

Local Governing Bodies

General

Much is made within the MAT structure that it is the Board which shoulders the legal responsibility for everything. This not inaccurate - it is Trustees who carry the legal burden for the Trust and its institutions. They are also the legal Directors of the Trust under Company Law. Unfortunately, in many MATs, this legal reality has resulted in Trustees significantly down-playing the role of Local Governing Bodies. Many of these have been abandoned or watered down to the extent that they have become merely advisory and with no real connection to the Board's outputs.

Potentially, this is a huge lost opportunity. Trustees often struggle to establish a personal connection or understanding of individual institutions within a Trust and that is a direct risk to the effectiveness of Board decision-making as it limits the breadth of assurance available to Trustees. LGBs on the other hand have a "ring-side seat" and are well positioned to act as the "eyes and ears" for the Board. Output from LGBs can offer Trustees invaluable insight to the reality of what is being delivered to stakeholders. Importantly, LGBs can also help Trustees to assure and tri-angulate evidence and data presented at Board level.

Quite rightly, some have questioned whether or not LGBs run the risk of creating repetition across the meetings structure and an unnecessary level of repeated reporting by the executive team. This is clearly a risk but one that can be almost entirely mitigated if we can be clear about "what" is being done at each forum.

Generally speaking, the Board and its sub-committees (other than LGBs) will be engaged in the following activities:

- Reviewing results and outcomes against agreed Key Performance Indicators and targets.
- Making enquiry into the "enablers" that have led to results e.g. strategies, management approaches, policies.
- Agreeing and monitoring Trust-wide improvement priorities
- Agreeing Trust-wide approaches and strategies that will drive improvement.

LGBs on the other hand will have a different focus which is predominantly about testing understanding and seeking information at the local level and assessing the impact and effectiveness of policy and strategy on results.

The one area of potential repetition between LGBs and other Board sub-committees relates to the act of enquiry into the "enablers" of results. However, this is probably

more about perspective than repetition with LGBs focusing on the local landscape whilst the Board and other sub-committees engage with Trust-wide synergies. One should inform the other.

Core Terms of Reference

1. To seek evidence about the experience of local stakeholders and report this to the Quality & Stakeholder Experience Committee.
2. To receive input from Student, Parent and Staff Governors directly and to champion the voice of these stakeholder groups.
3. To appoint lead Local Governors for Health & Safety and for Safeguarding. To monitor all Health & Safety and Safeguarding matters at the local level and make reports to the Board through the lead Trustees for Health & Safety and Safeguarding Trustees as appointed by the Board. To receive and monitor compliance and incidence reporting for both Health & Safety and Safeguarding bi-annually.
4. To review the college complaints log bi-annually.
5. To receive bi-annual annual reports on student behaviour and exclusions.
6. To establish mechanisms for a dialogue with the local community and businesses about how their needs are met by the Trust's institutions.
7. To enquire about local "enablers" that have impacted on results e.g. leadership, people management, the impact of Trust policy and strategy, resources, processes and procedures.
8. To tri-angulate and assure reported data through local visits.
9. To test compliance with the Trust's values, strategies, and policies at the local level.
10. To monitor the deployment of resources against budget and to identify resourcing gaps where these exist at a local level.
11. To work closely with the Quality and Stakeholder Experience Committee to support its outputs and to provide input directly regarding quality and the student experience.
12. To monitor the impact of the institution's marketing, liaison, and communication plans and report this assessment to the Trust Development Committee.
13. To celebrate the success of the institution and promote this externally.

14. To provide input to the Performance Development Review of institution Principals via the Chief Executive.

Way of Working

Local Governing Bodies will seek to be as participative and diverse as possible to enable an inclusive dialogue with all stakeholder groups. As much as possible, Local Governors will be encouraged to touch the life of the college. Open and extended debate will be encouraged.

The attendance of staff at meetings will be driven by the needs of the agenda and at the discretion of the Chair.

The meeting environment will also be driven by the agenda or external circumstances that may affect personal face-to-face attendance. Any decision about how the meeting should be held will be taken on the basis that it provides the best opportunity for participation, allowing all members to contribute within a safe environment that enables high-quality debate and oversight. The Chair of the LGB will have the autonomy to make this decision. Meeting environments that might be considered are:

- In person.
- Remote video conferencing (e.g. Zoom, Teams)
- Hybrid (where resources are available)

The Chair must apply caution to ensure the meeting environment is fit for purpose so that Trustees and/or Local Governors can fulfil their duties effectively. Meetings must also be UK GDPR compliant.

Delegated Authorities and Plan of Business

Local Governing Bodies have no delegated authorities but will develop an annual Plan of Business that will deliver fulfilment of their terms of reference. The LGB's plan of business and terms of reference will be reviewed by the Board annually.

Membership

Local Governing Bodies will comprise:

- A minimum of four External Governors
- Two Staff Governors
- Two Student Governors
- Two Parent Governors
- Associates*

*Local Governing Bodies will have the power to appoint up to three "associates". Typically, these will be individuals with particular knowledge or expertise that might benefit the LGB in terms of a specific project or purpose, or individuals that would like to contribute to institutional governance but are time-limited in their capacity. Their

activities will be overseen and directed by Local Governors. Associates will not have formal terms of office or any vote and will be reviewed annually by the Board. They will not be counted towards quorum.

For each Local Governing Body, the Board will appoint a Trustee as Chair on an annual basis

Each Local Governing Body will establish Local Governors for lead roles regarding both Health & Safety and Safeguarding.

Local Governing Bodies will be attended by:

- Institution Principals and Vice Principals
- Other staff as driven by the agenda and business plan
- The Governance Manager
- External advisers (by invitation)

There will be an open invitation for the Chief Executive and Trust Chair to attend Local Governing Body meetings at their discretion.

Meetings

Local Governing Bodies will meet 5 times a year.

In order to be quorate there must be at least 3 Local Governors present including a Trustee or 50% of total appointed Local Governors (whichever is the greatest)