LiFE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
HELD ON THE 8TH DECEMBER, 202 AT 5.00PM

NON CONFIDENTIAL
VIRTUAL MEETING

COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD

NAME		END DATE OF OFFICE	DESIGNATED ROLE	ATTENDANCE
David Maitland (DMA)	Trustee	09.02.2029	Chair	Y
Liz Warren (LWA)	Trustee	09.02.2029	Vice Chair	Y
Chris Parkinson (CPA)	Trustee		CEO	Y
John Baumber (JBA)	Trustee (Coopted)	06.07.2029		Y
Caroline Dickman (CDI)	Trustee (Coopted)	21.09.2029		Y
Sue Dunford (SDU)	Trustee (Coopted)	06.07.2029		Y – joined at 5.36pm
David Gordon (DGO)	Trustee	28.01.2028		Y
Rose Harvey (RHA)	Trustee (Coopted)	03.03.2028		Y
Ja Kim (JKI)	Trustee	09.02.2029		Y – joined at 6.03pm
Liam McDonagh (LMcD)	Trustee	09.02.2029		Y – left at 5.50pm
Andy Smith (ASM)	Trustee	19.09.2026		Y
Monica Wallace (MWA)	Trustee (Coopted)	21.09.2029		Y
IN ATTENDANCE - STAFF				
Nicola Koncarevic (NKO)			Director of Education	
Paul Maddox (PMA)			Executive CFO	
Sarah Mayes (SMA)			CFO	
Sian Griffiths (SGR)			Director of Governance & Admissions	

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed all present.

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

The Trustees were asked to declare any potential pecuniary interest or conflict of interest between an individual and the Trust Board as a whole with the business to be discussed during the meeting. The Trustees were reminded that interests must be kept up to date on an ongoing basis and if there have been any changes since their last declaration, ensure these are reported promptly. There were no additional declarations made. CPA reminded Trustees of the importance of accurately declaring all pecuniary interests some omissions had been identified during the recent external audit. The requirement was clear that every possible association must be declared, even if an individual believed that a company or organisation was unlikely to have dealings with the Trust and should include all company directorships and any close family connections, such as a spouse holding a directorship. Moving forward the compliance team would implement regular checks to ensure accuracy.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The non-confidential minutes of the Board meeting held on the 22nd September, 2025 were approved and confirmed as an accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Trustees reviewed and updated the action log from previous meetings – for ease of reference ongoing actions highlighted in blue -

<table>
<tr><th>DATE</th><th>NO</th><th>ACTION</th><th>WHO</th><th>WHEN</th><th>UPDATES</th></tr>
<tr><td>31.03.2025</td><td>5aii</td><td>SGR to convene a meeting of the board of directors for the subsidiary company.</td><td>SGR</td><td>ASAP</td><td>COMPLETED date agreed 19.01.2026</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>11d</td><td>Volunteer Policy - LWA to source some policies and share with Trustees.</td><td>LWA</td><td></td><td>ONGOING see update below</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">Update – LWA was unclear whether this was a priority for the Trust, both the central team and schools provided the Trustees with an opportunity to attend any of their events. LWA queried whether Trustees wished to pursue, RHA agreed to take on the action and make contact with LWA.
Update – RHA explained she had engaged with several school governors and trustees during a separate project and gathered insights on trustee recruitment. Key findings: recruitment success was less about formal reward or recognition policies (as previously discussed) and more about leveraging existing networks; effective strategies included Headteachers, Governors, and Trustees actively reaching out to potential candidates; persistence was highlighted as crucial—many Trustees/Governors agreed after multiple invitations rather than the first approach. LWA felt that was a positive first step to engaging with stakeholders. RHA confirmed she was happy to continue with the piece of work.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">LWA queried if a previous action for CDI to make contact with HR to discuss annualized had taken place, CDI confirmed she had not had any contact from Trust Staff. The Trustees noted that the consultation was now at Stage 2.</td></tr>
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With everyone's agreement the agenda moved to agenda items 6 and 7

5. GOVERNANCE & COMPLIANCE

a. Admissions 2027 - 2028 the Trustees were asked to note the details, shared prior to the meeting, of the consultation during the period 06.12.2025 - 27.01.2026. SGR provided a brief overview -

The Trustees noted that the accompanying notes were self-explanatory. Following discussions with secondary and primary headteachers, it was proposed that waiting lists be removed. Under the Admissions Code, waiting lists must be retained for a minimum of the first term (Autumn) for Reception and Year 7, as these were the main points of entry. Currently, waiting lists were held for all year groups, which was considered misleading and created significant additional work. For example, one school had 30 children on its waiting list who were unlikely to be offered a place due to the oversubscription criteria and the lack of movement in year groups. Removing waiting lists would allow parents to be informed immediately when no spaces were available, while still retaining the right to appeal. The proposal aimed to maximise options for increasing numbers for census purposes. For 2027 - 2028, the plan was to remove waiting lists after 31st December and change the deadline to early October. Other than this change, the proposal remained as previously circulated. It was noted that all related information would be sent to schools and interested parties on Wednesday or Thursday to begin consultation one week later.

Q: Can I just ask for clarity, in relation to Winstanley I was surprised that the sibling rule was number 5 and moved to number 2. What was 2, 3, and 4 before?
A: The criteria for Winstanley is LiFE MAT primary feeders, City Primary feeders and Primary feeders. The rationale for the proposed change is there have been some instances during the past 12 months where the school had received applications and could only admit one child as the sibling criteria was too low on the rankings.
Q: Are we proposing, before removing the waiting list, contacting parents to ask if they still want a place?
A: We would, and that's what we'll be doing now, for the 31st of December when the waiting list expires. So, the only option for them after that date is to submit a form, the team will check with the school and advise there is a space or send a refusal, there would still be the option to appeal. But the difference is that there is no list and no rankings so it's just on the day the application is received is there a space, this will significantly reduce the amount of work for all the staff.

RESOLVED: the Trustees noted the details of the consultation.

b. Scheme of Delegation
The Trustees reviewed the draft trust wide scheme of delegation which had been shared with Members, Trustees, Executive Team, LGB's and Headteachers for comment. The Trustees noted that the document was a trust wide paper but could be reformatted to suit the needs of each group, SGR confirmed a few comments had been received from Chairs of LGB's and Headteachers and these have where possible been incorporated into the final draft.

RESOLVED: the Trustees approved the revised scheme of delegation.

c. Articles of Association
The Trustees noted that SGR had chased the solicitors for an update on progress but had not received a response and agreed to share any updates with the Trustees.

d. Committee Membership
The Trustees reviewed the committee membership in light of the new Trustees joining and LMCD leaving, it was noted this was his penultimate Trust Board meeting and he had agreed to be considered as a Member. SDU confirmed that she would be happy to renew her term at the AGM in January but may not stay for the full 4 years and would be happy for LWA to take on the Chair of the School Improvement. LWA felt this was a way forward to address succession planning. DMA proposed that CDI and MWA join the Pay and People Committee to fill the vacancy left by LMCD but to also enable LWA to spend more time on School Improvement. To replace LMCD on the Finance and Infrastructure DMA suggested CDI joins Infrastructure and MWA joins Finance. CDI/MWA agreed to the proposal.

RESOLVED: the Trustees agreed to the proposed changes in membership and agreed that RHA would continue as Chair of Pay and People.

e. The Trustees received assurance, through a provided report, that the LGB's have –

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

f. The Trustees noted that all declaration of pecuniary interest and confirmations including reading of the KCSIE, 2025 and acceptance of the code of conduct had been completed via Governor Hub.
g. The Trustees ratified the outstanding appointment of the following LGB Chairs -

SCHOOL	DATE OF LGB MEETING	CHAIR	ACTION FROM TRUSTEES
Ashby	23.06.2025	NIgel Middleton	approved 07.07.2025
Bosworth	26.06.2025	Peter Crowe	approved 07.07.2025
Braunstone Frith	23.09.2025	Izzy Reid Mackay	Approved 08.12.2025
Countesthorpe	11.09.2025	Andy Berrill and Abigail Stewart	Approved 08.12.2025
Desford	10.09.2025	Viv Evans	Approved 08.12.2025
Dove Bank	02.07.2025	Ann Melville	approved 22.09.2025
Ibstock	10.09.2025	Clare Watson-Spence	approved 22.09.2025
Ivanhoe		Moved to October meeting - Mary Webster and Kate Whittlesey	Approved 08.12.2025
Kingsway		Camille London-Miyo as of 01.01.2026	Approved 08.12.2025
Winstanley		Moved to October meeting - will be Viv Evans	Approved 08.12.2025

The Trustees noted that Ann Melville would step down as Interim Chair at Countesthorpe but continue at Dove Bank.

ACTION: DMA to write to Ann Melville to express the Trust Boards thanks and appreciation.

The Trustees noted that Lis Stock would step down as Chair and Governor at Kingsway at the end of this term, Lis has served as a Governor at Kingsway for the past 14 years.

ACTION: LWA to write to Lis Stock to express the Trust Boards thanks and appreciation.

CPA advised he had attended the last Kingsway LGB, and was able to present Lis with a bouquet and delivered a speech thanking her for all her work and support.

RESOLVED: the Trustees approved the Chairs appointment listed above.

6. TRUSTEES REPORT AUTUMN, 2025 – 2026

CPA provided an overview and explained that the report was presented in two sections: the overall CEO report and a subset detailing how data was gathered from schools. The linked section focused on Headteachers' reports, including both text commentary and evaluations against their strategic wheel, summarizing their improvement plans. The report also included secondary data from summer 2025 and new primary data uploaded by ASM. The full CEO report against KPIs would be discussed as part of the confidential business. CPA invited Trustees to pose any questions/make comments, particularly where Trustees had an interest in specific schools and their improvement plans.

LWA commented positively on the crib sheet tab and reminded Trustees that the last block of color (mainly yellows and greens) represented progress for the current term, shown as RAG ratings of actual progress rather than current status. CPA suggested that the group could consider whether to include the front section of the confidential report (minus his introduction) in the main agenda, as there was nothing confidential in that part, although it had been split this way for this particular meeting. LWA commented that this process had been highly effective during this term, noting that the board received clear direction at the start of the term and, through the school improvement meeting, gained a strong understanding of how different schools were performing. She highlighted that this aligned well with other feedback from Chairs and stated that the process triangulated very effectively.

CPA added that all Headteachers were now confident in submitting the relevant section of information for their own school, comprising their school page on the spreadsheet and their commentary, to their LGB's, ensuring there was no duplication of work.

JBA commented how helpful he found this report and process, as he was linked with Ibstock if was really useful to see this self evaluation.

7. TRUSTEES REPORT AND ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

a. The Trustees reviewed the Trustee Report & Annual Accounts for submission to the DFE by the 31st December, 2025 including the reconciliation of funds, upon recommendation from the Audit & Risk.

The Trustees noted that the report had been updated since the Audit & Risk Committee had considered and reviewed it. They also found the accompanying document, which referenced tracked changes for ease of reference, to be helpful. The amendments had been reviewed by DMA who had asked if the report could reflect the wider community use of the other facilities and confirm the Trust's fixed assets were used for the benefit of education and other services for the pupils. The rest of the changes were mainly technical, or bringing in additional paragraphs that the auditors wanted.

b. The Trustees reviewed the External Auditors Report including any feedback and/or issues raised by the Audit & Risk Committee contained in the committee summary.

RESOLVED: the Trustees approved the Trustee Report & Annual Accounts for submission to the DFE by the 31st December, 2025

8. COMMITTEE & LGB ASSURANCES

a. The Trustees received the summary reports from the following committees, confidential summary reports were available in a separate confidential folder –

i. Infrastructure, 30.09.2025
ii. School Improvement, 01.10.2025
iii. Finance, 14.10.2025
iv. Pay & People 25.11.2025
v. Audit & Risk 26.11.2025

LWA asked Trustees whether they felt the summaries were helpful. Trustees felt they were.

b. The Trustees received an update on the ongoing work around the assurances from the LGB's covering matters included in the agenda planner. DMA explained there had been a discussion at the Chairs Group where Chairs were asked to review questions and how the LGB's can best respond and report to the Trust Board by looking at each key element of the steering wheel, work to be completed by the 21st January, 2026.

9. FOCUS TRUSTEE UPDATES

The Trustees noted that no reports had been received and agreed that this area required further work to include the recommendations in the ERG report to provide some clarity. The Board discussed previous approaches, including having linked trustees for individual schools, which was considered a significant burden in terms of visits. An alternative approach had been for all Trustees to review paperwork and discussions for a school. DMA suggested that the role should be defined as a Focus Trustee, with each Trustee concentrating on a school by reviewing all information provided to the Trust Board, attending at least one Local Governing Body (LGB) meeting annually, and meeting the Headteacher once a year. He noted that workload should be shared among Trustees who could commit to this. CPA added that, if all schools could not be covered, priority should be given to those who were identified as requiring higher levels of support. JBA emphasised the importance of Trustee engagement for both governance and school benefit, sharing his experience of managing multiple schools by reviewing paperwork, attending one LGB meeting, and visiting annually.

LWA proposed forming a small working group with DMA to redefine the Focus Trustee role and reallocate schools, noting that some Trustees currently had no allocation. The group would also consider whether the role should involve desktop reviews or visits and take account of geography for convenience. JBA stressed the need to define boundaries clearly, as Trustees could easily be drawn into school-level issues. LWA agreed, noting that schools often compared the level of attention they received, so having clear guidance in writing would be beneficial.

ACTION: LWA and DMA to form a working group to redefine the Focus Trustee role and reallocate schools.

10. POLICIES

The Trustees reviewed the following policies –

a. CCTV – for approval but as part of the new schedule in future would be reviewed at Infrastructure.

RESOLVED: the Trustees approved the policy.

b. Whistleblowing Policy - for approval

RESOLVED: the Trustees approved the policy.

c. Charging & Remissions Policy - for ratification, reviewed by Finance 14.10.2025. DMA had requested a few minor amendments e.g. Principal to be amended to Headteacher.

RESOLVED: the Trustees ratified the policy subject to the inclusion of the minor amends.

d. Declaration of Interest Policy (Trustees & Governors) - for approval amends highlighted in blue.

RESOLVED: the Trustees approved the policy.

e. Health & Safety Policy 2025 – for approval but as part of the new schedule in future would be reviewed at Infrastructure.

f. Exclusion & Suspension Policy, 2025 reviewed and recommended by the SI committee 03.12.2025, for ratification by the Trust Board.

RESOLVED: the Trustees ratified the policy.

11. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS
The Trustees noted the date and time of the next Board meeting on the 23rd March, 2026 at 5.00pm.
The Trustees agreed the date and time of the board session to review the KPI's on the 20th April, 2026 at 2.30pm

MEETING DATES 2025 - 2026

DATE	MEETING	START TIME	ONLINE/IN PERSON
AUTUMN TERM STARTS - 26.08.2025			
Mon 22 Sep 2025	Trust Board	5.00pm	Online
Tue 30 Sep 2025	Infrastructure	5.00pm	Online
Wed 1 Oct 2025	School Improvement	5.00 pm	Online
Thu 2 Oct 2025	Chairs Group	6.00 pm	Online
Tues 14 Oct 2025	Finance	5.00pm	Online
AUTUMN HALF TERM - 20.10.2025 - 24.10.2025			
Mon 3 Nov 2025	CEO call with Trustees	4.30pm	Online - googlemeet
Wed 5 Nov 2025	Chairs Group	6.00 pm	Online
Tue 25 Nov 2025	Pay & People	1.00pm	Online
Wed 26 Nov 2025	Audit & Risk	4.00 pm	Online
Wed 3 Dec 2025	School Improvement	5.00pm	Online
Mon 8 Dec 2025	Trust Board	5.00 pm	Online
CHRISTMAS - 22.12.2025 - 02.01.2026			
Mon 12 Jan 2026	CEO call with Trustees	4.00pm	Online - googlemeet
Mon 19 Jan 2026	LiFE MAT Services Board	5.00pm	Online
Mon 19 Jan 2026	Members - AGM	5.30 pm	Online
Wed 21 Jan 2026	Chairs Group	6.00 pm	Online
Wed 28 Jan 2026	School Improvement	5.00 pm	Online
Tues 3 Feb 2026	Infrastructure	5.00 pm	Online
Tues 10 Feb 2026	Finance	5.00 pm	Online
SPRING HALF TERM - 16.02.2026 - 20.02.2026			
Mon 2 Mar 2026	CEO call with Trustees	4.30pm	Online - googlemeet
Thu 5 Mar 2026	Audit & Risk	4.00 pm	Online
Thu 12 Mar 2026	Chairs Group	6.00 pm	Online
Tues 17 Mar 2026	Pay & People	1.00pm	Online
Wed 18 Mar 2026	School Improvement	5.00 pm	Online
Mon 23 Mar 2026	Trust Board	5.00pm	Online
EASTER - 30.03.2026 - 10.04.2026			

Mon 20 Apr 2026	CEO call with Trustees	4.30pm	Online - googlemeet
Tues 21 Apr 2026	Infrastructure	5.00pm	Online
MAY DAY BANK HOLIDAY 04.05.2026			
Thu 14 May 2026	Chairs Group	6.00 pm	Online
HALF TERM 25.05.2026 - 39.05.2026			
TBC - June	Trust Strategy Day	All Day	In person
Tues 16 Jun 2026	Audit & Risk	4.00 pm	Online
Wed 17 Jun 2026	School Improvement	5.00pm	Online
Tues 23 Jun 2026	Finance	5.00pm	Online
Thu 25 Jun 2026	Pay & People	1.00pm	Online
Mon 6 July 2026	Trust Board	5.00 pm	In person
SUMMER - 07.07.2026			