

**LIFE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
HELD ON THE 12TH DECEMBER, 2022 AT 6.00PM**

NON CONFIDENTIAL

COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD

NAME		END DATE OF OFFICE	DESIGNATED ROLE	ATTENDANCE
Liz Warren (LWA)	Trustee	29.06.2024	Chair	Y
Chris Parkinson (CPA)	Trustee		CEO	Y
Hazel Cole (HCO)	Trustee	30.09.2023	Vice Chair	Y
Hannah Cusworth (HCU)	Trustee Coopted	22.02.2026		Y
Sue Dunford (SDU)	Trustee	05.09.2025		N
Liam McDonagh (LMcD)	Trustee	02.09.2024		Y
Andy Smith (ASM)	Trustee	19.09.2026		Y
Anthony Nichols (ANI)	Trustee	09.10.2026		Y
Vacancy	Trustee			Y
IN ATTENDANCE				
Gareth Williams (GWI)			Deputy CEO	
Nicola Koncarevic (NKO)			Director of Education	
Chris Tweedale (CTW)			Leadership & Governance Development	
Sarah Mayes (SMA)			Chief Finance Officer	
Sian Griffiths (SGR)			Head of Governance	

The meeting opened at 6.10pm

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone and noted apologies had been received from Sue Dunford. It was also noted that where a new Trustees first meeting was held remotely that this should be covered in the induction pack.

RESOLVED: the apologies were accepted.

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

The Trustees were asked to declare any potential pecuniary interest or conflict of interest between an individual and the governing board as a whole with the business to be discussed during the meeting. No verbal declarations were made.

3. CHAIRS ACTION

Considered under Part 2.

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The non confidential minutes of the Board meeting held on the 10th October, 2022 were approved and confirmed as an accurate record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

The Trustees reviewed and updated the action log from the previous meetings –

DATE	NO.	ACTION	WHO	WHEN	UPDATE
Trust Planning Day					
26.05.2022		MAT Self-Evaluation - Nicola to advise Trustees when a first draft is ready and where to find it; Trustees to work on the Governance section - TBA	NKO		ONGOING - See below
12.12.2022 - NKO advised that a meeting had been arranged on Wednesday and the format of the SEF (Whole Trust) would be reviewed to see if it was fit for purpose. The outcome would then be fed back to LWA and the Trustees.					
<p><i>Q: Which one are you using?</i> <i>A: The one from David Carter, we're not sure if it's the one which best fits our needs.</i> <i>Q: Have you looked at the CST (Confederation of School Trusts) template?</i> <i>A: Yes but it covers some areas which we don't need.</i></p> <p>ACTION: NKO to draft for consideration at the next Board meeting.</p> <p>CPA confirmed there may need to be 2 versions as the SEF would relate to the whole Trust not just governance. LWA suggested there may be need to establish a workshop to look at outcomes.</p>					
		At Trustee planning Day, further discuss cost of Central Services (Top slice discussed) and delegation to Executive (not achieved – LWA to discuss with CTW and CPA and make recommendation, any other Trustees welcome)	SMA		ONGOING Top Slice Policy to be drafted for the Spring Term, Board meeting
	5.5	To consider the appropriate level of delegation and thresholds for the CFO to be able to approve on the Trustees behalf. This should be taken to the next Trustees Finance Meeting.	CTW/ASM		ONGOING - to be taken to the next Finance Committee, see below.
Update: this was discussed briefly at the last Finance meeting and further discussions would take place between ASM and SMA.					
	8.1	To sign up for the Disciplinary Training from the NGA.	Trustees		ONGOING – see below
12.12.2022 – SGR explained that there had been some issues with uploading all Governor/Trustee details onto the NGA system but before she completed this piece of work she felt it would be useful to review all advice/training providers.					
ACTION: CTW/SGR to review and bring back to the Board in the Spring Term.					
05.09.2022		LWA had asked for an Organisational Structure for the Trust	GWJ	ASAP	COMPLETED – see below
<p>GWJ presented the first draft of the Coaching Tree, Trustees were advised that this was not a traditional organisational structure, any comments/questions?</p> <p><i>Q: How have you grouped the Schools e.g. Desford is under GWJ who is the Secondary Coordinator?</i> <i>A: The Schools were allocated at the start of the academic year on the basis of capacity and workloads but we've ensured the balance in terms of primary and secondary. GWJ covers Secondary and Amelia Smith is Primary and is working with Primary Heads on the SDP. Lara Hall has a new role so we need to add in the role descriptors.</i> <i>Q: Why does Ben white have 3 coaches?</i> <i>A: It was Simon Brown and Amelia Smith so it seemed a natural transition to move to GWJ. The motivation was to ensure we have 3 people with central roles to work for the Schools.</i> <i>Q: Where does coaching stop and support start is there a plan in terms of performance management?</i> <i>A: It is coaching but more structured, there is always an informal structure in the background behind the formal support structure/process.</i> <i>Q: The agenda says organisational structure but the document says coaching tree, so are these coaches direct line managers?</i> <i>A: No, this is our model we don't have a hierarchal structure.</i> <i>Q: So in terms of Desford can we review after a period of time, have we just put the School where there is capacity rather than in other organisations where they put people with similar roles together so they can share best practice, is this a new structure?</i> <i>A: No we've just created this document so Trustees can see how the tree works.</i> <i>Q: Some of the titles don't match?</i> <i>A: We can change those quite easily now we have the format.</i></p> <p>CTW offered to draft a more traditional structure for the Support Team and asked for clarification around who has responsibility for Catering and Lettings was it GWJ or SMA.</p> <p>ACTION: CTW to produce an organisational structure for the Support Team.</p>					

ANI, in terms of accountability it's about giving context if I wanted to understand where I sit in the organization. LWA suggested maybe Trustee's as part of their visits could speak to some new Staff and get their experience of induction. ANI felt as a Staff member you need to know who you are accountable for and who is accountable to you and also your peer support, the document does not make that particularly clear. CPA stated that it was hoped that the Staff would ask their coach, other organisations e.g. Apple have a similar tree. GWI offered to share the support team tree with CTW, it was accepted that there needs to be a document which could be shared with Staff.

The Chair felt there had been a really useful discussion around the structure. The Chair also asked if it was possible to have a simpler format which was not so reliant on Staff time and workloads to design as the LGB at Bosworth were waiting on their StrategicWheel due to the design/format.

GWI said the concern was that they were having to use the format designer in overtime. LWA asked when a central IT team might be considered. GWI said this was being drawn up from next term

10.10.2022	6b	Spoke areas - actions plans to be available for the December Board meeting.	CEO	05.12.22	COMPLETED – included in the CEO Report
The Chair felt there may need to be a different way of accessing the links in the CEO's report.					
	10a	EGR Report Action Plan review - SGR to include on the Spring agenda.	SGR	Spring Term 2	ONGOING

6. CEO REPORT

The report had been uploaded prior to the meeting and LWA asked Trustees if they had any questions –

Q: Bosworth doesn't appear to be in the report, also the formatting in each Headteachers report is different which makes it very difficult to compare?

A: (LWA) I know Bosworth have completed the report as it was discussed at their LGB which I attended.

A: (CPA) the attendance report is a spreadsheet and has multiple tabs.

A: (LWA) I think it's the Headteachers narrative for Bosworth which may be missing.

A: (CPA) the issue with Bosworth is I don't think it's the full report. There is a standard template for the reports but then the Headteacher can break each section down. All of our Schools have lower attendance than pre pandemics, this is reflected in the national data too, but we are higher than the national data at the minute. The agreement which we'd had between Families and the Schools around attendance has been broken and lost due to Covid.

Q: Looking at Desford, is it we don't have any comparators from the Summer, is there a reason why the commentary is missing?

A: It was missing last time and added later.

Q: Is there a correlation between suspensions and post Covid?

A: Yes, completely interrelated, the lockdowns covered up all the issues, we have huge cohorts in year 10 and Year 11 which is all interrelated. Some Students hadn't been in their High Schools, so their needs were not identified.

7. COMPLIANCE

- a. The Trust were required to consult on any proposed changes or consult on the admissions arrangements if it had not been changed for seven years (in accordance with the timelines stipulated in the Code). CPA confirmed that some Schools had reviewed the arrangements even though there had been no change. CTW was working with CPA to support Braunstone Frith who want to undertake a consultation around PAN's. CTW would draft the report. The National Forest Schools had changed age range and admission arrangements and these had been presented to the Board prior to them joining the Trust.

The Trust were required to ensure the LGB's have –

- b. Reviewed the draft pupil premium strategy statement (where applicable)
- c. Reviewed the PE and sport premium spending and impact report (where applicable)
- e. Evaluated pupil outcomes using relevant performance data from the previous academic year
- f. Reviewed and approved SEND (Special Education Needs) information report ahead of publication

SGR had spoken to Catherine Headley, who had contacted the company which CTW had procured to undertake a compliance audit of the School Websites. The Schools had received the reports and Catherine had made contact to discuss the reports, she would also provide details so the School could log into the system and map their progress.

ACTION: Catherine Headley would prepare a report for the Spring Board meeting.

8. TRUSTEE WORK, VISITS & COMMUNICATION WITH THE LGB'S

a. The Board received the Trustee visit reports which had been undertaken since the last meeting, a list of visits agreed on the 10th October, 2022 together with an update on progress were detailed below –

TRUSTEE	SUBJECT AREA	STAFF MEMBER(S)	UPDATE
SDU	Safeguarding	GW/LHA	Ongoing
SDU	inclusion Plan (SEND & Behaviour)	LHA	Ongoing
HCO	LiFE MAT Services		Ongoing - see below
HCO	Energy Savings	SMA	Completed - discussed at the A & R Committee.
HCO/LWA	Central Team Executive Meetings		Ongoing – CEO PA asked to send dates to LWA and HCO
LWA/SDU	Assessment Review	BW	Completed

LiFE MAT Services, CTW had undertaken a piece of work to look at the future of the company in terms of the LiFE MAT Board and in particular had looked at the Nurseries and Lettings. The nominated person had been appointed for the Nurseries and a review of the composition of the Board would be needed. The report would be available for the Spring Term Board meeting. ASM confirmed the MAT Services would need to convene a Board Meeting to agree the accounts for submission on the 31st May, 2023. CPA asked Trustees to note the work CTW had undertaken. The Chair queried whether HCO was best placed to undertake the visit to the MAT Services or whether ASM should do this as he was on the Board. HCO explained she had tasked the Staff with looking at how each School could optimise income generation and it would be useful to receive the feedback from each School. ASM would now lead on this and provide a report to the Board when Chris Ripley’s report was received.

ACTION: CTW to draft a report for the Spring Term Board meeting.

Assessment Review

LWA/SDU had met with Ben White to look at the data to consider ways in which the Trust could learn from the data results, new pointers today. LWA will revisit during the Spring Term.

CPA, everything which has been reported is on the risk register and shows the value of the Trustees visits. LWA some Trustees will need to complete any outstanding visits before the next Board meeting but no further new visits would be scheduled before the next Board meeting, with the exception of arranging a visit for ANI.

The Chair suggested the actions would be taken out of each report and used as learning points.

ACTION: LWA/SGR to pull out action points.

TRUSTEE	SUBJECT AREA	STAFF MEMBER(S)	FOLLOW UP ACTIONS
LWA/SDU	Assessment Review	BW	<p>ONGOING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To receive further detailed analysis of outcomes at the Feb 23 Board Meeting through a report from Chris P or Ben ▪ To set a further meeting with Ben and Amelia in April or May – LWA and SDU?

- b. To evaluate communication methods local governing bodies and other stakeholders and to receive the LGB action points, recommendation and assurance reports.

The Chair explained the reports summarised the business covered at each LGB and supports Trustee visits and asked whether Trustees found the reports helpful. The Trustees felt summaries were useful as reading all the minutes could be time consuming.

9. COMMITTEE UPDATES

- a. The Trustees noted the minutes of the Chairs Group 08.11.2022, LWA provided a brief summary. The meeting was very productive, a 45 minute remote meeting but the group was now growing into a support/collaborative group, it was encouraging to see the Chairs taking the time to attend.
- b. The Trustees noted the Audit & Risk 29.11.2022. HCO provided a summary. The Audit and Risk function had split out from Finance and Infrastructure and would be able to look at specific areas in more detail. The establishment of the committee was a statutory requirement. The committee had considered and reviewed the Internal and External Audit. The committee had reviewed the financial accounts including the Trustee report and challenged specific areas and those accounts were now with the Board for ratification. The Internal Audit, HCO and HCU would arrange to meet the auditors and agree an area for further audit, the committee had identified cyber security as a high priority area as the impact of a breach could be significant. HCO/HCU would discuss this with the auditors and arrange a cyber review. The meeting would also be useful to understand how the auditors can support the Trust.

Risk Register, HCO had made contact with Minerva Trust, the Trustees must ensure Risk register was fit for purpose. Both the Internal and External audits recommend the Trust has a Trust wide risk register. The committee audits the process and check whether the Trust was compliant this would then be considered by the Trust Board. The Trust had moved from 1 to 10 Schools and would need to look at the transition and the impact of the outcomes if the Trust got it wrong, what the Trust does well and areas which could be improved. HCU suggested changing the title to Audit & Compliance.

LWA explained the Audit and Risk Committee looked at all areas within the Trust not just around finance. CPA, SMA and GWI all need to attend.

10. FINANCE REPORT

- a. The Trustees received the Finance Report.
- b. The Trustees were required to approve the annual accounts and recommend the appointment/ reappointment of auditors to members. The A & R committee had undertaken a detailed review of the accounts at the meeting on the 29th November, 2022 and recommended the Trustees approve the accounts for submission to the ESFA.

RESOLVED: Trustees approved the annual accounts.

- c. The Trustees considered how the estates management strategy and plans were reviewed. LWA explained this was included on the annual planner and Trustees would need to decide how this would be completed, was the F & I committee the right place. SMA confirmed with the exception of Desford/Dove Bank (new Schools to the Trust) all others conditions report had been produced, there would need to be a plan agreed to decide how the SEC monies were spent, this was on the Spring Term F & I agenda. LWA asked for the item to be moved to the Spring Term Board agenda.

ACTION: SGR to include the estates management strategy and plans onto the next Board agenda in the Spring term.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY

SHR provided an update, the policy had only recently been approved and Jeanette Smith, Trust Health & Safety lead was working with Schools to implement, this would include establishing a committee (Staff not Governors)

who would report on a regular basis to the LGB and then this would feed through to the Board. CTW mentioned that the reports from the LGB's highlights SGR's approach to standardising was going well. Ivanhoe were very happy with the new Complaints Policy.

12. POLICIES

LWA asked Trustees if they were happy with the process, currently a draft policy was available for comment by Trustees, no comments had been made to date. Other Trusts operate a system where policies were allocated to a Trustee. HCO was happy for everyone to look at all policies and then as long as 70/80% of Trustees approved. LMCD maybe a small group would be better. LWA suggested for the next meeting the process would remain unchanged i.e. all Trustees comments and/or approve and then at the next meeting allocate policies to Trustees.

The Trustees considered the following policies all of which have been available for comment by Trustee via Governor Hub.

- a. Data Protection Policy
- b. Record Management & Retention Policy

RESOLVED: the Trustees approved the above policies.

The Trustees noted the following procedure/process, which had been made available for comment by Trustees via Governor Hub. LWA advised this was an important procedure and process for Trustees to be aware of.

- c. Breach & Non Compliance Procedure and Process with flow chart.

13. GOVERNANCE

- a. The Trustees noted the Trustee vacancy and received an update on recruitment from LWA. Discussion had taken place with the Minerva Trust on this, their HR team leads on this, and the Trust Central HR Team would be asked to lead on this.

Q: Does the team have the capacity to cover this?

A: Yes, they do.

14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS

The Trustees considered the amended schedule of Board and Committee meetings for the remainder of the year. The rationale for the rescheduling was –

- a. To balance out the meetings (and pre and post work) throughout the term so F & I - Half Term 1 and A & R Half Term 2.
- b. Both committees would meet before the half termly Board meeting.
- c. Some of the Board meetings have been moved back to give a bit more time to complete any work which may be needed after the committee, in readiness for the Board meeting, in particular A & R.

MEETING - PROPOSED	DAY	DATE	
LiFE AGM	Monday	23/01/2023	
LiFE F & I	Tuesday	24/01/2023	
LiFE Chairs Group	Thursday	26/01/2023	No change
LiFE Trust Board	Monday	06/02/2023	
LiFE A & R	Tuesday	28/02/2023	
LiFE Chairs Group	Tuesday	07/03/2023	No change
LiFE Trust Board	Monday	27/03/2023	
LiFE Chairs Group	Wednesday	26/04/2023	No change
LiFE F & I	Tuesday	09/05/2023	

LiFE Trust Board	Monday	22/05/2023	
LiFE A & R	Tuesday	13/06/2023	
LiFE Trust Board	Monday	03/07/2023	

All Trustees were asked to notify SGR by Friday, 16th December, 2022 if they were unavailable for any date.

ACTION: SGR was asked to send the list to SDU for comment.

8.09pm the meeting closed following the conclusion of the confidential business.