



**MINUTES of a Meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust, held at Langtree School, Woodcote, RG8 0RA on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at 7.00 pm**

**Present:**

Geoff Braham (GB)  
Will Bromage (WB)  
Alan Broomhead (AB)  
Linda Burton (LB)  
Scott Chambers (SC)  
Ken Coveney (KC)

Vicki Hamilton (VH)  
Neil McIntosh (NM)  
Val Nowell (VN)  
Lucy Phipps (LP)  
Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR) – Chair  
Annie Temple (AT)  
Graham Webber (GW)

**Apologies:**

Simon Bamford (SBa)  
Jesse Cleverly (JC)  
Duncan French (DF)

**In attendance:**

Helen Batten (HB) – Clerk  
Sarah Burman (SBu) – Deputy Head  
Dawn Challis (DC) – School Business Manager  
Jo Cundy (JC) – Visiting Clerk

*Governor challenge is shown in red*

**1. Introduction**

- Quorum was confirmed.
- Apologies tendered were accepted.
- No substantive items were notified for AOB.
- No governor declared a material interest in any agenda item.

**2. ATB meeting, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

**2.1 Minutes** which had been circulated were approved as an accurate record, and signed by JSR 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:

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Tel: 01491 680514 Email: office@langtreeschool.com www.langtreeschool.com Twitter : @Head4094  
Acting Headteacher: Mr S. Bamford Acting Deputy Headteacher: Ms S Burman  
Acting Assistant Headteachers: Mrs J. Holroyd and Mrs S. Wood

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- **Governor visibility** (item 4.2): Dates for parent evenings and Y6 transfer will be circulated in due course, so that governor attendance can be arranged.

### 3. 2019-20 Budget:

**3.1 Budget recommendation:** AB presented information which had been circulated, emphasising key points from FGB discussions:

- Langtree has made the same assumptions as other schools regarding government funding for staff pensions.
- Finances remain very pressured and some adjustments were necessary. The number of Yr 9 groups for English, Maths and Science have been reduced with effect from September, but teacher non-contact time has been retained at the current level. The budget strikes an acceptable balance between making savings and leaving some flexibility to make further changes if funding should reduce further, or indeed increase.
- This budget will achieve a positive carry forward to 2022-23, although in-year deficits will reduce reserves and we will need to monitor the situation very closely and be prepared to consider further cost-saving measures going forward.
- The majority of costs relate to staffing and careful recruitment decisions will be essential in the future.
- This budget will be acceptable to the EFA but the school is not yet in a secure financial position.

### 3.2 Governor discussion

- *Does the budget include essential premises works?* DC confirmed that known essentials are currently covered, although further clarification of costs for work to the library is needed and, given the age of the buildings, complications may arise in any project that requires additional expenditure. The budget will not allow expenditure on items such as improvements to learning spaces, but this is really no different to the position for the past few years.
- *Governors asked for more detail about the planned class changes.* SBu confirmed that it is only intended to alter group numbers for Yr 9 at this stage (for English, Maths and Science), and no changes will be made to KS4. In these Yr 9 classes the average class size will probably be 30 across the year, and not so much weighted by ability as before.
- *Some tough decisions about strategy will be required before the next round of budget-setting, and it would be good for all governors to have input.* It was agreed that F&GP committee will look at how to involve all governors in 2020 budget discussions.
- Governors had no concerns and approved the budget for submission.
- Governors thanked AB, SBa, DC and F&GP committee for their work in producing the budget.

**4. Headteacher's report:** SBu presented the report which had been circulated. Discussion raised the following points:

- *What is the rationale for changing the performance management system?* Googledocs is more user-friendly and suits the school better. This decision has been communicated to staff with no concerns raised.
- John Howell presented the funding petition to government on 2<sup>nd</sup> July.

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- Governors welcomed the downward trend in the number of exclusions, including smoking-related incidents. SBU confirmed that these messages are now well-embedded and students have a very good understanding of expectations and sanctions.
- The previously-excluded student is still on roll, although not currently attending, while efforts are continuing to find the right placement by means of a managed move. *How have these events impacted the school?* This student's lack of engagement had been negatively affecting other students and staff, and much staff time was spent dealing with behaviour issues, so these pressures have reduced although there are safeguarding concerns for a student not in school.
- A conference to explore some of the themes identified in the staff survey responses, particularly bullying issues, will take place in the autumn.
- *How are the concerns about school council raised in the recent student survey being addressed?* Council activities will start again in September. Student leaders have been appointed, following a very good level of interest in the roles. Another away-day is planned, and Council activities will be slightly altered to provide a balance between structured responsibilities and elective activities.
- *Was feedback provided to unsuccessful candidates?* Some students requested feedback, which was really positive, and we were able to provide some guidance but it was not possible to feedback individually to everyone because of the high number of students involved. Some general points were also delivered.

## 5. Governor activities

### 5.1 General updates

- **Drama studio:** This will be a focus of the October FGB, when the video will be presented to governors, and the proposal then fully discussed, hopefully leading to a formal decision to proceed with the project and setting up the fundraising group.
- **Governor training:** DC will be asked to provide the GDPR link. **Action: VH**  
Completion of the online module is required by JC. **Action: JC**
- **Skills audit:** Paperwork will be circulated to update the NGA audit, last completed in 2016. **Action: VH**
- **Strategic governance group:** Planned activities will move forward in September. **Action: KC**
- **Googledocs:** All governors have now set up their access and some queries have been resolved. LP advised that she can also assist VH with specific tasks such as collating the skills audit responses.
- **Governor social:** The proposed social will be deferred to September so that SBA and more governors can attend. Suggested dates will be circulated. **Action: VH**
- **Clerk:** HB will be standing down at the end of term. Handover to JC will take place over the summer.

### 5.2 Committee reports

- **Finance & General Purposes:** Minutes of 26<sup>th</sup> June had been circulated.
  - ~ **Biomass boiler:** *What are the concerns with the buy-back offer?* The proposal appears to be very generous (perhaps too generous?) and requires further investigation before a decision is made.

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- ~ **Charging & remissions policy:** The policy recommendation which had been circulated was approved.
- **Curriculum & Standards:** Minutes of 18<sup>th</sup> June had been circulated, with no queries arising.
- **Pastoral & Community:** Minutes of 1<sup>st</sup> July had been circulated.
  - ~ **Students' mental health:** AT described the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant role, which aims to pick up problems at an early stage. Governors welcomed this increase in the support available to students in school, and thanked AT for her commitment.
  - ~ **Governor profile:** VH commented on the number of school visits made by governors for various reasons. Governors were requested to log all visits by notifying VH so there is a clear record of governor support for the school.
 

**Action: All governors**
  - ~ **School meals survey:** VH noted that the survey is difficult to interpret because not all respondents use the canteen. However some student concerns have come through very clearly: The queuing system is generally disliked. Prices are not displayed on the items and students don't know if they have sufficient on their account to cover their purchases without queuing at another machine to check. SBU will be following up some of these issues.
  - ~ **PHSE curriculum:** *Are there concerns about the additional pressure on staff workloads as a result of the new statutory requirements?* SBU explained plans to deliver PHSE within the current arrangements in the first year, following which schemes of work will be revised and arrangements adjusted as necessary. *Who will deliver PHSE?* This will be by a combination of teachers, the school nurse and outside professionals. Some themes will be quite challenging and we have done some work with staff to identify where they will need further training or support. *Are there concerns about the costs of the PHSE curriculum?* We are aiming to keep costs to the minimum. We will be completing training in-house, and some of the external input will be free of charge. We are also thinking creatively to include aspects in other subjects. *Have any parent concerns been raised?* One query regarding religious content was received, and we have explained that this is not RE and will focus on practicalities rather than ethics.

**5.3 Brief overview of governor activities 2018/19:** JSR reviewed the achievements of the governing body. The appointments of SBA as Head Teacher and SBU as Deputy Head appointment and confirmation of the new SLT are regarded as solid achievements that have set the school on a strong course for further improvement. In addition, some very positive new governor appointments have been made, and committee knowledge and confidence has continued to grow, led by able and committed chairs. Individual portfolios have been very effective in moving forward areas such as safeguarding, H&S and the drama studio project. The strategic group has already had a positive impact on the structure of FGB

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meetings, and will spend some time next year considering how we can ensure continuing improvement in governance.

**6. Governor arrangements 2019-20**

**6.1 Election of Chair and Vice Chair:** JSR and AB confirmed they would be willing to serve as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. Governors thanked them both for their commitment and the appointments were agreed, to run until the July 2020 meeting. JSR also thanked KC who had stepped up to fill the Vice Chair role this year.

**6.2 Members:** Two more members are required to bring the total to five. Any specific responsibilities and the process involved will be checked, before further discussion at the October FGB. **Action: AB**

**6.3 Committees:** Membership was discussed and has now been confirmed as follows:

- **F&GP:** AB (Chair), SBa, GB, WB, KC – plus new governor to be appointed.
- **C&S:** VN (Chair), NM, LP, JSR, GW
- **P&C:** VH (Chair), LB, SC, JC, DF, AT
- Arrangements will be reviewed again when the fundraising committee is set up.
- Chairs were reminded to review terms of reference at their first meetings, for approval by the October FGB.

**6.4 Individual responsibilities:** Roles were confirmed as follows:

- **Health & safety:** GB was to continue but this is likely to be reviewed over the summer.
- **Safeguarding:** This has now been confirmed as GB.
- **SEND:** VN
- **Careers:** NM

**6.5 Code of conduct:** It was agreed that the code of conduct, which had been refreshed in January 2019, remains the framework within which the governing body will operate and no further amendments are required at this point.

**6.6 Register of interests:** Information to update the register of interests has been provided.

**6.7 Meeting dates:** Proposed FGB dates were agreed. Committee chairs will schedule their meetings to align with FGB dates. **Action: AB, VH, VN**

**7. AOB:** None.

**8. Date of next meeting:** Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October, 7:00 pm

JSR thanked all governors and closed the meeting at 9:00 pm.

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**ACTIONS LIST from FGB meeting, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019:**

Minute	Action	By whom?	By when?
5.1	Liaise with DC to circulate GDPR training link.	VH	ASAP
5.1	Complete Prevent training online.	JC	ASAP
5.1	Circulate skills audit.	VH	
5.1	Progress strategic governance group activities.	KC	Reporting to October FGB
5.1	Circulate proposed dates for governor social event.	VH	
5.2	Notify VH of dates/purpose of visits to school in governor capacity.	All governors	Ongoing
6.2	Check Member responsibilities and process for appointment.	AB	October FGB
6.7	Schedule 2019-20 committee meetings to report to FGBs.	AB, VH, VN	ASAP

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