



**MINUTES of a Meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust, held at Langtree School,
Woodcote, RG8 0RA on Thursday 7th December 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)

Hayley Scott (HS)

Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR)

Clive Watts (CW)

Apologies:

There were none

In attendance:

Jo Cundy (JCu) – Clerk

Kathryn Foster (KF)

Victoria Vaughan (VV)

Carolyn Ventress (CV) - School Business Manager

Trustee challenge is shown in red

1. Introduction

- Quorum was confirmed.
- No trustee declared a material interest in any agenda item.

2. ATB meeting, 5th October 2023

2.1. Minutes which had been circulated were approved as an accurate record. The minutes will be signed by AD and filed in school.

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: AD noted that he had written a letter to OCC regarding the in-year admissions process. SB said that there are two more admission appeals, one of which is for year 9.

Signed

Date

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

- The Class of 2023 presentation was held, it was a very successful, well attended evening. Huge thanks to CRo for sourcing an excellent guest speaker, Sir Charles Mayfield, ex Chairman of the John Lewis Partnership.
- The MAT strategy meeting was successful and produced some useful and practical operational outcomes
- Year 11 are just finishing off their Mock Exams. It has been a gruelling fortnight but they seem to have taken them seriously and it usually catalyses an increase in work ethic and recognition of the limited time they have left.
- The School Production of 'Nativity the Musical' was a great success.
- We sent a team of year 8 scientists to the Faraday Challenge held at Queen Anne's School in Caversham. We won (obviously).
- Three students have been suspended for vaping. This is a rising problem in society, and particularly within this age group. Langtree is considering investing in vape detectors in the toilets. The problem is something that Langtree is aware of and working with.
- There are a number of Support Staff vacancies, some of which have been filled.
- Langtree is confident that robust filtering processes are in place. Filtering - stopping students from accessing anything untoward on the internet via school Wi-Fi, and monitoring what individual students (and staff) are attempting to access. Sarah Burman is looking into software packages - there are pros and cons with these which are being explored.
- The School Development Plan (SDP) front page was tabled. The SDP looks at the next twelve months, a longer 3-5 year plan is also available. **What is the SDP review process?** SLT review the SDP termly, it is a live document. The SDP is shared with team leaders who shape their department development plans, personal development plans are then worked on based on the SDP. **How successful has Langtree been in achieving the 2022/23 plan?** Very successful. All aspects were largely achieved except for closing progress gaps for vulnerable Learners. **Were the red areas carried over to 2023/24?** Yes, that is the starting point of creating the next year's plan.
- The Pupil Premium (PP) Strategy Statement has been completed. The Statement will be sent to Trustees after the meeting to enable any comments before uploading to the school website by 31st December. **Action:** SB to circulate the PP Strategy Statement

4. Safeguarding

- a) VH provided a brief summary of the changes to KCSIE 2023. School lettings should only be contracted to over 18-year-olds. This is already in Langtree's lettings policy, Sarah Burman is working with School Space to implement this into their policy. Filtering and Monitoring is also documented, this was discussed in 3.4.
- b) Sarah Burman has completed Langtree's Safeguarding audit, the document was circulated to Trustees prior to the meeting. There is a statement regarding SEN and the requirement to understand the extra need for SEN pupils who have difficulty in communicating. The

SEN Policy doesn't explicitly cover this area but Langtree is very aware and is monitoring for this.

Trustees approved the Safeguarding audit for submission to OCC.

5. Trustee Approval

- a) Re-appointment of Trustee – Clive Watts. Trustees unanimously agreed to renew the term of office for CW as Co-opted Trustee for a further four years. Subsequent to the meeting it became apparent that this was also agreed at the 5th October meeting. Clive's new term of office started on 3rd December 2023.
- b) **Proposal for new trustees to join the Trustee Board** – Victoria Vaughan and Kathryn Foster. Victoria and Kathryn's personal statements had been circulated prior to the meeting. Introductions were made. Trustees unanimously voted Victoria and Kathryn onto the Trustee Board.
Action: JCu to upload an updated Langtree Trustee Board document to the school website.
- c) **Staff Handbook:** AB said that Worknest were working on staff contracts and have created the Staff Handbook. It is intended to be the one reference point for staff regarding how things work at Langtree. The Handbook replaces nine Langtree policies approved by Trustees. The Handbook will be reviewed annually by Worknest. ***VH questioned the use of staff's personal phones while on a school trip due to GDPR.*** CV said that mobile phones have been purchased for school trips and therefore staff should not have to use their personal mobiles. ***Are there any segments of the Handbook which cover DfE statutory policies?*** JCu has since reviewed the list of policies to be replaced by the Handbook, none of them are statutory. Trustees approved the Handbook and thanked CV for all her work on the project. **Action:** CV to revisit the section of the Handbook which refers to personal phones/school trips to ensure it reflects current operations.
- d) **Good Estate Management in School (GEMS):** GEMS is a self-assessment tool which asks questions across twelve areas of estate management to help provide assurance that the estate is being managed effectively. Having GEMS in place will support a CIF bid application. The GEMS document which details Langtree's estates vision, strategy, statement and asset management was circulated to Trustees prior to the meeting. The Finance committee reviewed this document at their November meeting and recommended it for approval: Trustees approved.
- e) **CIF Bid proposals for Science Laboratory Refurbishment:** AB said that Langtree were initially going to submit two CIF bids however, as the school roof currently has no leaks, it was felt that a bid for a new school roof is unnecessary. The remaining proposal is to refurbish two science labs and to also convert the science teaching room into a lab. Should the bid be successful, approximately £150,000 of Section 106 money will be used for Langtree's contribution, reserves therefore won't be diminished. Trustees agreed to proceed with this plan and for the F&GP committee to manage the bid submission on behalf of the Board.

6. Trustee Updates

- a) **Strategic Planning Workshop:** On the 14th November 2023, Ed Vainker, MD of the Reach Foundation, facilitated a discussion around the future of Langtree and specifically

whether the Trustees should take a different approach – grow its own MAT, or join another MAT.

- b) It was agreed that, for now, Langtree should stay as it is, build on its strengths and explore further the pros and cons of being part of another MAT. There was also a suggestion that Langtree would look at PP within the local area and think about what more can be done to support vulnerable pupils from a younger age. ***Is there a sense that, with an election looming, a new government might change the direction, and move away from Academies?*** AD said that so much work has been done a complete U-turn is unlikely. Next steps in the process are to look at Ed's suggested actions and formulate a plan for 2024.
- c) **Trustee Training Programme:** VH and JCu have reviewed different aspects of Trustee training. A programme has been devised which includes mandatory training for new Trustees, annual and ongoing periodic requirements for all Trustees and suggested training for Link Trustees and those who sit on certain committees. Suggested time frames for completion are also included.

Christine left the meeting at 8.45pm

7. Committee Reports

Finance and General Purposes: Minutes of 20th November 2023 had been circulated.

- It is still early in the school year but the surplus for this year is currently projected to be £22,400 vs. the budgeted £13,300.
- The ESFA have released revised budget numbers resulting in an improved 5-year position.
- The Risk Register has been reviewed and updated, this was circulated to all Trustees.
- A H&S meeting took place on 31st October, including a walk around the school buildings. A few issues were identified but nothing major.
- ***Why has the water usage gone down?*** This is because the pipework has been replaced and there are no leaks.
- ***Are we confident that there are enough students to fill a bulk year?*** Upcoming pupil numbers have been sent through from OCC, there are 149 children with Langtree as their first choice.
- The Teaching and Support Staff pay policies are not yet available from OCC. They will hopefully be available for the January meeting.
- Policies approved were: Reserves & Investment.

Curriculum and Standards: Minutes of 23rd November 2023 had been circulated.

- Most of the meeting focussed on the new Literacy Champion Kathryn Maunder-Hand. One of Kathryn's tasks is to introduce the Hackney Literature programme. 59% of Y7 pupils have increased their spelling and reading ages during the year.
- A select group of students have supplementary literature classes instead of MFL. Reading buddies was an initiative set up last year, this has been really successful.
- Policies approved were: Exams.

Pastoral & Community: Minutes of 21st November 2023 had been circulated.

- The transition to the new caterers is working well. The catering manager has recently met with the school council, the meeting was well received. ***How does the new offering compare with the previous caterer?*** The new provision is great. There is a lot of colour, a lot of salad is included. More pupils are using the canteen.

- Attendance is good when compared to the national average but the gap between PP and non-PP still exists. There are a number of children who have Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) which the pastoral team are working on. Resources for dealing with EBSA in schools are generally poor, Langtree has a new pastoral assistant which should help. **Some children attend school but not attend class – internal truancy – is this an issue at Langtree?** There are some children who are regularly out of class but they are usually with the pastoral team who are fantastic at supporting those students and working on getting them back into class.
- Vaping was discussed. The number of children suspended for vaping is still low, but increasing. The risks and other disadvantages of vaping is included in PSHE year 9 curriculum.
- The Mental Health Action Plan has been expanded and is working well.
- The school nurse is returning and will be in school all day on Friday and alternate Tuesdays.
- Sharing a counsellor with local primaries may be explored.
- Policies approved were: Complaints, Relationships and Sex Education.

Drama Studio update

If the Drama Studio is to go ahead it will need a full-time person to run the project, a Chair Person is therefore being sought. SB has met a good candidate for the role.

6. Approval of statutory policies

- There were none

Date of next meeting: Thursday 25th January, 7:00pm

Finally, AD thanked SB and all trustees for their time and input, and closed the meeting at 21:15

ACTIONS LIST from ATB meeting, 7th December 2023:

Minute	Action	By whom?	By when?
3b	Circulate the PP Strategy Plan	SB	ASAP
5b	Add new Trustees to the Trustee Board document and upload to website	JCu	ASAP
5c	Revisit Handbook which refers to personal phones/school trips to ensure it reflects current operations	CV	December
6.0	Approved Policies to go on school website: Complaints, Exams and Relationships & Sex Education	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

