

LIFE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
HELD ON THE 3RD JULY, 2023 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	N
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		Via phone
David Gordon (DGO)	Trustee	26.02.2027		Y
IN ATTENDANCE				
Gareth Williams (GWI)			Deputy CEO	
Nicola Koncarevic (NKO)			Director of Education	
Sarah Mayes (SMA)			Chief Finance Officer	
Sian Griffiths (SGR)			Head of Governance	

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Hazel Cole and Hannah Cusworth. Anthony Nichols joined by phone.

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 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 19th June, 2023 were approved and confirmed as an accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Trustees reviewed and updated the action log from 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		ONGOING – see agenda item 11
		Update: this was discussed briefly at the last Finance meeting and further discussions would take place between ASM and SMA. Update: 27.03.2023: CTW explained this was still under consideration and would be brought to the Board meeting in May.			

	Update: SGR to reshare thresholds (LWA) with Trustees – COMPLETED					
06.02.2023	11b	Public Sector Equality Duty, CPA/ANI to look at the narrative around anti racism and bring any improvements to the next Board meeting.	CPA/ANI		ONGOING – see update below	
	ONGOING – CPA advised the Trust was not required to update until 2025. ANI was working with the equity groups within the Trust to strengthen the KPI’s and this would be revisited in the Autumn Term					
27.03.2023	13e	Admissions Policy - SGR would circulate to Schools with a request to include the specifics to the School. CTW would then forward the final policies to the LA with a 7 day deadline for comment	SGR/CTW		ONGOING – See update below	
	Update – SGR/CTW had met with the LA Appeals Admission Manager who raised concerns about the current policies, CTW explained this was frustrating as the policies had been reviewed by the LA. SGR had drafted a model policy and was waiting on feedback from the Appeals Manager. The agreed template for Secondary and Primary Schools would then come to the Trust Board for approval in the Autumn Term. 03.07.2023 – waiting on response from the LA.					
19.06.2023	6b	LWA asked Trustees to complete the Skills Audit, Chairs 360 and Self Evaluation Matrix by the 3rd July.	Trustees	3 rd July	ONGOING	
		F & I and A & R Committee – Chairs. ASM/HCU to discuss and decide who will Chair each Committee and report back to the Board.	ASM/HCU	3 rd July	ONGOING	
	7b	Trustees to make contact with Chairs of the LGB’s to discuss Trust Contributions as follows – ASM – Ashby & TWS (completed needs writing up) HCO – Bosworth (completed) HCU – Ibstock SDU – Countesthorpe LMCD – Braunstone Frith DGI – TBC mentored by LWA who has 3 with one to ANI	See list			

5. CEO REPORT

Moved to the confidential part of the meeting.

6. EARLY INDICATORS FOR FSP'S, SATS AND GCSE'S

The data, provided by Amelia Smith, for the primary schools was included in the CEO's report.

7. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PUPIL ATTENDANCE DATA

Considered under the CEO's Report.

8. REVIEW OVERVIEW OF STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK (SUCH AS PUPIL VOICE, STAFF SURVEY RESULTS, PARENT FEEDBACK AND ACADEMY COMMITTEE FEEDBACK)

The Trustees noted that feedback from stakeholders needed to be reviewed, this had been highlighted as part of the EGR (External Governance Review) last year. LHA was leading on this piece of work and the Trustees considered when was the best time of year to receive and review the data. The CEO explained the data from January was available and the deadline for the Summer Term data had just passed and was being analysed. The data was captured through the surveys 3 times per year, the analysis of the Summer Term data would be available in the Autumn Term.

Q: How will the Trustees receive this information, would it be useful to include a summary in the CEO's report?

A: Yes, I can include this in my report.

Q: Could we check with LHA to see whether the analysis would be available in Term 1 or Term 2?

A: Term 1 is preferable as it would give you the previous whole terms data and outcomes e.g. in the Autumn you would receive the report from the Summer Term.

ACTION: SGR to contact LHA to agree when the data would be available.

The CEO advised that there had been some Parental concerns at the Winstanley School, the School had gone through a behaviour reset and the surveys were showing the levels of Parent satisfaction was increasing. The School had also invited current Parents into the School to show how the School worked and this had proved to be a positive move.

LWA felt the Trustees needed a summary of the data. The CEO believed it would be useful to include the data in the Headteachers Report as a tab. SDU suggested asking the Schools how they collect the information as it may be useful to share good practice.

Q: What is the size of the sample and contributions?

A: The surveys are sent to everyone but returns are variable Staff (50/60%), Children and Parents (greater a return than on an Ofsted survey, greater than 10%), the returns are always beyond what we need statistically.

Q: Are the surveys anonymised?

A: Yes, but we provide an opportunity for individuals to include an email address if they want some feedback.

Q: Do we get more feedback from Parents who have issues?

A: Yes, but we try and encourage Parents who interact positively to complete the surveys .

Q: Do you give advance notice before the survey goes out?

A: We publish the details of when we'll be sending out the surveys but we don't send out specific emails. We also make sure we're addressing responses. Headteachers are engaging with that process some more than others

Action: Board to agree times in the annual plan for receiving Stakeholder data, through the CEOs report

9. GOVERNANCE

- a. The Trustees considered the revised Scheme of Delegation. SGR explained the document had been shared with Chairs of the LGB's and discussed at the Strategy day, some of the comments had been included in the document, there had also been a few amendments relating to terminology from LWA, SGR and the CEO. LWA explained the levels of delegation would remain unchanged but there would be some changes in terminology

ACTION: SGR to redraft the Scheme of Delegation to include the amendments.

- b. The Trustees noted the Trust Board Self Evaluation, annual review of the Chair and the Skills Audit needed to be completed as part of the Annual Board Effectiveness Review. SGR explained the forms were available for completion on the GoogleDrive and the link had been shared with the Trustees.
- c. The Trustees agreed to move the election of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Trust Board to the September meeting. The Trustees would need to elect a new Vice Chair as HCO would be resigning at the end of her term in September. An advert had been placed to try and recruit a Trustee but there had been no interest to date. The membership of the Finance & Infrastructure and Audit & Risk Committees and appointment of the Committee Chairs for 2023 – 2024 was moved to Part 2.

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

- a. The Trustees noted the reports from the visits which had been undertaken since the last meeting, the list of visits were detailed below and the Trustees reviewed any follow up actions.

School	Trustee	Discussion with Chair	Executive comment complete	Record uploaded
Ashby	Andy	Y		
Bosworth	Hazel	Y	Old form, not needed	Y
Braunstone Frith	Liam			
Countesthorpe	Sue			

Desford	Liz	Y	With Gareth	
Dove Bank	Liz with ANI	First draft done		
Ibstock	Hannah			
Ivanhoe	Liz with DGO	Y		
Kingsway	On hold as non-urgent			
Winstanley	Andy	Y		

LWA had spoken to Chairs regarding Trust Contributions.

- b. The Trustees noted there were no updates from the LGB's.

11. FINANCE (moved to agenda item 5)

- a. Levels of Delegation.

The Chair advised that she had shared an example of levels of spending delegations with Trustees as a starting point for discussion. The CFO agreed to review the delegations, share with the Finance Team and report back to the Board.

ACTION: CFO to review the levels of delegation and report back to the September meeting.

- b. SCA Plan to receive a report from the Chair, Finance.

The Chair of Finance advised that a date for the meeting with GWI and the Premises team was yet to be agreed.

Q: Is the Trust penalised for not spending the funding?

A: Yes, we have to pay the monies back, we have identified an issue with delays in progress due to the workloads of current Staff.

LWA felt the thresholds were too low and could be delaying progress, in particular where the costs were preapproved and already included in the budget plan but appreciated that 3 quotes would need to be sought.

Q: Is the SCA in digital/online format?

A: No, we asked a company to undertake the survey and they uploaded the outcomes onto a spreadsheet, we need to find a better way to manage/track progress etc.

LWA suggested looking at 6 meetings of the Finance and Infrastructure per year and having a Finance focus in 3 meetings and an Infrastructure focus in 3 meetings. Trustees were asked if they had any views. ASM confirmed he was happy with 6 and suggested SMA attends Finance with Karen and Ian attending Infrastructure, meetings to take place half termly.

ACTION: SGR to add in 3 additional meetings to cover Infrastructure.

GWI confirmed meetings had taken place with all Schools to discuss the SCA and also to look at retrospective use of funding, the Trust would then look at reallocating monies/funding.

Q: So currently there is no work/costs to sign off?

A: No, ASM has authorised quite a bit of work/costs some other costs may come through for approval during the holidays.

- c. Budget Setting

LWA advised the budgets could not be agreed/approved today but the papers for approval would be with Trustees by 10th August with an Extraordinary Meeting arranged on the 17th August to ratify the budgets. The following Trustees confirmed their availability – ASM, LWA, LMCD, SDU, DGO and ANI.

ACTION: SGR to check availability with HCO, HCU and set up the meeting via zoom.

- d. To review the three-year budget forecast return (to be submitted to ESFA alongside budget)
As per point c. above

6.30pm SMA left the meeting

The meeting moved back to agenda item 7.

12. POLICIES

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

- a. Capability
- b. Anti Bullying and Harassment
- c. Attendance Management

RESOLVED: the Trustees approved the policies a. to c. listed above.

- d. Investment Policy & Strategy (incl. Treasury Strategy)
SGR advised the articles stated –

Section 5 -

m. to deposit or invest any funds of the Academy Trust not immediately required for the furtherance of its Objects (but to invest only after obtaining such advice from a financial expert as the Trustees consider necessary and having regard to the suitability of investments and the need for diversification);

n. to delegate the management on terms that:

i. the investment policy is set down in writing for the financial expert by the Trustees;

ii. every transaction is reported promptly to the Trustees;

iii. the performance of the investments is reviewed regularly with the Trustees;

iv. the Trustees are entitled to cancel the delegation arrangement at any time;

v. the investment policy and the delegation arrangement are reviewed at least once a year;

vi. all payments due to the financial expert are on a scale or at a level which is agreed in advance and are notified promptly to the Trustees on receipt; and

vii. the financial expert must not do anything outside the powers of the Trustees;

o. to arrange for investments or other property of the Academy Trust to be held in the name of a nominee company acting under the control of the Trustees or of a financial expert acting under their instructions, and to pay any reasonable fee required;

The definition of finance expert within the articles is - “financial expert” means an individual, company or firm who is authorised to give investment advice under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000;

A member of the Finance Team had arranged to discuss this with an Investment Company for advice. The above text would need to be included in the policy. LWA expressed her concern about the wording in the current policy, Trustees asked for clarification on point 3.1 what does ‘sweep’ mean.

ACTION: SGR to discuss with SMA and agree a redraft.

- e. 3rd Party Complaints Policy.

RESOLVED: the Trustees approved the policy.

13. DATE & TIME OF THE NEXT BOARD MEETING

- a. The Trustees noted the date of the Extraordinary Trust Board meeting on the 17th August, 2023 at 6.00pm via zoom.
- b. The Trustees noted the dates and times of the meetings for 2023 – 2024.

The meeting closed at 8.23pm following the conclusion of the confidential business.