



**Active
Lancashire**

Item:

4

Report title:

Board of Directors/
Trustees Minutes and
Actions

Date:

22.10.25

Author:

Adrian Leather

Impact on Corporate Risk register?

Is this required?

Y

Environmental / Sustainability impact?

Is this required?

N

Welfare and safety of participants and beneficiary impact?

Is this required?

N

Executive Summary

Minutes and Actions from the Board meeting held on the 31st July 2025.

Action required by the Board

The Board to approve the minutes and note the updated actions.

ACTIVE LANCASHIRE LIMITED (“the Company”)

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS / TRUSTEES

Held in person in the Conference Room, 1st Floor: Global Renewables - Enterprise Business Park, Sustainability Way, Leyland, PR26 6TB on 31st July 2025 at 1-5.30pm

Present:

Brian Cookson	Chair, Active Lancashire	BC
OBE		
Dr Amanda Thornton	Director / Trustee (<i>joined via teams</i>)	AT
Bryan Jones	Director / Trustee & Vice Chair, Active Lancashire	BJ
Danielle Roberts	Director/ Trustee	DR
Kathryn Moffitt	Director / Trustee	KMo
Roger Davies	Director /Trustee	RD
Alex Downard	LCC County Council Member	AD
Donna Rawding	LCC County Council Member	DR
Georgina Roby	LCC County Council Member	GR

In attendance:

Adrian Leather	Chief Executive, Active Lancashire	AL
Amy Thompson-Spears	Place Manager, Active Lancashire	ATS
Cara Berriman	Virtual Assistant, Active Lancashire	CB
Darren Wright	Director of Community, Active Lancashire	DW
Ronan McMahon	Deputy Safeguarding Officer, Active Lancashire	RMc
Stuart Oliver	Director of Finance, Active Lancashire	SO

Apologies:

Joanna Robinson	Director /Trustee	JR
Nigel Murray	Director / Trustee	NM
Zee Jogi	Director / Trustee	ZJ

1 Chair Welcome and Quorum

- 1.1 Brian introduced the meeting and asked participants to introduce themselves and their organisations.

2 Place Partnership Input

The Board was joined by Empire Fighting Chance (EFC), a boxing charity partnering with the Pendle Youth Hub and CYP offer to support young people in understanding their emotions and managing behaviours through boxing and self-development. Ronan presented on the expanding partnership between Active Lancashire and EFC, highlighting how this collaboration helps promote both physical and mental wellbeing.

Ronan explained the background and purpose of the partnership, linking Active Lancashire’s values of Engage, Empower, and Enable with Sport England’s Uniting the Movement strategy, particularly the Recover and Reinvent theme. He reflected on how the pandemic disrupted informal physical activity

and social connection, making the programme's focus on wellbeing and community more important than ever.

Aaron Morten, Growth and Development Manager for EFC, introduced EFC, founded in the early 1970s in Bristol, and now operating nationally. He shared how EFC has worked with like-minded organisations and, since 2022, reached approximately 15,000 young people across multiple cities, including Bristol, London, and Peterborough. Active Lancashire was among the first trusted partners in the North West, with the relationship growing significantly over the past two and a half years.

Ronan detailed how the model was embedded locally in Lancashire. In June 2023, three Lancashire partners visited Bristol to observe the programme, inspiring a place-based approach which shaped local plans. Over the next year, EFC supported partners through a wraparound programme and introduced new initiatives such as Box Champions and Box Therapy. By September 2024, the partnership was fully operational in Lancashire, particularly Preston, with plans to onboard new partners by September 2025. Currently, 12 organisations are involved, moving into the early majority stage of adoption and focusing on wider behavioural and system change. Nine key conditions for place-based success have been identified, guiding how physical movement is promoted in communities.

During the discussion, there was strong interest in the programme's impact and evidence of effectiveness, particularly regarding crime reduction, mental health, and childhood obesity. Ronan and Aaron acknowledged the programme's positive impact and noted ongoing efforts to improve data analysis and evaluation to provide credible, measurable outcomes for funders and commissioners.

Questions about sustainability focused on what happens after the 20-week programme. Ronan outlined follow-on pathways such as Team to Breathe and the Annual Challenge Programme and confirmed retention is monitored with mechanisms to signpost young people to further opportunities.

The group asked about gender inclusion, to which Ronan responded that participation in Lancashire is roughly balanced between genders, with strong interest and involvement from girls and a good gender balance among practitioners.

Regarding accessibility and entry, Ronan clarified that the programme is delivered through trusted partners already engaging young people and is part of a wider holistic offer, making it accessible to those who need it most.

There was also discussion about school and college involvement, including self-funding options. Examples were shared where institutions invested independently, with the programme's value often leading to uptake once understood.

Several contributors offered support with evaluation and data collection. The group emphasised the importance of choosing delivery partners who already work with vulnerable young people and understand the local context, stressing engagement with middle leaders in schools and organisations.

Finally, broader behaviour and system change were discussed, highlighting the need to influence not only young people but wider systems. Positive role models, confidence-building, and integrating the programme into non-boxing settings were seen as important. Existing tools in local hubs, such as confidence measurement, could help demonstrate broader impact.

The session concluded and the meeting moved on to formal board business.

3 Apologies for absence

3.1 Apologies were noted from Joanna Robinson, Nigel Murray & Zee Jogi.

3.2 There were no Declarations of Interest noted.

3.3 Ratification of Board member nominations

Brian confirmed that three directors had already been approved by Lancashire County Council (LCC) as the company owner. Their appointments had been formally processed and recognised.

He also shared an important update from LCC regarding governance arrangements. LCC has confirmed that it is not a requirement for an LCC board member to be present on the committee in order for the committee to be quorate.

As a result, going forward, all committee meeting minutes will be submitted to and approved by the Board at its quarterly meetings. This governance update will be discussed further under Item 12 on the agenda.

In light of this clarification, Brian emphasised the importance of ensuring that the Annual Report is formally recorded as approved by the Board and noted that this would now form part of the official governance process.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

4.1 The committee reviewed the minutes from the following meetings:

- Board Meeting held on 10th April
- Audit & Finance Committee held on 26th June 2025
- Nominations & Remuneration Committee held on 3rd June

Danielle raised queries regarding two items in the April Board minutes. Firstly, a reference to an administrator named Emma-Jane was incorrect. Secondly, the mention of a MEC and Health Fortune programme was also inaccurate. Clarification was given on both points, and so the minutes will be updated accordingly.

4.2 Action list

An updated action list was tabled at the meeting. All actions that were due for completion by this meeting had either:

- Been completed, or
- Were tabled and are now progressing in line with the schedule for future meetings.

One specific update was shared regarding equipment accessibility for people with disabilities. The necessary information has been sent to Joanna, and relevant steps are being taken. There are no outstanding actions at this time.

4.3 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4.4 Ratification of Committee Decisions

There were not committee decisions to be ratified.

4.5 Approval of the Statutory Annual Report and Accounts and Letter of Representation for the Financial Year 2024/25

Stuart Oliver reported that the organisation had received a clean audit, with no adjustments required - a reflection of the significant work put in by the team. He extended his thanks and credited the team for their efforts in ensuring a smooth process.

The Annual Report and Accounts had been reviewed and approved by the relevant committees. Stuart confirmed that, following today's meeting, they now require formal approval from the full Board in order to be submitted.

Brian confirmed that all relevant information had been included in the Board meeting pack.

A question was raised by Bryan regarding whether individuals who joined the Board after 31st March should be included in the report. Stuart confirmed that they would be, and that now the new directors had been approved at this meeting, he would inform the auditors accordingly.

There is a deadline of 31st December 2025 for submission of the accounts.

The Board formally approved all three documents:

- The Annual Report and Accounts
- The Letter of Representation
- The Management Letter

5 Review of CEO 2024/25 appraisal and 2025/26 Work priorities

Note: Adrian and Active Lancashire employees left the room for the duration of this item.

The Committee reviewed the 2024/25 CEO appraisal and discussed priorities for 2025/26. As part of the appraisal process, Amanda and Brian conducted Adrian's performance review and reported that they were satisfied with his performance, noting that he had successfully achieved all objectives set out in the previous appraisal. The Board reviewed Adrian's performance over the past 12 months and supported the comments and assessment undertaken by the Brian and Amanda, with Brian agreeing to provide feedback to the CEO on specific points during their monthly briefing and planning meetings.

6 CEO Report – Questions from Board

6.1 Strategy Refresh:

The updated Strategy Refresh was included in the meeting pack. Adrian provided a wide-ranging organisational update, including key staffing changes and strategic developments.

It was shared with regret that Sarah Bennett will be stepping down from the organisation in October due to ongoing health issues and family circumstances. The board acknowledged her valuable contributions, particularly in marketing and communications, and early plans are being developed to address the leadership gap in that area.

Brian formally thanked Sarah for her entrepreneurial and dedicated service, wishing her and her family well for the future.

Danielle noted that the team is due to be organising a farewell gesture to recognise Sarah's impact.

It was also reported that the CSI Lead is on long-term sick leave and not expected to return in the near future. Plans are being explored for a more permanent solution to ensure continuity. Further information will be brought to the Board once options have been assessed. The CSI team is currently

being supported by Darren, and while key risks remain around delivery, steps are being taken to maintain coverage.

There has been progress in the development of place-based partnerships, with stronger working relationships emerging—particularly with Together an Active Future (TaAF). It was noted that some elements of this work may transition into Blackpool, offering potential for a more cohesive, cross-boundary approach.

Paul Blythin will lead on a newly formed, more cohesive group in this area.

The team is also extending CSI coverage across the county, a significant milestone in the programme's expansion.

Active Lancashire has been working closely with local authority leisure providers and the ICB, focusing on enhancing services that support patients either awaiting surgery or transitioning from clinical care. These include therapeutic and physical activity services within leisure centres. This work has seen strong success, including a recent session at County Hall to explore broader opportunities—although data sharing remains a challenge, progress is being made.

A session was also held at YMCA St Annes, where the group agreed to focus on two key areas:

- Estates strategy: particularly linked to Kendal Leisure Centre, where MSK (Musculoskeletal Services) has relocated from UHMB (University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay).
- Skills development: A project with CIMSPA (Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity) and the local hospital trust has led to groundbreaking analysis, which may support the creation of a new health-focused skills pathway. There is potential for funding via the Lancashire Skills Board and Skills Bootcamp model, with a possible investment of up to £7 million for Level 3 and Level 4 training programmes.

Adrian noted the desire to replicate this model in the culture sector, with discussions already taking place around falls prevention and broader community health leadership.

Board members reflected on Active Lancashire's increasing influence:

Bryan described Active Lancashire as becoming a "kingpin" within the broader 10-year health prevention strategy, now engaging directly with councils and the ICB.

There was agreement that while non-statutory organisations like Active Lancashire still face challenges in being recognised within statutory commissioning structures, leisure centres are well placed to become signposting hubs.

Alexander shared insights from ongoing community agent trials, which may align with this agenda—potentially offering a launchpad for integrating community-based referrals and social prescribing pathways.

Adrian added that the environment is shifting rapidly. That morning, he had attended a strategy session with Lancashire Teaching Hospitals, where the trust set out its new vision with a strong focus on improving health and wealth through prevention and partnerships. Sport England has also offered to support stakeholder consultation, which could add weight to these initiatives.

Donna asked whether there had historically been structural barriers to closer partnership working. Adrian acknowledged that while more could have been done sooner, momentum is now building across systems.

Danielle offered helpful context on the Together an Active Future (TaAF) programme, which runs until 2028, highlighting the critical role Active Lancashire can play in its delivery.

She also commented on the co-location and skills development work, describing it as potentially ground-breaking and a model worth sharing across the network.

Adrian extended an invitation to board members to attend the next pivot session at Kendal Leisure Centre, which will be attended by Sport England and other key stakeholders. A new CEO from a partner organisation has also expressed interest in getting involved.

Danielle raised a question regarding internal finance and IT capacity, following the absorption of those functions under the recent restructure.

Stuart confirmed the team is currently managing, though individuals are covering multiple roles. He praised Adam, who recently left the organisation, for his contributions. While his role was diminishing due to funding constraints, his growth within the organisation—from a chef to a skilled IT and digital support lead—was commended.

Danielle sought clarification on the decision to include a two-pronged environmental pillar in the refreshed strategy, covering both the physical environment and green sustainability.

Adrian explained that this work is being led by Darren.

Darren provided an update, noting that:

The organisation has an ESG policy and action plan in place (last updated in 2023). Capacity is limited, but internal skills and interest are being utilised where possible. The team is currently revamping the ESG plan, aiming to strengthen its sustainability focus. An internal Sustainability Group is being developed, which will feed into broader work with Sport England, including alignment with their Sustainability Maturity Matrix.

Active Lancashire is also a member of BASIS, and is actively engaging with tools and networks to support its environmental ambitions.

7 Implementation Plan progress update: Questions from Board

Darren provided a detailed update covering several key operational areas.

He began by outlining the implementation plan, originally created by Adam. This plan is now a live working document that captures all ongoing work across Active Lancashire. Darren also described a revised reporting model designed to present this information more clearly to the team. Due to time constraints, he gave a brief overview of some challenges and opportunities related to forward planning.

Regarding the Learning Zone, Darren explained that they are currently working towards income targets, but this remains a developing area. They have engaged with Sported, a national charity, which has agreed to provide business mentors to help support this work. There has been a noticeable increase in demand for short learning courses, and engagement levels are growing. A full progress update on income targets will be provided at a future meeting. The multi-sport courses have expanded into Preston, with very positive feedback. Plans are underway to collaborate with colleagues at Lancashire County Council (LCC) and TaAF to scale up delivery.

The Active Cycles programme is progressing very well. It has received funding from both LCC and Pendle Borough Council. A bike library has already been launched, and another is set to open next week in Pendle. There has been excellent uptake and positive feedback from participants, particularly

encouraging people to get on bikes. Delivery in Preston is on track, and the team has been offered an additional £50,000 in funding, reflecting recognition of their good work. Preston City Council has also shown interest in further partnership opportunities.

Adrian added that the Active Cycles work fits well with the organisation's role as an early intervention provider, especially for those with low-level health needs. He highlighted how the organisation leverages its networks to help reduce barriers and improve access to activity.

Darren also gave updates on several other areas:

The Preston Prison Project is progressing, focusing on support before release ("before the gate").

The organisation has submitted tenders for Lots 3 and 4 under the Connect to Work scheme and has been involved with submissions for Lots 1 and 2.

At the Pendle YES Hub, good progress is being made with commissioning targets on track. The hub is now being incorporated into a new neighbourhood plan and has received positive publicity.

On the topic of environmental sustainability, Darren briefly touched on ongoing efforts, as discussed earlier in the meeting.

Regarding schools and youth engagement, Darren reported that all planned county-wide and cluster festivals have taken place despite challenging weather. Eight cluster events engaged approximately 800 young people. Roger reminded the group that two years ago the board shifted from one central event to a cluster model, which has significantly increased reach. He suggested that sharing this success with Sport England would be valuable.

Action: Darren will share this learning with Martin and the team to highlight the increased impact.

In total, around 26,000 young people have been engaged through the School Games across the county. Bryan offered support to help increase capacity by providing students who need work experience opportunities.

Action: Darren to follow up with Andy and Mark to coordinate this.

On staffing, Darren confirmed the Shop Manager role has been filled on an interim job-share basis and is working well.

The new CGL contract is due to start in October. A new proposed structure has been put forward to deliver this contract across the county.

Roger raised a point regarding the Learning Zone, noting that it was previously unclear to the board what exactly the project encompassed. Given the anticipated changes in the school sector over the next 12 months, he suggested a deep dive report on the Learning Zone project would be timely for the next board meeting.

Action: Darren to prepare a comprehensive report on the Learning Zone for the upcoming board meeting.

8

Finance Update

The meeting reviewed the detailed finance statements included in the document pack.

Stuart highlighted key points, noting that overall finances are on track but remain tight. The organisation is currently in a transition year. Over the last 12 months, a deficit was agreed, with a small surplus planned for this year. There are ongoing challenges, particularly around pay scales, as national agreements were still pending. The recent National Agreement has now been resolved with a 3.2% pay rise agreed, compared to the 2.5% that was originally budgeted. This difference will have an approximate £10,000 impact on the budget, which is being mitigated through not replacing certain roles.

The finance pack includes a summary of the budget to keep everyone reminded. Income targets remain on track, although there are some slight risks associated with the Preston partnership.

Business development income is heavily reliant on the Connect to Work contract. The contract has been successfully secured, and targets are expected to be met. Stuart provided key figures related to current reserves. A board induction session for new members was also noted.

Regarding pensions, an annual valuation of the pension scheme is required by 31st March. The latest valuation shows an increase in surplus. Updated contribution figures for local government pensions are expected around October-November, with hopes that this uplift in valuations will continue. A summary of income changes was also provided.

In terms of budget risks, hitting business development targets remains the primary concern. The National Living Wage (NLW) is expected to increase slightly, though not significantly impacting the budget.

Medium to long-term risks include static funding from Sport England, ongoing devolution to local authorities, and increasing demands from stakeholders and local authorities. The organisation is managing these demands carefully.

The team continues to review compliance with the UK Code of Governance to ensure all standards are met. The business development plan remains uncertain due to a competitive sector environment.

Staffing statistics as of the end of June were shared: 36 employees, 7 of whom are part-time. The average length of employment is 6 years and average age is 44 years.

Bryan raised a question regarding the need to revise the business development plan following the departure of Sarah.

Stuart responded that the role Sarah held was new and securing funding for it has been difficult due to the challenging sector environment. This raises questions about the future shape of the role, which might not be an exact replacement.

Bryan further questioned whether the business development sub-committee should be sustained in light of Sarah's departure.

Adrian provided reassurance that the team is highly entrepreneurial and capable. However, there is still a need for some form of support structure to ensure quality bids and oversight for smaller bids. He emphasised the importance of board assurance and oversight groups to add value, generate new opportunities, create partnership links, and facilitate focused discussions.

Donna made observations on the finance situation, noting that staff costs are reasonable relative to income for this sector. She stressed that if the Connect to Work initiative does not proceed as planned, it could present significant challenges.

Stuart acknowledged the organisation's good track record in delivering large projects with major partners. He noted that staff costs are dependent on the continuation of funded projects.

Danielle cautioned against focusing too narrowly on one area or purpose.

Amanda, Deputy Chair, shared that she, Bryan, and Sarah had a meeting aimed at providing support in this area. She suggested that a wider group coming together would be beneficial for both the board and organisation, especially to enhance commercial acumen.

Bryan emphasised the need to decide the future of the sub-committee and who will lead it from the staff side.

Adrian proposed holding a meeting before Sarah's departure to kick off discussions and then follow up accordingly. He noted that there has been no further update regarding Roger's sport role but anticipated new strands of work coming through the organisation.

Roger expressed a preference for the organisation to act more as a broker and enabler rather than continually competing for funding. However, no progress has occurred as Parliament is currently in recess.

Bryan stated he is not convinced the organisation should remain as an active partnership in its current form.

Adrian confirmed the sub-committee will continue for now, with three standing members: Bryan, Amanda, and one of the board applicants who has agreed to join, making four members in total.

Roger suggested starting with three members and then adjusting as needed. There are currently no formal quorum numbers as the group is considered a working group rather than a constituted committee.

Kathryn briefly mentioned an income stream related to the Social Value Portal.

9

Pension Update

Stuart provided a pension update and Adrian proposed seeking legal advice regarding the existing and replacement indemnity/surety documents and to mitigate liability of the Trustees regarding decisions they may make regarding the pension scheme.

The team had narrowed the pension schemes down to five options, including one called NEST, which satisfies current legislation.

They also reviewed a scheme offered by Aviva.

Regarding the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), being over 55 provides significant protection, so a different perspective was needed.

Following discussions, the recommendation is to adopt the SMART Pension, which is a defined contribution scheme. It is noted for being very responsive throughout the process and offers low costs, meaning it will not add to overheads. There are also options for death-in-service benefits.

A defined contribution scheme means contributions are fixed, and benefits depend on investment performance. The LGPS is a defined benefit scheme, which guarantees a pension based on salary and years of service.

LGPS is one of the best schemes in the country but comes at a high cost.

- First recommendation: Is the SMART pension scheme acceptable?
- Second recommendation to the board: Approve a contribution rate of 8%. The legal limit for combined contributions will be set, with a minimum employee contribution of 2%.

Board approval was requested for these recommendations.

If approved, one of the new shop managers will be the first person to join this scheme.

The board is also being asked to approve a limit on how often staff can change their investment choices — proposed to be twice per year — as more frequent changes would create a significant administrative burden.

Adrian explained the focus of the legal advice will be to protect the board members in their professional roles as trustees. Although costs are not yet known, seeking this advice is considered critical.

The board reviewed options for a new pension scheme and recommended adopting the SMART Pension, a defined contribution scheme with low costs and flexible benefits. They proposed an 8% employer contribution rate and a minimum 2% employee contribution, seeking board approval.

Key points raised included benchmarking against other organisations, balancing competitiveness with cost control, and limiting how often staff can change investment choices to reduce administrative burden.

The board agreed that the clear, fixed 8% contribution provides certainty for staff and supports budgeting. They also approved seeking legal advice to protect trustees in their roles.

Donna and Danielle supported the motion, and a consensus was reached around the room to approve.

The recommendations were unanimously accepted, with thanks to Stuart for his work on the project.

The board gave full approval to proceed with the legal instruction.

10 Place Universal Offer submission and Place Partnership Preston Update

Amy Thompson-Spears introduced herself and provided an overview of her role as Place Manager at Active Lancashire. She delivered a presentation on the Place Universal Offer, which will be shared with the Board following the meeting.

Amy outlined Sport England's £250 million investment into whole-system place work until March 2028, focusing on areas with high inequality and low activity levels. The programme will expand to 80 Place Partnerships and aims to tackle inequality, increase physical activity, reduce inactivity, and improve experiences for children and young people.

Funding will support:

Activation of universal assets (Active by Design, Buddle, We Are Undefeatable, NELP) across Lancashire, with emphasis on Fylde, Chorley, South Ribble, parts of Lancaster, West Lancashire, and Wyre.

System leadership workshops for Lancashire stakeholders (covering topics such as system mapping, influencing change, evidencing impact).

Development of a collaborative leadership offer for Lancashire and planning for legacy beyond current Sport England funding.

Ongoing evaluation and learning.

Some areas will receive enhanced support based on data and identified need, including Morecambe, Fleetwood, and Skelmersdale. Other areas will still benefit from the universal offer.

Place-specific updates:

Morecambe – Identified as a starting point, with a particular focus on the West End. Two workshops were held in May and July, facilitated by Tamsin [surname TBC], exploring local priorities. Around 20–30 participants attended, focusing on collaboration rather than solely funding access.

Fleetwood – Pilot work includes two workshops on children and young people. Wyre's existing Moving More strategy has sub-groups to support delivery. Work is also ongoing on a Middle Leaders Programme in schools.

Skelmersdale – Delivery scheduled for Year 2. Engagement with the local authority is using resident insight to identify priorities, with discussions on potential NHS investment and improving the town centre to create more active, inclusive spaces.

Preston – Identified as an expansion partner, with a working group preparing an application for a development award in September 2025. Priorities include children & young people, health, active spaces, and physical activity messaging. Agreed values: community-led, inclusive, connected, empowering.

Amy highlighted that Buddle will be the key training and learning resource to ensure no place is left behind. A system leadership approach will bring together leaders from multiple sectors to foster collaboration, avoid duplication, and share resources.

Key questions and discussion points:

It was confirmed that the £630,000 total funding will be spread over three years, with allocations for staffing across years 1–3. Amy noted this is approximately a third of what had been expected. For comparison, Blackpool's award was £1.3 million, and Preston's is also expected to be under £1.5 million.

Questions were raised about how the leadership element is being funded. Amy noted this will likely be resourced through partners. Adrian confirmed that TaAF is delivering a System Leadership course, also in partnership with NW NHS Leadership Academy. There are plans to ensure sustainability when funding ends in 2028.

Some Board members observed that Preston's four priority themes appear to align with TaAF's deepening themes. Amy wasn't certain but Adrian confirmed there is alignment. Danielle queried whether this consistency was being seen across the county – Adrian acknowledged there's room for more joined-up working.

Donna asked what would be done differently this time to ensure better collaboration and shared learning. Amy explained that Paul Blythin is currently on secondment to TaAF one day a week to

support a joined-up approach and explore a secondment model for collaboration. The programme is also assessing the system maturity of each place.

Kathryn asked what learning could be applied from areas already mobilised, given Skelmersdale is further behind. Danielle suggested this could be picked up through Paul's new group and tabled as an early agenda item.

Georgina raised the need to ensure that children in care are not excluded from the universal offer, particularly around leisure opportunities. Adrian agreed and took an action to follow this up with Georgina directly.

Donna and Danielle both welcomed the dual role approach being taken by Amy, recognising that this had helped create shared priorities in other areas. Amanda, who joined the meeting at this point, acknowledged that while progress had been made, there are still gaps across the patch, and called for greater connectivity. Adrian noted that since 2017, around £4 million of investment had been received, compared to previous years which saw £10 million+.

Action:

Amy to circulate presentation slides.

Adrian to follow up with Georgina regarding a potential leisure offer for children in care as part of the universal offer.

11 Safeguarding and volunteer pathway update

Adrian explained the need to formalise a pathway for volunteers to become full members of staff. The organisation has recently accepted beneficiaries who are listed on the sexual offence register or have domestic abuse orders. These high-risk offenders require thorough risk assessment and management, which previously had some gaps.

As the organisation expands services county-wide with CGL, compliance is critical to ensure our policies are aligned with CGL as the service funder and contractor. If volunteers are not properly registered and are engaged with sexual offence and abuse offending histories, Active Lancashire risks breaching the contract, potentially leading to loss of the CSI service.

An internal investigation identified seven points of judgment failure involving a staff member where disciplinary action is being considered. The staff member has been on sick leave for over eight weeks, with resolution ongoing.

The revised volunteer pathway now includes managing two volunteers who are on the sex offenders register. They are being supported carefully to ensure they exit as volunteers to enable Active Lancashire compliance with the CGL contract. However, board agreement is needed on the key components of this pathway to ensure that sex offenders and those with violence offences (MAPPA level 3) are not offered the opportunity to become volunteers and employees of Active Lancashire, thus ensuring compliance with the CGL contract conditions.

Amanda stressed the importance of a thorough conversation to fully understand the implications of the AL and CGL contract, noting the huge potential impact.

Danielle agreed more time is needed and suggested this item be placed earlier on the agenda at the next meeting to avoid it being rushed. She also highlighted the board's collective safeguarding responsibilities and the need to appoint a safeguarding lead.

Adrian confirmed ongoing positive discussions with CGL, where assurances were given that we are working to policy and practice compliance with the standards set by CGL.

Bryan expressed concern that delaying approval could put the public at risk. He proposed ratifying the pathway now to protect the public, with the option to revisit and possibly reverse the decision at the next meeting.

Amanda voiced discomfort and stressed the need for board consensus on the threshold of what is acceptable.

Danielle emphasised that volunteers are subject to a transparent process, and leaving the organisation is not just about saying sorry but follows a formal pathway.

Roger called for urgent discussion and swift action to put a system in place.

Alexander expressed doubt about potential outcomes without full clarity.

Adrian explained that open-access sessions make it difficult to know attendees risk profiles in advance, but for referrals, risk assessments can be conducted and decisions made in advance. The process aims to define clear thresholds for volunteer and staff member involvement.

He noted that the organisation is unique in managing these risks so proactively, with assurances sought from probation services. Low-risk individuals can be moved to other roles; high-risk cases would be handled differently.

Amanda acknowledged the need for swift action but remained concerned about unresolved evidential issues.

Further Discussion:

Danielle pointed out that no one at AL has had formal training on this.

Brian commented that the lack of training doesn't prevent moving forward.

The group reached consensus to proceed with the pathway, with the condition that it will be regularly reviewed.

Amanda requested clear documentation from Adrian on the process to support board decisions and assist with accountability.

The board agreed the current risk is managed and mitigated, and the public is protected. Two volunteers on the register will exit with probation involvement as soon as practical.

Amanda asked for one further assurance: that the team managing the exits fully understands the changed situation and the paper presented.

Consensus: The board resolved to approve the pathway with ongoing review and documentation.

12 Annual Review of Terms of Reference (Board and Committees)

a) Update on change to quoracy status (Committees now advisory)

This item was not discussed due to time constraints. It will be carried forward to the next meeting.

Reference Documents:

- Board Terms of Reference
- Audit & Finance Committee Terms of Reference

- Nominations & Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference

13 Board reflection / Any other business

None discussed due to time constraints.

Actions for the next meeting

Minutes of the Previous Meetings

- Minutes from April Board meeting to be updated to correct administrator name and MEC/Health Fortune programme reference (*Cara*).
- Equipment accessibility information sent to Joanna, with relevant steps being taken (*Joanna/Danielle*).

Implementation Plan Progress Update

- Share learning from cluster school events with Martin and the team to highlight increased impact (*Darren*).
- Follow up with Andy and Mark to coordinate support for work experience students (*Darren*).
- Prepare a comprehensive report on the Learning Zone project for the next board meeting (*Darren*).

Place Universal Offer Submission and Place Partnership Preston Update

- Circulate presentation slides from the meeting (*Amy*).
- Follow up regarding potential leisure offer for children in care as part of the universal offer (*Adrian/Georgina*).

Safeguarding and Volunteer Pathway Update

- Document volunteer pathway process to support board decisions and accountability (*Adrian*).
- Regularly review the volunteer pathway and manage ongoing risk (*Adrian/Board*).

Date of next meeting

The next Board meeting will take place on 22nd October 2025, Conference Room, 1st Floor: Global Renewables - Enterprise Business Park, Sustainability Way, Way, Leyland, PR26 6TB, 13:00-16:00pm.

Signed by the Chair of the Board:

Date:
