



**MINUTES of a Meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust, held at Langtree School,  
Woodcote, RG8 0RA on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7.00 pm**

**Present:**

Simon Bamford (SB)  
Alan Broomhead (AB)  
Linda Burton (LB)  
Kathryn Foster (KF)  
Vicki Hamilton (VH)

Sarah Parish (SP)  
Lucy Phipps (LP)  
Catherine Roche (CRo) – Chair of Meeting  
Hayley Scott (HS)  
Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR)  
Clive Watts (CW)

**Apologies:**

Jesse Cleverly (JC)  
Alan Dunstan (AD)  
Christine Reeves (CRe)  
Victoria Vaughan (VV)

**In attendance:**

Jo Cundy (JCu) – Clerk

*Trustee challenge is shown in red*

**1. Introduction**

- Quorum was confirmed.
- Apologies tendered were accepted
- HS declared that she currently has a Year 10 pupil doing work experience with her.

**2. December ATB and AGM meetings, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

- 2.1.** AGM minutes which had been circulated were approved as an accurate record. The minutes will be signed by AD and filed in school.
- 2.2.** ATB minutes which had been circulated were approved as an accurate record. The minutes will be signed by CRo and filed in school.
- 2.3.** Review of Actions/matters arising. Unless otherwise discussed, assigned actions had been completed. Matters arising not covered by the current agenda were considered:  
SB said that he believes the handbook does reflect current operations; there is a meeting next week to reinforce this.

Signed .....

Date .....

***Is there an update on the person SB had met to potentially run with the Drama Studio project?*** SB said that the person contacted him after the meeting, sadly they are too busy to take on such a project. SB added that JC is writing a promotional article which will be posted in the Henley Standard, this will hopefully gain some interest.

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

- Year 11 mocks have just finished, a mock results assembly has also taken place. LP noted that the mocks went really well and will give the students a lot of confidence going into the real exams. The results are comparable with last year's cohort however, the class of 2023/24 are less able so, to be in the same place as the previous cohort, is very positive.
- The new House system is building well with lots of inter-house competitions taking place. ***What is the rationale behind the new House system?*** SB said that it is not to replace the pastoral system but to work alongside it. The intention is to foster healthy competition and provide additional leadership opportunities for students, among other things.
- Attendance remains a concern but is still tracking above the national average. Of particular concern are the disadvantaged children who, generally, have lower attendance.
- ***School Performance and Standards on page 2, how do you interpret the graph?*** SB said that it is a typical chart with higher P8 until Year 9, when students start their chosen GCSE subjects, in Year 10 the data drops to more realistic values. The P8 for Pupil Premium (PP) children tracks lower below the non-PP children. VH noted that of the 57 PP students, 48 have special needs and are therefore considered Double Disadvantaged. ***Can it be demonstrated that the PP budget is spent on the PP children?*** SB said that the PP grant does not have to be spent exclusively on PP children. ***If more was spent on PP, would it help bridge the gap between PP and non-PP?*** SB said that it isn't always financials that act as barriers, these can differ for each child. An understanding of the barriers is needed and then a plan put in place. PP money is used as creatively as it can be.
- Trustees congratulated the debating teams for competing at the Cambridge Union debating competition, and to Ina Thorburn for her coaching and support.
- The new staff have been brilliant. In addition to the usual colds and flu there has, unfortunately, been a large degree of long-term absence. Covering these illnesses will have a negative effect on the budget. ***How many staff members are on long term sick at the moment?*** SB said that there are four. School has plans in place for them to return; encouraging them to come back in a sustainable way.

**4. Trustee Approval**

- a) **Proposal for new Trustee to join the Trustee Board** – Deborah Allen. Deb's personal statement had been circulated prior to the meeting. Introductions were made. Trustees unanimously voted Deb onto the Trustee Board.
- b) **Re-appointment of Trustee** - Trustees unanimously agreed to renew the term of office for Alan Dunstan as Co-opted Trustee for another four years. Alan's new term of office will start on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

## 5. Trustee Updates

- a) **Skills Survey** – Results and conclusions from the Skills Survey were circulated prior to the meeting, JCu provided a high-level overview of the findings. It was noted that the survey was taken in October and some of the weaker areas may have strengthened. For example, Business Continuity was noted as a weaker area but, with the introduction of a new plan, some Trustees will be more familiar with this. CRo said that Trustees should keep working on improving the diversity of the Board. VH said that diversity training has not been done, nor is it noted on the new training programme. **Action:** JCu to research Diversity training

**What are the next steps?** JCu said that targeted training can be suggested for weaker areas/individuals. SB added that he is keen to organise a Trustee Day which could be used to address any areas where Trustees felt they lacked knowledge on.

**Action:** JCu and AD to discuss/formulate targeted training for weaker areas. SB to suggest dates for the Trustee Open Day.

- b) **Trust Board Objectives 2024** – Prior to the meeting AD had circulated the 2024 Trust Board Governance Objectives, these had also been reviewed at each of the January committee meetings. The discussion was, predominantly, regarding Langtree's 3–5-year Strategic Plan. **Since the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 Strategic Planning meeting, has progress been made towards the recommendations?** SB said that SLT are visiting a variety of other MATs to get a flavour for the differences. SB also noted that he has enrolled onto a National Professional Training for Executive Leaders (NPQEL) training course. **Action:** SB to provide a summary of the Strategic findings from SLT's MAT visits. It was noted that, considering the recommendations from the Strategic Planning meeting, a high-level action plan with next steps would be useful. **Action:** AD/CRo/SB to consider drawing up a plan. Trustees approved the 2024 Objectives.

## 6. Committee Reports

**Finance and General Purposes:** Minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 had been circulated.

- Mark Vitty discussed remuneration for trip leaders. Langtree has a healthy trips programme, a great deal of work is required from key staff involved but they are currently not remunerated for any extra work done. The finance committee came to a broad agreement that perhaps trip leaders should be remunerated however there are some complexities and the ESFA provides guidance on the matter. More work is to be done.
- The CIF bid has been submitted, the result from the bid won't be known until March. A bid has also been submitted to the Wolfson Foundation for the additional Science work not included in the CIF bid.
- CW met with Niki Smith regarding Risk Assessments and approval processes for Trips and Visits. While lots of things are done very well it was apparent that work is required to improve some operational processes.
- Due to the potential conversion of classrooms into labs a new classroom will be needed. It has been suggested that, if the foundations are strong enough, it could be possible to build on top of the maths block. **Does a comprehensive plan for the estate, and any potential expansion, exist?** AB said that Carolyn Ventress, (School Business Manager) is working on a plan through GEMS. AD has summarised the results from all the site reports. **Is a clear level of investment that we believe we need to make over 5 years**

**known?** SB said that priorities are made based on the state of the buildings and need for expansion. AB added that money in the budget is only for routine maintenance, any large pieces of work have to be funded by CIF bids.

- Policies approved were: Best Value/Value for Money Statement, Fraud, Lettings, Performance Management, Teaching Staff Pay, Support Staff Pay.

**Curriculum and Standards:** Minutes of 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024 had been circulated.

- Sophie Cordillet, Head of MFL, provided a really encouraging presentation to the committee. Sophie's two main objectives are to a) Improve the quality of Teaching and Learning and b) Develop the 'fun' factor. Sophie is working on raising the profile of MFL within Langtree, she was very passionate about it. Some of the things her team are focusing on are: Basic vocabulary, slimming down the breadth of work required and making languages more practical.
- The committee also reviewed PP outcomes from 2022/23, FFT review and initial outcomes, the Year 11 December mocks, and staffing.

**Pastoral & Community:** Minutes of 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024 had been circulated.

- Attendance, and the work of the Pastoral team was discussed. The Pastoral team closely monitor attendance and many interventions are in place. The new attendance officer is not concerned about attendance at Langtree.
- The Mental Health Action Plan was reviewed. Comparisons between the Well-being survey from 2019,22, and 23 were made – there are no dramatic changes. Scores have improved for questions specifically about how Langtree helps with mental and physical health.
- The need for a counsellor was discussed. A new, experienced, school nurse is now at school every Friday and alternate Tuesdays, there is also a new Pastoral assistant. Would like to see how pupils respond before involving an external counsellor.
- Progress on Filtering and Monitoring is being made. Sarah Burman is continuing with her research on how it can be taken forward, if necessary.
- Policies approved were: Suspensions and Exclusions.

**Drama Studio update**

- Please see 2.3.

## **6. Approval of statutory policies**

- The Teaching Staff Pay Policy was reviewed and approved by the F&GP committee. The policy was approved by the Academy Trust Board.

**AOB**

- CRo noted that JCu continues to work on the recommendations from the NGA's external review and has completed the 'Clerking in New Contexts Academy Trust Boards' module.
- Trustees thanked CRo for stepping in and chairing the ATB meeting in AD's absence.

Finally, CRo thanked SB and all trustees for their time and input, and closed the meeting at 20:45

**Date of next meeting:** Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March, 7:00pm

**ACTIONS LIST from ATB meeting, 25th January 2024:**

Minute	Action	By whom?	By when?
4a/b	Amend Trustee Board document and upload to website	JCu	ASAP
5a	Research Diversity training	JCu	ASAP
5a	Formulate targeted training for weaker areas	JCu/AD	ASAP
5a	Suggest some dates for the Trustee Open Day	SB	ASAP
5b	Provide a summary of strategic findings from SLT's MAT visits	SB	June 2024
5b	Consider drawing up a high-level Strategic Action Plan for Langtree's next steps	AD/CRo/SB	April 2024
6.0	Approved Policies <i>to go on school website:</i> There are none	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