



MINUTES of a Meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust, held at Langtree School, Woodcote, RG8 0RA on Thursday 12th July 2018 at 7.00 pm

Present:

Geoff Braham (GB)
Will Bromage (WB)
Alan Broomhead (AB)
Linda Burton (LB)
Jesse Cleverly (JC)
Ken Coveney (KC)

Vicki Hamilton
Rick Holroyd (RH)
Neil McIntosh (NM)
Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR) – Chair
Annie Temple (AT)
Mark Vitty (MV)
Graham Webber (GW)

In attendance:

Simon Bamford (SB) – Deputy Head
Helen Batten (HB) – Clerk
Dawn Challis (DC) – School Business Manager

Governor challenge is shown in red

1. Introduction

- Apologies were received and accepted from Paul Burrows, Val Nowell and Dennis Rocks.
- Quorum was confirmed.
- Updates on headteacher appointment and the drama studio would be received with committee reports.
- No governor declared a material interest in any agenda item.

2. ATB Meeting, 17th May 2018

2.1 Minutes, which had been circulated, were agreed to be an accurate record and signed by JSR for filing as appropriate.

2.2 Review of Actions/matters arising: Unless noted below, all assigned actions had been completed or would be covered by the current agenda.

- **Governor development** (item 3.2): It was confirmed that the governor development group will comprise KC (chair), AB, PB, VH, NM and JSR. The group will complete

Signed

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Headteacher: Mr R Holroyd B.A. M.A. Deputy Headteacher: Mr S Bamford Assistant Headteacher: Ms S Burman

SIP section 3.5 to define activities that will ensure governors to play an effective role in strategic leadership. An initial meeting will be scheduled. **Action: KC**

- **Transition arrangements** (item 4.3): AT has received confirmation that the importance of students getting enough sleep is included in the presentation to Y6, and is also covered later in PHSE lessons.
- **Netball posts** (item 5.2): Following concern raised by the student panel, staff have confirmed that replacement netball posts are in school ready for use.
- **Links with other schools** (item 13): Following the Woodcote meeting, it was agreed to look at further opportunities for similar discussion with Gillotts and other local schools to explore different ways of working together.

3. Budget 2018-19: The budget proposal and narrative had been circulated. AB presented key points from the F&P committee discussion.

- Governors considered the recommendation to submit a budget that accurately reflects the true situation rather than trying to achieve a balance in years 2 and 3. The potential risks of this approach in terms of increased scrutiny of financial management, loss of reputation and parent concerns were acknowledged. However it was also recognised that this would be a conscious and principled decision. We would make it clear that the budget is the result of careful consideration and reflects that there is insufficient funding coming in rather than any inability to manage finance. We will continue to review all possible cost saving. Confirmation of a number of variables is awaited, and we anticipate having further clarity before a response is received from the EFA. This matter can be picked up again when the view of the EFA is known.
- *Wouldn't we expect the costs of salary increases to be balanced out by replacing experienced leavers with less experienced and therefore cheaper staff?* AB confirmed that one of the potential savings considered was to consciously replace leaving staff with cheaper appointments, although it is not clear what saving this approach will provide - and we also need to ensure the right balance between reducing costs and educational needs. RH drew attention to the excellent level of staff satisfaction which leads to low turnover and limited opportunities to make such savings – and how this is actually a real strength of the school which should be promoted. Another particular issue is the high cost of housing in the local area which makes it less viable for more junior teachers.
- *Why does the projection show income dropping after 2020?* DC clarified that the new formula includes transitional funding for a defined period. There is no indication of what will happen after that, and the projection assumes it will not be replaced by anything else. RH noted that he will be picking up this concern in the forthcoming meeting between local Heads and John Howell MP.
- Governors agreed that submitting the recommended budget makes some important points about our current serious concerns, rather than pretending that everything is fine with our funding situation. The potential risks of this approach are recognised but it is believed to be the right action, stemming from our duty of care to students and staff. The recommended budget was therefore approved for submission.

Signed

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4. Committee reports

4.1 Finance & General Purposes: Minutes of 21st June had been circulated.

- **Risk register:** AB explained that a risk register is standard practice, setting out all identified risks and mitigating actions. This will be brought to the October FGB following further work at committee level.
- **Car park puddle:** Governors were concerned that the ongoing situation is dangerous because it forces vehicles to avoid that area and park on the grass which then becomes muddy and slippery. It was agreed to write to OCC, as the land owner, setting out safety concerns arising from the puddle and requesting a solution. **Action: GB**
More general concern about traffic management and parking in the vicinity of the school gates was also raised. It was agreed to monitor this area and gather evidence of safety concerns before deciding further action. **Action: SB**
- **Cleaning contract:** The new contract is now agreed. Governors thanked staff members who have taken on additional work to cover the gap in service.

4.2 Headteacher appointment: GW and JSR reported that the Appointments Committee Working Group met on 9th July to discuss and agree the programme of work. The advertising campaign will start in September, with the objective of making an appointment by October half term. Output from the 'blue sky' session in June will be used to create the recruitment materials. It is envisaged that the selection process will include involvement from governors, staff and students. It is hoped that Tim Bartlett will be able to continue to provide external advice and his confirmation is awaited.

4.3 Curriculum & Standards: Minutes of 26th June had been circulated.

- **SLT appointments:** SB described the SLT structure for September, confirming that a strong and experienced team is now in place for the interim period until a substantive headteacher is in post. SB also thanked GB, VN and GW for attending the interviews. Governors congratulated all staff concerned and thanked SB for ensuring a successful outcome.
- **Googledocs:** It was agreed to investigate the practicalities of using the school system to manage governor paperwork. **Action: MV**
Subscription to an alternative option had been previously agreed but no further action will now be taken to set this up.

4.4 Pastoral & Community: Minutes of 21st June had been circulated.

- **School nurse:** As subsequently reported by RH, governors were delighted to learn that a full-time service to support students has now been restored.
- **School meal survey:** In response to governor questions about space and facilities, RH explained that a further 50 students can actually be accommodated in the hall but that this is not necessary at this time of year, and that ceramic plates are available with the larger and more expensive meal options. MV reported that he has observed no problems of vegetarian meal choices running out recently. Governors agreed that a

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return to metal cutlery would be preferable, if the students can be trained not to throw cutlery away as has been reported by Aspens.

- **Policies**

- ~ **Anti-bullying:** It was clarified that the policy agreed by the committee included the previous amendment requested by governors.

- ~ **Collective worship:** A recommendation has been circulated. Governors recognised the practical challenges of delivering statutory requirements, and approved the policy.

- **Governor training & resources**

- ~ **The Key:** Log-in details had been circulated. Governors were urged to look at the information and guidance available, covering all areas of work.

- ~ **Online training:** Governors thanked VH for researching a range of options. It was agreed that full information will be provided to the development group, which will consider the right way forward. **Action: VH, KC**

- ~ **Safeguarding & Prevent training:** Online training links will be circulated again. Governors were reminded to ensure that these modules are completed as required, and to provide certification to the school. **Action: HB, all governors**

4.5 Drama studio: JC reported that work with the architects is ongoing to agree a project that will suit our needs, aiming for a mid-range specification. Costs of the project will then inform the next steps in the campaign.

5. Head's Report: A report had been circulated.

5.1 Exams: Governors thanked the exams team for all their extra work during a challenging period. SB explained that it had been possible to improve some procedures and that everything ran very smoothly. All students in school attended all their exams.

5.2 Langtree challenge: RH reported a very successful celebration event. A total of 445 awards have been presented since the start of the scheme.

5.3 Lockdown procedure: Governors asked for further information about operation of the procedure in school. RH explained that lockdown is signified by an alarm with a different sound. All staff are fully briefed and an explanation of what to do if the alarm sounds is included in visitor information (visitors would be the specific responsibility of their host). The recent practice identified no concerns.

5.4 Educational Visits Co-ordinator: *How will this role be fulfilled?* SB confirmed he is currently considering how best to cover this function, and will provide further information in due course. **Action: SB**

5.5 Permanent exclusion: A governor panel will be set up to consider a recent decision. Dates will be suggested according to the necessary timeframe. **Action: RH**

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6. School improvement plan review: A paper was tabled. Governors thanked RH and SB for providing detailed information. It was agreed to schedule sufficient time for full discussion at the next meeting agenda. **Action: HB**

7. Election of Chair & Vice Chair

- JSR had notified that she would be able to continue as Chair, on the understanding that other governors will be able to continue to cover a number of delegated tasks. This was confirmed and governors thanked JSR for her ongoing leadership. It was agreed to appoint JSR to serve as Chair until the July 2019 meeting.
- KC volunteered to take the Vice Chair. Governors thanked him for making this commitment and agreed to appoint KC to serve as Vice Chair until the July 2019 meeting.

8. Governing body

8.1 Resignation: Dennis Rocks had announced he would be stepping down at the end of the year, and governors thanked him for all his work on behalf of the school. It was agreed not to seek a further appointment for the time being, and to redeploy governors where necessary to fulfil committee numbers. It was also agreed that it would be helpful to consider the optimum size and constitution of governing body to suit current requirements, and this will be included on the October FGB agenda. **Action: HB**

8.2 Committee organisation

- JSR thanked AB, VH and VN for leading the committees over the past year, which have covered a lot of detailed work. It was agreed that current committee arrangements will continue, although it will be necessary to fill gaps in P&C and this will be discussed at the next FGB.
- The policy list showing committee responsibilities had been circulated for reference.
- Committees will review their terms of reference at their September meetings, and provide recommendations to the FGB. **Action: AB, VH, VN**

8.3 Code of conduct: The previously agreed code had been circulated, and it was agreed that this will remain in place for next year with no amendments.

8.4 Meeting dates: The FGB schedule which had been circulated was agreed as follows:

- ~ Thursday 11th October 2018
- ~ Tuesday 4th December 2018
- ~ Thursday 31st January 2019
- ~ Thursday 28th March 2019
- ~ Thursday 16th May 2019
- ~ Thursday 11th July 2019

Signed

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Committee meetings will be scheduled to report to these meetings.

8.5 Register of visits & training: Governors were reminded to provide information to the Clerk to create a live record of governor activities. **Action: all governors**

9. Farewell: Governors joined JSR in raising a glass and thanking RH most sincerely for his 13 years of service as Head. His impact on the school has been exceptional and it is now in a very good position to continue its development. A formal farewell event will take place on 19th July.

ACTIONS LIST from FGB meeting, 12th July 2018:

| Minute | Action | By whom? | By when? |
|--------|--|---------------|---|
| 2.2 | Schedule meeting for governor development group. | KC | ASAP |
| 4.1 | Raise car park puddle safety concerns with OCC. | GB | ASAP |
| 4.1 | Monitor traffic safety issues around the school gates. | SB | Further report to October FGB |
| 4.3 | Investigate use of Googledocs for governors | MV | ASAP |
| 4.4 | Define governor training options for consideration by the development group. | KC, VH | ASAP |
| 4.4 | All governors to complete safeguarding and prevent online training, using links provided, and report completion to the school. | All governors | Completion of outstanding training by October FGB |
| 5.4 | Confirm arrangement for Educations Visits Co-ordinator | SB | ASAP |
| 5.5 | Notify proposed disciplinary panel meeting date(s) | RH | ASAP |
| 6 | Include review of SIP on October meeting agenda | HB | October FGB |
| 8.1 | Include review of optimum governing body on October meeting agenda | HB | October FGB |
| 8.2 | Include review of terms of reference on September committee meeting agendas | AB, VH, VN | Recommendations to October FGB |
| 8.5 | Notify training & visits completed to the Clerk. | All governors | On a regular basis |

Signed

Date