

**LIFE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
HELD ON THE 6TH FEBRUARY, 2023 AT 6.00PM**

**NON CONFIDENTIAL**

**VIRTUAL MEETING**

**COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD**

NAME		END DATE OF OFFICE	DESIGNATED ROLE	ATTENDANCE
Liz Warren (LWA)	Trustee	29.06.2024	Chair	Y
Chris Parkinson (CEO/CPA)	Trustee		CEO	Y
Hazel Cole (HCO)	Trustee	30.09.2023	Vice Chair	Y
Hannah Cusworth (HCU)	Trustee	22.02.2026		N
Sue Dunford (SDU)	Trustee	05.09.2025		Y
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			
<b>IN ATTENDANCE</b>				
Gareth Williams (GWI)			Deputy CEO	
Nicola Koncarevic (NKO)			Director of Education	
Chris Tweedale (CTW)			Leadership & Governance Development	
Sarah Mayes (CFO/SMA)			Chief Finance Officer	
Catherine Headley (CHE)			Trust Operations Manager	
Sian Griffiths (SGR)			Head of Governance	

The meeting opened at 6.00pm

**1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed Catherine Headley. Hannah Cusworth's absence was noted. SGR offered to make contact with HCU and perhaps agree text notifications when an email is sent.

**ACTION: SGR to make contact with HCU.**

**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. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

The non-confidential minutes of the Board meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2022 were approved and confirmed as an accurate record.

**4. MATTERS ARISING**

To review and update the action log from the previous meetings –

DATE	NO.	ACTION	WHO	WHEN	UPDATE
26.05.2022	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		COMPLETED
<b>Update:</b> 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
<b>LWA asked all Trustees to complete the training, if anyone had completed similar training please send a copy of the certificate to SGR</b>					
05.09.2022		LWA had asked for an Organisational Structure for the Trust	GW	ASAP	ONGOING
<b>ACTION: CTW to produce an organisational structure for the Support Team – moved to the March meeting.</b>					
12.12.2022	16	ANI and CPA to discuss risk calculation.	ANI/CPA		ONGOING – date for a meeting has been arranged.

## 5. CHAIRS UPDATES

LWA provided the Trustees with an update. Trustee recruitment would be discussed later on in the agenda. The External Governance Review progress report, following the recent meeting with David Werry, had been emailed to all Trustees this afternoon. One of the issues which has been raised in the report was David was unable to find whether the 'How we share funding' paper was considered by the Finance & Infrastructure and provided to all Trustees last week.

The Chair thanked Bosworth Nursery for a successful outcome following the recent Ofsted Inspection, the Chair also thanked CTW for all his hard work around the compliance for all the Nurseries.

## 6. MAT SEF (NKO)

The SEF had been available for Trustees prior to the meeting, NKO explained this was a piece of work to produce a MAT Wide SEF to provide Trustees with an overview of the current position of the Trust. The SEF was colour coded (key at the end of the document) to reflect the steering wheel. A meeting had taken place last week to update the SEF, this was partly based on David Carter's MAT Self Assessment Toolkit, but it was felt that the tool was not an exact fit with the requirements of the Trust, so a number of additional questions were included. The evaluation which was used aligned with the question's which were included in the Headteachers reports.

Trustees were asked if they had any questions and in particular where the Trustees felt the Trust were in terms of Leadership and Governance section to see if Trustees agreed with the rag rating.

*Q: Has this been updated as I couldn't see a judgement on Governance*

*A: Yes this is the most up to date, we just need comments from Trustees.*

The Chair asked if Trustees may be available to work on statements around governance and suggested Trustees emailed her and then a meeting would take place between LWA and NKO to update the SEF. The CEO asked for questions for Column C and judgements in Column E.

*Q: Compared to the one from a year ago this is so much clearer and better for the Trust, does it match up to frameworks used by Trustees in their day jobs?*

NKO asked if the Trustees required more information or whether they needed evidence. LWA felt for an LGB it would be useful to have links to the Headteacher's Report as an example. NKO confirmed she would add links to the back documents on Governor Hub.

The Trustees felt it would be useful to have evidence for the judgements.

*Q: Is this an evolving document.*

*A: We'll update at each of the School Improvement meetings to ensure we don't lose our focus and highlight which areas require further work.*

*Q: Could we have an additional column to show the previous and current position, this would provide a clear trajectory?*

*A: The SEF cross checks with the Headteachers reports it's the same format which they find really useful, so you can triangulate and refer back.*

*Q: Is there a section on safeguarding?*

*A: Yes there is a part, under inclusion, but it's not a separate section as it runs through everything and would be included in the reports from the School's.*

*Q: Even though it's not a separate section should we be looking at trends, local issues etc, not particular cases?*

*A: I think this would come through the safeguarding report rather than this document.*

*A: (CPA) Safeguarding is either good enough or not, we're not trying to make that judgement in this document, this is more about Trust progression.*

*Q: Under safeguarding could we put something to say please see individual School Plans.*

**ACTION: Trustees to email LWA who would then discuss outcomes with NKO and share with Trustees.**

**ACTION: LWA asked for the governance section to be put on the Chairs Group Agenda subject to the updated version being ready – SGR.**

## **7. INCLUSION**

The report from Lara Hall, Director of Safeguarding and Inclusion had been deferred to the March meeting due to major decisions and actions to be undertaken this week.

**ACTION: SGR to place on the March agenda.**

## **8. SEND**

Considered under Part 2.

## **9. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE – SUPPORT STAFF**

LWA explained this was an additional document which supplemented the coaching tree received by the Board in November. This item was moved to the March meeting, CTW advised the structure would need to be discussed at Executive level first.

**ACTION: SGR to place on the March meeting agenda.**

## **10. GOVERNANCE**

- a. EGR Report – the progress report, which was positive, had been shared with Trustees today.
- b. Scheme of Delegation to the Executive - CTW advised this SOD already been approved, so there was a document for Ofsted, just needed to be reformatted to align with the LGB's SOD. The draft version had been uploaded into the folder but required further updating e.g. split column for CFO/Dep CEO/COO roles. Once this piece of work has been completed and further detail included then the paper would be brought back to the March meeting.
- c. The Trustees noted the vacancy and received an update on recruitment. HCO has submitted her resignation for September as a Trustee, LWA thanked HCO for letting the Board know sooner rather than later and over the next months the Board will speak more about HCO's valuable contribution. The previous prospective applicant (educational background) who had been discussed at the December meeting had now been recruited by another Trust, but her feedback had been positive, LiFE was seen as a collaborative Trust and the work at TWS with the Stephen Lawrence Foundation was seen as a real positive. In light of HCO's resignation there was a need to look for someone with a system finance background. The new Trustee pack had been sent to contacts provided by Chris Ripley. CPA reminded Trustees that ethnic diversity on the Board continued to be a priority. LWA confirmed this had been included as a desirable in the current advert - lived experience and also experience of racism. CPA is there anything else the Trust could do as our efforts to date have not been successful. ANI explained that the Trust ideally needs to engage with the Community before adverts were placed, to inform people about the work of the Trust, it would also be useful to increase the Trusts profile on social media, FB/Twitter using short sound bites.

**ACTION: LWA to email Amanda Scott, HR Manager, cc ANI to check this was happening.**

- d. Scheme of Delegation (SGR), to change Point 23 from –

*Admissions application decisions for individual in year, over PAN and deferred admission –*  
*Trustee - A, Exec - S, LGB - R, HT - S.*

to

*Trustee - A, Exec - S, LGB - I, HT - R.*

This had been raised by one of the Chairs as a point for clarification. SGR had reviewed the Schools policies which refers to Leicestershire CC acting on behalf of the School for admission. With one exception which states 'discretion to exceed the AN (Admission Numbers) shall rest solely with the Academy and not the governing body of a school'.

The Trustees were therefore asked to approve the change to the SOD to reflect current practice/policies.

**RESOLVED:** the Trustees approved the change to the SOD - Trustee - A, Exec - S, LGB - I, HT - R.

## 11. COMPLIANCE

- a. The Trustees received a report on website compliance (in line with \*DfE publication requirements) from the Trusts Operations Manager. The Trustees felt this was a very useful report. Trustees were invited to ask questions.

*Q: (LWA) Looking at the report why isn't my name on the Trust Website?*

*A: There is a list of minor amendments to up level of compliance, these are small wins, not clear you are the Chair so we just need to add your name*

*Q: Who does this if it's that simple?*

*A: Not sure but this is the work I'm doing, we just need to ensure we have the right people on the right schools and other basic information e.g. opening hours.*

*Q: Is there anything we can do to expedite?*

*A: We should be 100% compliant by half term.*

The CEO felt this was a useful piece of work much better than in the past thanks to CHE.

*Q: How do Schools know about this work?*

*A: We employed a company Schudio last year to undertake an audit of the websites and provide a report on Compliance, CHE is working with the School's to complete the work and ensure the websites are compliant.*

- b. The Trustees reviewed the information to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty annually and publish equality objectives at least every four years. LWA asked ANI if there was anything else which needed to be included. ANI explained it was helpful to include good relations with community groups and also to look at as part of the recruitment process. The CEO explained the document would be reviewed every 4 years ideally this should be a live document and would evolve over time. ANI also felt the Trust could be more ambitious in terms of the narrative around anti racism. LWA asked CPA/ANI if they could look at this and bring any improvements back to the next Board meeting.

**ACTION: CPA/ANI to look at the narrative around anti racism and bring any improvements to the next Board meeting.**

- c. Publish admissions arrangements for next year's offer on the Trust website, CTW explained this was not a requirement but deemed to be good practice to have this information on the Trust Website. CTW/SGR will take this piece of work as an action.

**ACTION: CTW/SGR to look at publishing Schools Admission arrangements on the Trust Website.**

- d. Braunstone Frith PAN reduction consultation summary, the Trustees felt this was a useful summary. CTW advised the consultation had been undertaken to consider a reduction in the number of Pupils the School admits each academic year, from 90 to 60. This was planned to come into effect in September 2024. 768 people had been invited to comment, 11 replies had been received and 1 objection.

**RESOLVED:** Trustees approved the reduction in the number of Pupils which the School admits each academic year from 90 to 60 with effect from September, 2024.

## 12. TRUSTEE WORK, VISITS & COMMUNICATION WITH THE LGB'S (LWA)

- a. The Trustees noted report from any visits undertaken since the last meeting, reviewed the list of visits agreed on the 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2022 detailed below and any follow up actions.

TRUSTEE	SUBJECT AREA	STAFF MEMBER(S)	STATUS/FOLLOW UP ACTIONS
SDU	Safeguarding	GW/LHA	<b>ONGOING</b>
SDU	inclusion Plan (SEND & Behaviour)	LHA	<b>ONGOING</b> - not met yet, need to agree a date
LWA	Central Team Executive Meetings		<b>ONGOING</b> – LWA asked if anyone was available the meeting take place on Tuesday mornings. ASM agreed to attend a meeting.
HCO	LiFE MAT Services		<b>ONGOING</b>
LMCD	Age range changes	NKO	<b>ONGOING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A further visit to take place (either LMCD or another Trustee) by end of the year to see how the age range change has progressed, particularly in light of some of the leadership changes</li> <li>b. Request for other updates around some other issues that attracted LMCD's, attention, points of contact to be provided – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ashby – Year 7 supervision levels and when Year 8 and 9 curriculum finished and displayed.</li> <li>▪ Guidance on staff laptop use while pupils around</li> <li>▪ Students out of class</li> <li>▪ Estates – Cycle track not in use, Ibstock gate falling off</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
ASM	Behaviour	LHA	<b>ONGOING</b> Visit arranged for 07.12.2022 – to analyse data collected – Jason, Tim, Denise & Andy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Further visit towards the end of the first half of the Spring term – similar to this visit – Jason &amp; Andy.</li> <li>▪ Separate follow up from members of the LGB – Jason, Tom &amp; Denise</li> </ul> Submitted another report, TRO wrote the report. LWA useful report
LWA/SDU	Assessment Review	BW	<b>ONGOING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To receive further detailed analysis of outcomes at the Feb 23 Board Meeting through a report from Chris P or Ben</li> <li>▪ To set a further meeting with Ben and Amelia in April or May – LWA and SDU?</li> </ul> <p>The work had been paused as BW was committed with or other work. LWA asked when it was best to rearrange. CPA confirmed possibly Summer or Autumn term. SDU confirmed she was happy to continue to cover this are with LWA.</p>

LWA reminded Trustees that with Ofsted Inspections looming the Trust contribution visits would need to be refreshed. ANI asked if it was possible to shadow those visits to see how their done, ASM confirmed he would get in touch to make arrangements. SDU advised that another Trust which she works with had produced a number of

useful documents to prepare for Ofsted, she had emailed and asked if they were happy for her to share the documents, if permission was forthcoming the documents would be shared with CPA and GWI

**ACTION: SGR to produce an Ofsted folder.**

LWA provided the following list of Schools who require a refresh visit –

SCHOOL	TRUSTEE	TIMING
Ashby	LWA (shadow ANI)	Beginning of the Summer term
Bosworth	HCO	Beginning of the Summer term
Braunstone Frith	LMCD	Soon
Desford	LWA	End of the Summer term
Dove Bank	LWA	End of Summer term
Ibstock	HCU	During of the Summer term
Ivanhoe	SDU	During of the Summer term
Kingsway		
Winstanley	ASM	Soon

- b. The Trustees noted that there were no LGB action points, recommendation and assurance to consider.
- c. LHA had spoken to LWA to gauge what information the Board would want from LGB's, is it just top line messages. LHA was looking at Parent surveys, based on Ofsted, which was a good starting point, CTW/LHA had met and were undertaking a piece of work. LHA has analysed a significant amount of the survey responses, also at School level. Next year the Trust would need to decide whether this work was undertaken in house or approach external providers to see what the cost would be, also some companies undertake similar work for other MATs, so there may be a possibility of benchmarking. LHA was just finishing off the analysis of the survey and then CTW/LHA would look at the top 5 priorities.

### 13. COMMITTEE UPDATES

- a. The Trustees noted the Chairs Group 26.01.2023 summary.

### 14. FINANCE (SMA)

- a. To consider the appropriate level of delegation and thresholds for the CFO to be able to approve on the Trustees behalf – recommendation from the F & I Committee.

LWA advised she had attended F & I and shared a document prior to the meeting. It was unclear of the reason for the delays, LWA had sourced examples from other Trusts and shared with Trustees today. Currently there was no cover for the CFO or her Team, this was further highlighted by this evenings agenda where Trustees were discussing/approving a request for an £8,000 spend. The Trust needs to move on a decision.

The Trustees were asked to approve additional expenditure for a HRIS (Human Resources information System). As Trustees were aware the Trust was in the process of sourcing a new payroll provider, the current quotes identified a saving of £20,000 from the current provider. The request was to utilise some of the monies for this year only, to purchase the HRIS, this was a requirement from all payroll providers. The HRIS would record absences, travel, mileage etc electronically. The indicative quotes were £8,000 as there was a need to double run this year but then next year this would be under budget as the current system was more expensive.

LMCD declared a conflict as he works for one of the companies who had quoted and abstained from voting.

**RESOLVED:** the Trustees approved the additional sum of £8,000 to double run the HRIS for this year.

### 15. POLICIES To approve the following policies, all of which have been available for comment by Trustee via Governor Hub.

- a. Top Slice Statement, the CFO explained this was a retrospective approval and the statement for next year would be drafted and brought to the May meeting alongside the budgets. The Trustees noted that this was an issue which had been identified in the EGR.
- b. Accessibility Policy (GWI) to be approved until the 31st March, 2023 so further work can be undertaken on the draft.
- c. Equality Policy (GWI) to be approved until the 31st March, 2023 so further work can be undertaken on the draft.
- d. Admission of Schools to the Trust Policy (CTW) to be moved to the March meeting.
- e. CCTV Policy (CHE)

**RESOLVED** – The Trustees approved all the policies.

## 16. AOB

- a. LWA asked whether anyone would be interested in putting their name forward as a representative on the School Forum, unfortunately LWA was unable to commit, if anyone was interested please let LWA know.

*Q: Could one of the Members put their names forward?*

*A: Yes, I've also asked Chairs of the LGB's.*

LWA advised that she would be away for the majority of March and the arrangements were as follows –

- HCO will chair the Chairs Group meeting and Trust Board Meeting.
- HCO and SDU will be in contact with the CEO weekly.
- SDU has agreed to support any Ofsted.
- LWA was contactable in an emergency

## 17. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS

The Trustees noted the dates and times of the meetings for the remainder of the year.

MEETING	DAY	DATE	
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	

LWA advised that the dates for 2023 – 2024 would be available for the March meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.22pm following the conclusion of the confidential business.