

# Local Trust Board

## Meeting minutes, decisions and actions

Conf Room 5b, Canopi, 7-14 Great Dover Street, London SE1 4YR

10:00-13.15 Wednesday 17 July 2024

*Board meeting Incl lunch. Followed by tea and cake with LT colleagues*

Discussion and decision		Actions
<p><b>Present</b></p> <p><b>Trustees</b>            David Warner (chair), Stephen Aldridge, Chris Catterall, Caroline Macfarland, Patrick Melia, Nicola Pollock, Rich Wilson.</p> <p><b>Non-Trustees</b>            Rosie Chapman (protector), Matt Leach, Rachel Rowney, Jon Fox, Alexandra Askew (minutes), Alex Boys (item 1 – 5), Rob Evans and Daisy Mannifield; CCLA (item 4.1) Madeleine Jennings (item 4.4 &amp; 4.5), Daniel Crowe (item 5), Jayne Humm (item 5)</p> <p><b>Apologies</b>            Kate Hainsworth, Sahil Khan, Matt Bell, Jessica Studdert, Margaret Bolton</p>		
1.	<p><b>Welcome, intros and apologies for absence</b>            The board welcomed Alex Askew (head of HR and office services and Alex Boys (head of area intervention) to Local Trust.</p>	
<p><b>BREAK FOR SGM TO CONFIRM APPOINTMENT OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS</b>            Apologies and attendance as above.            Agreement from all board members to appoint to the board: Kate Hainsworth, Stephen Aldridge and Jessica Studdert.</p>		
2.	<p><b>Declarations of interest</b>            DW presented declarations of interest. The board noted that they only need to declare interests that directly conflict with Local Trust.</p>	<p>The policy would be reviewed to take into account comments</p>

Discussion and decision	Actions
<p>There were none declared further to those already on the register.</p>	<p>received before meetings</p> <p>The declaration of interest will be a standing part of all future agendas.</p>
<p><b>3. Minutes and matters arising</b></p> <p><b>3.1. Approve minutes of board on 20 March 2024</b> Minutes from 20 March 2024 were approved with no amends.</p> <p><b>3.2. Matters arising/action points not covered by the agenda</b> The board noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCLA investment story will be picked up this year as part of comms workplan.</li> <li>• A longer discussion on insights from the programme, including different typologies of Big Local areas and their relationship to area performance, will take place at the away days in September, and trustees will receive a further update on area's progress towards closure at November board.</li> <li>• The roundtable with Community Foundations was less positive than hoped, however there had been considerable interest from Foundation Scotland in learning from Big Local. The team would focus efforts on knowledge transfer to FS initially, with the potential to build on that next year, depending on outcomes.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4. Key organisational issues</b></p> <p><b>4.1 Final update to the management of our Investment (CCLA)</b> Rob Evans, Senior Portfolio Manager and Daisy Mannifield, Client Investment Director joined from CCLA.</p> <p>CCLA presented summary of investment over the last 12 years, the presentation is appended.</p> <p>The board noted that it is expected that by November the total funds in management will be in the region of £40m. As previously agreed by the finance and audit committee funds will then be invested fully in the COIF Charities deposit fund. The fees will reduce following the move to the deposit fund.</p> <p>The board thanked CCLA for all their support over the years and noted the value of their early investment advice which has resulted in significant additional funds being available to support delivery of Big Local.</p> <p>Jon and Rachel are meeting with the Cabinet Office to demonstrate learning in coming weeks, with a particular focus on the setting up of endowed trusts as a delivery model.</p>	

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<p><b>4.2 Financial context to items 4 and 5</b> The board noted the update. On the assumption that Board approved spending proposals at item 5, a further £1m-£1.4m would be available for investment in “carrying the flame” activities to be discussed at the September awayday. There is further contingency provision in the budget, including programme and policy contingencies, which have not yet been committed, which should provide trustees with confidence when making spending decisions.</p> <p><b>4.3 Programme delivery – key emerging challenges</b> The board noted the update.</p> <p>Key observations were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While there had been some nervousness amongst staff about being more direct with lower spending areas about the need to make progress towards close out, the reaction had often in fact been one of relief at the provision of additional leadership and support (with only some resistance when challenging power structures locally).</li> <li>• There was a general acknowledgement across the team that the work will change as closeouts progress and increasingly it is the challenging areas that remain.</li> <li>• For many areas the discussion is about how plan objectives can be successfully delivered given the time remaining. This was not about reducing prioritisation of impact and community decisions, more about how areas could be supported to implement them successfully given the stage in the programme they were at</li> </ul> <p><b>4.4 Post-election response – how do we influence the new Labour government?</b> Maddie Jennings joined the meeting</p> <p>DW asked trustees to share their thoughts and insights over the last 2 weeks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local government is at crisis point and their financial health is a key concern, with families and education services struggling the most.</li> <li>- It isn't yet clear who is responsible for what in some ministerial teams, and some appointments are still to be made.</li> <li>- Lots of references to taking an evidence-led approach.</li> <li>- Likely that there will be an increasing focus on transfer of power to a local authority level</li> </ul> <p>The executive noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Whilst relationships were positive, it was difficult to gain policy traction pre-election, given Labour's exclusive focus on its mission priorities (something that other organisations had also faced).</li> <li>- However, there was a good base from which to build relationships, based on positive previous work done with both shadow teams and civil servants.</li> </ul>	

Discussion and decision	Actions
<p>- Letters have been sent to ministers welcoming them into post and seeking meetings.</p> <p>- A particular early focus was on shaping/influencing decisions on the CWF.</p> <p>To note:</p> <p>- An engagement event is taking place next week to engage with new MPs on the makeup of their areas.</p> <p>- We were re-establishing relationships with former APPG officers who had been re-elected</p> <p><b>Stakeholder comms around closure</b></p> <p>4.5 MJ summarised paper circulated with particular note to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall the tone and message is not about closeout, it's about moving into a new and active phase focused on impact and evidence.</li> <li>• The strategy is structured around 3 key areas (“how did we deliver BL?”, “what have we learnt?” and “what needs to happen?”)</li> <li>• Recent user testing on the website looked at breadth of our audiences and we have been shaping our outputs in response to those results.</li> <li>• As highlighted in the EDI report considered elsewhere on the agenda, EDI is threaded into everything we do and underpins everything we do, including in relation to closure comms.</li> <li>• We are scoping the communications plan post Local Trust, particularly in regard to projects / activities that will outlive us.</li> </ul> <p>Board thanked MJ for her work. MJ left the meeting.</p>	
<p>5 <b>Legacy Discussion</b> Dan Crowe and Jayne Humm joined the meeting</p> <p>5.1 <b>A new Commission on neighbourhoods – discussion of outcome of scoping report; decision on whether to proceed</b> A scoping document on the proposed commission had been circulated prior to meeting. The board were supportive of the proposal and noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of getting the right commissioners and chair – this was a policy-heavy initiative focused on informing and influencing government.</li> <li>• However, some consideration should be given to ensuring that there is at least some wider experience in the commissioner group.</li> <li>• The ‘lived experience’ panel was a very good idea and could contribute significantly to the work of the panel</li> <li>• The possibility of galvanising interest beyond government (whilst being mindful of its core purpose)</li> <li>• That the investment (whilst significant) appears low given the work that needed to be taken on – in particular the commissioning budget -</li> </ul>	<p>ML to send an update to trustees by end of August.</p>

Discussion and decision	Actions
<p>but that further funds might be accessed from other partners once Local Trust's commitment was confirmed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That as well as commissioning new evidence, the commission would provide a great platform for other research and evidence commissioned and funded by Local Trust</li> <li>• That a very close relationship with Whitehall would be critical to the success of the commission, and that the inquiry should be designed in a way that facilitated treasury engagement and incorporate government observers.</li> <li>• The pros and cons of the secretariat being independently hosted rather than by Local Trust.</li> </ul> <p>The board <b>agreed</b> that the project should proceed, with the executive seeking to make progress over the summer on terms of reference for the commission, commission make-up and recruitment of the secretariat and asked for an update by end of August.</p> <p><b>5.2 Local authority focused network development – discussion of outcome of scoping work; decision on whether to proceed with increased investment</b></p> <p>DC presented on progress to date, and plans for extending funding and scope of the local government project. Board noted and congratulated DC on progress to date.</p> <p>The Board noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The capacity of the team to deliver the proposed programme, and whether the initiative was sufficiently funded, given how challenging some local authorities could be to work with.</li> <li>• The need to continue to focus on the objectives of the network and the anticipated outputs. For example, what will success look like in Stoke? and how will the transfer of knowledge and techniques take place at Local Authority level?</li> <li>• Support for early work by the executive to look at the long term sustainability of the project, and potentially partnering with another organisation to host. This would be something that would be subject to a tendering process.</li> </ul> <p>Subject to the executive taking note of the points raised, the Board agreed to the proposal proceeding as set out.</p>	<p>The executive to explore partner organisations to host network going forward to secure its future.</p>
<p><b>5.3 Connected Communities Research Centre – what next following ESRC decision?</b></p> <p>LT had been part of the bid expected to be confirmed as receiving ESRC funding in coming weeks, following an extended commissioning exercise. The centre would be focused on supporting and strengthening connectedness and participation in place-based communities across the UK. The main objectives of the centre were to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the factors and conditions that affect levels of community connectedness and cohesion within and across areas.</li> </ul>	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop new approaches to measuring connectedness and participation</li> <li>• Work with a coalition of partners – including community groups, governments, and the business community – to co-produce a programme of work that tests different approaches to strengthening social connectedness.</li> <li>• Work with, and be responsive to, the needs of UK-based decision makers</li> </ul> <p>£9.7m over 5 years was expected to be committed, plus £1m and staff time commitment from Local Trust.</p> <p>ESRC expected to announce the decision soon, until then the decision was not for public discussion. The Centre was expected to launch in the autumn and work programme is likely to be announced next spring. Local Trust will sit on the partnership and governance boards. Roles on a broader Advisory Board had not yet been confirmed.</p> <p>JH thanked the board for their support that had enabled progress to this point. She would share further detail when available.</p> <p>The board congratulated Jayne and Margaret on the success of the bid.</p> <p><b>JH and DC left the meeting.</b></p>	
<p><b>6 Other items</b></p> <p><b>6.1 Management accounts</b>  Management accounts circulated and agreed by Finance and Audit committee and were as expected.</p> <p>Finance and audit committee would meet in October with the draft mid-year budget.</p> <p><b>6.2 2024-25 Business Plan Performance Report June 2024</b>  Rachel confirmed we are where we expected to be at this point in the year. There were no questions or actions</p> <p><b>6.3 Risk Register June 2024</b>  The register had been reviewed and updated. Key updates relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risks in relation to the recent change of government</li> <li>• Risks associated with staffing reduction and team reviews</li> </ul> <p>No questions or actions.</p> <p><b>6.4 Local Trust Investment Report May 2024</b>  Nothing further to discuss following CCLA presentation</p>	<p>RR to report back to Finance committee on revised financial projections</p>

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6.5	<p><b>Big Local Trust Investment Report May 2024</b> Nothing further to discuss following CCLA presentation</p> <p><b>Further documents requiring Board approval:</b></p>	
6.6	<p><b>EDI Action Plan 2024-25</b> Board noted the update, which followed the substantive discussion at March board</p>	
6.7	<p><b>Big Local Regulations</b> Board noted and agreed the revised and updated Big Local Regulations. Rosie as Protector had considered and approved the changes.</p>	
6.8	<p><b>People and Culture Committee – Terms and Reference (including proposed change of name)</b> Noted and approved the committee name change to People, Culture and Governance.</p>	David to hold 1-2-1 meetings in person over summer.
6.9	<p><b>People and Culture Committee – 4 April 2024 – draft minutes</b> Draft minutes approved – it was noted that David will reach out for time to complete 1-2-1s with trustees over summer and ideally in person)</p>	
7	<p><b>Any other business</b> Notice of meeting dates – it was noted that dates for Board and committee meetings through to 2026 were being confirmed, to ensure trustees were given sufficient notice in their diaries.</p> <p>RW was not able to attend the September awaydays but hoped to feed into Ben Hughes' report before then</p>	AA to connect RW to Ben Hughes
8&9	<p><b>Confirmation of Board decision on working group recommendations on senior staff and update on next steps (closed item)</b> Following discussion, AA returned to the meeting. Minutes and actions circulated as a separate document to trustees.</p>	