards the numerous recommendations which came about from the NGA review. An action plan has been devised. A good

understanding of what's required, and a timeline of milestones has been drawn up. The aim is for AD to present an update to the Board of Trustees at the October FGB meeting. The Langtree Board of Trustees is in a better place having done the review. **Action:** JCu to include EGR update on October FGB agenda.

Strategic Planning: AD has written a Background Information paper on Academy Trusts; their history, structure, opportunities, threats, and lessons learned by other schools. One conclusion is that an external facilitator will be required to ensure that an effective strategic plan, which considers all of the facts, can be drawn up. To accomplish this the facilitator will hold a ½ day workshop for Trustees in the autumn term. A draft template plan will then be drawn up and be presented to Trustees at the December 2023 FGB meeting. An Action plan would then follow, starting in 2024. **When looking ahead strategically, does a potential change in government need to be factored in?** The labour government started the academisation process. While party policies do change, it is unlikely that such a U-turn will take place considering the direction of travel over the last 10-15 years.

6. Committee reports

Finance and General Purposes: Minutes of 22nd June 2023 had been circulated.

- There looks to be an in-year surplus this year of about £97,000 which is £60,000 more than expected. This is mostly due to staffing costs.
- The heating system is soon to go live. When it was tested there was only 1 leak - very impressive considering how much new piping has been laid down.
- Policies approved were: Health and Safety

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

- The 2023/24 SDP was discussed, including areas for development and the current status of various items. A few things were picked out to be focussed on next year, such as the Literacy project.
- AD announced that KR is sadly stepping down as a Trustee at the end of this school year due to taking on a headship at another school and, therefore, not having the necessary time to commit to her role as a Langtree Trustee. The board thanked KR for her contributions and wished her every success in her new role.
- Policies approved were: Early Career Teachers, SEND. The timing of the SEND review cycle was discussed, it was agreed that it should be reviewed by both the C&S and P&C committees, every January. **Action:** JCu to update the policy schedule accordingly

Pastoral & Community: Minutes of 14th June 2023 had been circulated.

- The mental health action plan continues to be successful, and is being further developed. The situation with the school nurse's lack of hours, alongside increasing problems with young people's mental health, is an ongoing challenge. CR circulated her notes from her recent update meeting.

- CR has circulated her report on her recent Pupil Premium (PP) update meeting with Susannah Wood (SENCO), Ina Thorburn (PP Champion), and SP (SEND Governor). Reviewing the effectiveness of interventions will be a focus at the next PP update meeting.
- **The last staff stakeholder survey, which took place towards the end of the pandemic, showed some dissatisfaction amongst staff, when will the next survey take place?** SB said that it was scheduled for the summer term however, with the recent Ofsted Inspection, it was felt staff might prefer to leave it until the autumn.
- Policies approved were: Designated Teacher for Looked After Child, Staff Code of Conduct.

Drama Studio update

JC has arranged a meeting with Amanda Cropper regarding fundraising. The meeting is scheduled for 11th July, the Drama Studio working group of SB, AD, AB, JC and JSR will attend.

7. Approval of statutory policies

- The Early Career Teachers policy had been reviewed and approved by the C&S committee. **How well has the ECT process worked in previous years?** This is the first year Langtree has had an ECT. Training is bought in; Langtree is a local hub for other ECTs to come here and be trained. LP, as an ECT mentor herself, said that the process works well. The policy was approved by the full governing board.
- The Health and Safety policy had been reviewed and approved by the F&GP committee. It was noted that CW, even though he is currently in Australia, has read and asked questions on the policies which were due for review. CW had specifically queried the section on wheelchairs. SB stated that every pupil that has a disability has their own personal evacuation plan. The policy was approved by the full governing board.
- The SEND policy had been reviewed and approved by the C&S committee. The policy was approved by the full governing board.

8. Trustee Meeting Diary 2023-24

The 2023/24 meeting schedule had been circulated. SB noted that there were one or two clashes with in-school events, such as parent's evenings. **Action:** JCu to move the February F&GP meeting to the 22nd.

AOB

- AD said that a recent event has highlighted that most Trustees have not had any training on Permanent Exclusions (PEX), this is something that might be required in the future. It would be beneficial for 5 governors to undertake PEX training so that they could be called on should a Trustee Review Panel need to be convened. Subsequent to the meeting it was

agreed that JCu and VH would look into including PEx training for all Trustees within the new training programme being devised. **Action:** JCu and VH to discuss including PEx training for all Trustees within the training programme.

- AB informed Trustees that the 2023 Academy Trust Handbook (ATH) has just been released. As the new ATB only came out today it was, unfortunately, too late to digest for the June/July round of committee and FGB meetings. The ATH will be reviewed prior to the September and October Trustee meetings.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 5th October, 7:00pm

Finally, AD thanked SB and all trustees for their time and input, and closed the meeting at 20:53

ACTIONS LIST from FGB meeting, 6th July 2023:

Minute	Action	By whom?	By when?
5.3	Include EGR update on October FGB agenda	JCu	October
6.2	Update policy schedule	JCu	ASAP
8.0	Update Trustee Meeting Diary	JCu	ASAP
7.0	Approved Policies to go on school website: Health and Safety, SEND	JCu	ASAP
AOB	Discuss the Inclusion of PEx training within new training programme	JCu	October
	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