

**LIFE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON THE 23RD JANUARY, 2023 AT 5.30PM**

VIRTUAL MEETING

NON CONFIDENTIAL

NAME		DESIGNATED ROLE	ATTENDANCE
Iain Kinnis (IKI)	Member		Y
Atika Kohli (AKO)	Member		Y
David Noble	Member		N
Colin Crane	Member		N
IN ATTENDANCE			
Liz Warren (LWA)	Trustee	Trust Chair	
Chris Parkinson (CPA)	Trustee	CEO	
Andy Smith (ASM)	Trustee		
Antony Nichols (ANI)	Trustee		
Hazel Cole (HCO)	Trustee		
Sarah Mayes (SMA)		CFO	
Chris Tweedale (CTW)		Leadership & Governance Development	
Sian Griffiths (SGR)		Head of Governance	

Clause 23 of the Articles of Association state - Two persons entitled to vote upon the business to be transacted, each being a Member or a proxy of a Member or a duly authorised representative of a Member organisation shall constitute a quorum. The meeting was therefore quorate.

1. ELECTION OF (MEMBER) CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

The Members present elected Iain Kinnis as Chair for the duration of the meeting.

2. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed all present and thanked Anthony Nicholls for agreeing to become a Trustee. Apologies had been received from Colin Crane.

RESOLVED: the apologies from Colin Crane were accepted.

David Noble's absence was noted, SGR explained she had made a number of attempts to make contact. LWA suggested contacting him through the College where he works.

ACTION: SGR to make contact via email and cc Iain Kinnis and Atika Kohli.

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

The Members 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 additional verbal declarations were received.

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the previous AGM held on the 24th January, 2022 were approved and confirmed as an accurate record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

The Members considered whether they should meet on a more regular basis, e.g. 6 monthly, this was an issue raised by the previous Clerk. The Members felt more communication and perhaps regular updates throughout the year would be helpful but did not want to increase the workloads of Staff.

There were 2 matters arising for consideration the first was to adopt the latest articles, this had been discussed by the Trustees who agreed that the EGR (External Governance review) Working Group would take this as an action. At the previous AGM Members had requested an EGR. Members felt it would have been helpful to receive a copy of the report from David Werry ahead of the meeting.

ACTION: Trust to provide updates to Members throughout the year, including receipt of the weekly update for Trustees, this would also cover updates to any actions agreed in this meeting .

ACTION: LWA/SGR to forward the EGR and updated Plan to Members.

6. APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

The Members approved the appointments of Hannah Cusworth and Anthony Nichols as Trustees.

Q: (IKI) How many vacancies do we have, is it one?

A: (LWA) Yes, I've been in touch with Amanda Scott, Acting HR Manager to discuss recruitment, we may have 2 prospective candidates one with an education background and one with LGB experience.

Q: (IK) How many Governor vacancies do we have?

A: (SGR) We've had quite a few vacancies, but the elections over the past few months at the Schools, have been very successful and they've received more nominations than vacancies so I've advised about Associate Member roles which is useful to support succession planning on the LGB's

Q: (IKI) So have there been discussions around coopting Trustees and then Trustees who are leaving to perhaps become Members?

A: (LWA) HCO approached IKI last year, we may also have a Chair who is stepping down in the near future who would be a useful addition to the Board but we need to be careful not to deplete the pool of Governors.

Q: (AKO) Do you have a skillset gap on the Board?

A: (LWA) The gap changes depending on the pressures, at the minute all skills are covered, with HCO leaving we will be losing financial skills.

Q: (AKO) Do you work well as a Trust Board?

A: (ANI) As a new Trustee I felt very supported and inducted from a governance perspective, I have a wide overview in other areas of my work and I think this Trust Board is good.

A: (LWA) We recognise we need to improve IT induction.

A: (CPA) IT development is a big piece of work it's a difficult time to get Schools to move IT systems, we need a School to step up, our priorities currently relate to age range change.

IKI confirmed he had spoken to HCO in November, 2022 to discuss the possibility of her becoming a Member when she steps down as a Trustee. Following a discussion the Members agreed to appoint HCO with immediate effect and she would continue as a Trustee until the Summer - LWA would make contact to agree the effective date for HCO's resignation as a Trustee.

RESOLVED: Members approved Hazel Cole's appointment as a Member with immediate effect, 23rd January, 2023.

ACTION: LWA would discuss with HCO the end date for her term of office as a Trustee.

7. ANNUAL AUDIT AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2021/2022

The Members received and considered the statement of accounts and the report of the External Auditor. IKI asked whether there was anything which the CEO or CFO wished to bring to the Members' attention. The CFO advised that the process for this year had been smoother than last year. The Pension deficit had not had a significant impact and applied to all Academies in terms of the contributions. The Trusts reserves had increased by £800,000;

the monies had been earmarked for projects last year but not spent. The Reserves Policy outlined how the monies should be spent and ensure the monies were used for the stated purposes.

Q: (IKI) Do we use reserves for specific projects?

A: (SMA) The Trust ensures there is an allocation of funds for the Schools but also a fund is held centrally by the Trust.

Q: (IKI) The letter from Audit, 11/2022 confirms that the process was smoother than previous years?

A: (SMA) Part of this reason for that was we had just brought Ivanhoe and Ibstock into the Trust very late which had caused some difficulties. The year before there had been 14 medium risk levels whereas this year there was 1 high and 4 medium risk levels, this was a reflection on the team being more established now.

Q: (AKO) Is the work undertaken by the Central Team or franchised out?.

A: (SMA) We have a Central Team.

Q: (AKO) Is training easily activated for the Staff?

A: (SMA) Yes.

RESOLVED: the Annual Audit and Statement of Accounts for 2021/2022 be received and noted.

8. CHAIR OF THE TRUST BOARD REPORT

LWA presented her report and asked if there were any questions.

Q: (AKO) It's clear that the Team are working really hard and there is a lot of work going on, how supported are our high attaining Students?

A: (LWA) I feel this is probably a question for the LGB's rather than a Trustee but I'm happy to refer it over to CPA for a response.

A: (CPA) All of our Schools receive support and challenge unlike many Trust we don't grade our Schools, so all Schools receive equal support around embedded leadership, Central Team, collaborative layers in the organization etc irrespective of progress/attainment. In addition Schools can be involved in our reviews and safety check process which audits progress, we can then commission additional support. The Trust is set up to encourage progress and achievement but we recognise there needs to be some further work with some of the LGB's around this.

Q: (AKO) Are there issues around behaviour and attendance and how does that affect our higher attainers?

A: (CPA) Yes, it is absolutely the case that nationally post pandemic there have been heightened issues with behaviour and attendance in particular in the socio economic deprived area. Primary v Secondary have a different picture in terms of these issues.

6.19pm Hazel Cole joined the meeting.

LWA, introduced ANI who provided an overview of his skills and experience – a long term NHS employee, with experience in inclusivity, diversity, engagement and equality across systems, communications, transformations, organisational change and HR also a Magistrate working with a wide range of people.

The Members felt it would be helpful for clarity to look at a job description for Members, this was an action from the AGM in 2022.

ACTION: SGR to draft a job description for the Members.

The Members recognised from the report this had been another challenging year for Trustees but were content that the Trust was moving in the right directions; was working consistently with the ambition in the articles and were still compliant with that ambition and thanked all the Trustees and Staff.

Q: (LWA) It was really strange writing last year's report and discussing in January?

A: (IKI) Unfortunately we have to note the Trustee Report and Accounts for the minutes which we're not able to do until they're filed in December, and, as we're hands off we need to have a retrospective report.

9. EXTERNAL AUDITORS

The appointment of External Auditors is the responsibility of Members. The current External Auditor (Burrows Scarborough, Chartered Accountants, Coventry), were appointed by Members following a competitive tendering exercise. The three year contract was due for renewal during 2022 but extended for a year to 2023.

Q: (IKI) We appoint having considered the recommendation of the Trustees.

Q: (CTW) One of the responsibilities of the Members is to appoint the Auditors so you will need another meeting of the Members to consider the recommendation for September, 2023.

Q: (IKI) So will SMA drive when the next meeting takes place, is the Summer Term too late? Will that give auditors enough time?

A: (SMA) Yes we've done this before, and we appoint in the Summer for a September start.

10. PERSONS WITH SIGNIFICANT CONTROL

The Members considered the DfE guidance which provides that where the number of MAT Members is three or less, the provisions of the 2006 Companies Act apply in relation to Persons with Significant Control. The Trust has five Members therefore the requirements of the 2006 Act are satisfied.

11. POLICIES

The Members confirmed they had read the Anti Fraud, Corruption, Bribery & Related Party Transaction Policy, 2022.

Q: (IKI) Why are we being asked to note and read this policy and no other policy, e.g. whistleblowing, referred to in the policy?

A: (CPA) It's to bring to your attention, as you need to be mindful that there is a greater chance Trustees could be defrauding the Trust.

A: (CTW) Particularly important around related party transactions we need to ensure Members are looking at that.

The Members queried whether they needed to be made aware of any other policies or undertake any training. SGR confirmed that the Trustees required training was Safeguarding, Prevent and GDPR but would check whether this also applied to Members.

ACTION: SGR will speak to Lara Hall and Catherine Headley to agree what training Members should undertake e.g., Safeguarding, Prevent and GDPR.

ACTION: SGR to confirm what (other) policies Members need to be aware of.

ACTION: AKO agreed to send over her training certificates.

LWA, thanked IKI for stepping in as a Trustee last year. AKO thanked IKI for chairing, LWA for her report and all the volunteers.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Members agreed the date for the next meeting would be confirmed at a later date (expected to be mid Jan 2024) and were happy to convene a Summer meeting to consider the appointment of auditors but would wait to hear from the CFO.

The Meeting closed at 6.41pm.