



Full Trust Board Meeting

CIT Academies

Tuesday, September 16, 2025, at 1:00 PM

Warwick House, Long Bennington

Minutes of the meeting

1. Welcome and check in

Presenter: Chair

Points to note

Present

Jo Slesser– Chair

Alex Hole - Trustee

Laura Cook- Trustee

Pam Powell – Trustee (via Teams)

Harpaul Dhindsa- Trustee (via Teams)

Daran Bland- Interim CFO

Jane Starbuck – Director of Growth/ Governance Lead (DoG)

Ana Hendrickson – Company Secretary/ Governance Professional to the Trust Board (Minutes)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Presenter: Clerk

Points to note

Helen Drew-Bradley – Trustee- Previous commitment

Nathan Jeremiah- Trustee- Work commitment

Apologies accepted.

Absent

Paul Tallentire – Trustee

Kate Goodman – Trustee

Quorum met.

3. Declarations of Interest

Presenter: Chair

Points to note

None for this meeting.

4. Chair's opening remarks

Documents provided

CIT Values and Principles.

Summary of: questions raised / clarifications sought / challenges / points to note

All were reminded regarding the CIT Values and encouraged to speak up should this meeting not abide to these.

The CIT/RCT merger did not complete on September 1st as expected consequently the new Trustees will be fully onboarded by the December TB meeting.

It was noted that the Company secretary/ Governance Professional will have an input during Trust Board meetings going forward.

5. Minutes of last meeting- FOR APPROVAL

Presenter: Chair

Documents provided

Draft Trust Board Minutes 15th July 2025.

Resolutions

The Minutes of the 15th July 2025 full Trust Board meeting were approved as a true and accurate record.

Any votes against or abstentions with reasons

None.

6. Action Tracker- FOR INFORMATION

Presenter: Chair

Documents provided

2025-26 Trust Board Action Log- Outstanding Actions only to include those of the 15.07.25 meeting.

Summary of: questions raised / clarifications sought / challenges / points to note

Outstanding action points rag rated AMBER were reviewed.

Trustees indicated they were content with the context provided.

7. Summer Term LSB Reports - FOR ASSURANCE

Presenter: DoG

Documents provided

LSB Consolidated Report Summer Term 2024-25- (May- July)- Main Report.

LSB Consolidated Report Summer Term 2024-25- (May- July)- Matters for TB Consideration.

2024-25 LSB Consolidated Report V4.0 Summer Term May-July 2025.

Summary of: questions raised / clarifications sought / challenges / points to note

Trustees queried whether a contingency plan is in place at BEA (low capacity LSB) for the provision of the required assurances.

Summary of: Management response

SOAP Assurances from the BIN LSB were submitted late, this is due to the change of LSB Chair and Governance Professional.

A further update was provided in relation to matters raised by POP, BEA, LIN, FOX and BOW.

An LSB member recruitment drive is underway. A prospective LSB member is in line for BEA's LSB.

CIT LSB capacity is being monitored.

8. Impact Of Governance 2024-25 -FOR INFORMATION

Presenter: Chair

Documents provided

The Work of the CIT Trust Board.

Summary of: questions raised / clarifications sought / challenges / points to note

The *Work of the CIT Trust Board* document was produced by the previous Trust Board Chair; it will be shared with all CIT LSBs.

Attention was drawn to the *Overview, Assurance and Accountability* section, in particular to the commissioning of an external review of Governance.

It was suggested for this exercise to be carried out in Autumn 2026.

9. Governance of Compliance/ ELT Member responsibility and accountability - FOR INFORMATION

Presenter: CS

Documents provided

ELT Compliance Framework 25-26.

Summary of: questions raised / clarifications sought / challenges / points to note

No comments made.

Summary of: Management response

Information regarding the *ELT Compliance Framework* had previously been provided to the Board.

This document has recently been updated to reflect the latest external compliance framework that each member of the ELT has to adhere to.

A change in the ESFA compliance framework was noted. This organisation ceased to exist as of April 2025, compliance is now to the DfE.

10. Strategic Direction -FOR INFORMATION

Presenter: Chair

Documents provided

Verbal update.

Summary of: questions raised / clarifications sought / challenges / points to note

The TB Chair has met individually with each member of the ELT.

Visits to CIT schools are underway, two schools per week.

The above activities have provided an opportunity to scrutinise the current Trust Strategy. This matter will be the focus of the January 2026 Trust Board meeting.

It's been agreed that in order to strengthen relationships, Trustees and the ELT will meet for lunch an hour prior to each Trust Board meeting, and one member of the ELT will be invited to attend the meeting at any one time.

Trustees indicated their agreement with the above and also with the ELT's Strategic Plan input request.

It was suggested for the working draft of the Strategic Plan to be shared prior to the January 2026 meeting.

Summary of: Management response

The Trust's Strategic Plan will be signed off by the Trust Board at their January 2026 meeting.

The current document is a strong draft.

Input from Board Committees, CIT HT's, LSB Chairs and School Councils was requested.

The ELT agreed to share hard copies of the Strategic Plan at the December 2025 TB meeting.

Actions

ACTION 1: For hard copies of the Strategic Plan to be provided at the December 2025 TB meeting.

11. CEO Update - FOR INFORMATION AND RATIFICATION

Presenter: CEO/ ELT Members

Documents provided

FOR INFORMATION:

KS2 and KS4 Outcomes- CEO- Full Educational Outcomes Report

Growth Projects (RCT/ Orchard/ Earl of Dysart/ Free School)- DoG -Verbal update

Finances (Predicted year end position/ Reserves/ LCC Funding)- CFO- Verbal update

Implication of National Policy changes-CEO- Verbal update

FOR RATIFICATION

CFO and DoG Interim positions- Resolutions Sheet DB Interim CFO / Resolutions Sheet-JS

Teachers and Support Staff Pay Awards- Resolutions Sheet Teachers and Support Staff Pay Awards 2025-26

Summary of: questions raised / clarifications sought / challenges / points to note

The TB Chair noted that the schools' clear plans and strategies for the improvement of outcomes was evident during her visits to CIT primary schools.

A query was raised in terms of lead indicators in order to capture and address any issues at an early stage.

Trustees requested national results data in relation to GCSEs and an update regarding the sale of the Stornoway site. Consideration will be given to the housing developer's proposal regarding the Stornoway site. It was agreed for the F&E Committee to have relevant oversight.

Trustees praised the transformational, clear and organised reporting of the CFO and his team, and the work of the DoG.

The proposals to continue with the interim appointment of the CFO until the early '26 review point, to appoint Jane Starbuck to the ELT, as Director of Governance until (31.8.25) and to accept the Teachers and Support Staff Pay Awards 2025-26 were agreed and unanimously approved.

Summary of: Management response

Education outcomes

Areas of concern were highlighted. Further scrutiny will be given to these by the E&SG Committee.
KS2 results were not as expected.

Phonics is strong overall although it sits at 5% below national average.

Times tables results are above national average.

The DoE Mainstream has been tasked; he has a clear timeline for internal testing which, together with an action plan, will be shared with the E&SG Committee.

Baselining is carried out within week three of the academic year. Lead indicators are being uniformed across the schools for data scrutiny, monitoring and the addressing of any potential issues.

The successes at Newton Bridge Academy (25 GCSE at grade 4 and above) and Carre's (increase in GCSEs achieved) were noted.

Growth projects

RCT- The September 1st date for the completion of the merger was not met due to an outstanding signature. Relevant documentation has now been signed and submitted to the DfE. Full DfE ratification is expected on 17.09.25.

Newark Orchard- All is on track and in line for a conversion date of 01.01.26.

Free School- A bid has been submitted for a Nottinghamshire Special School. All DfE bids for special schools are on hold nationally, currently awaiting an outcome.

Fairham Pastures- Bids for this 650-place primary school are now open. Fairham Pastures is due to open its doors in September 2027. CIT is currently preparing a bid application.

Earl of Dysart- DfE approval has been received for the tier one change of the expansion of Newton Bridge onto the Earl of Dysart site. Awaiting information from LCC.

Finances (Predicted year end position/ Reserves/ LCC Funding)

A change in the estimated year-end budget position was reported. A significant surplus will be reflected from the P11 to P12 Management Accounts. This positive variation is due to the Staff Pay Awards figure being less than originally anticipated, a successful staff vacancy management, budget consolidation and budget generation activity. Staffing percentages closed at 78.9% (target of 80%) at school level and 6.7% (target of 5%) at Centre.

LEARN's negative deficit position has reduced slightly thanks to their focus on revenue generation. This will continue to be a KPI to ensure that running costs are covered by income generated from trading activity next academic year.

Context was provided regarding the the financial due diligence carried out for RCT and its findings.

An offer from a housing developer has been received for the purchase of the Stornoway site (subject to planning permission approval) and an additional offer for the payment for the Trust's sale legal fees. This is a long planning permission process due to the scale of the proposed project.

Implications of National Policies

Changes within the new Ofsted framework were highlighted particularly the evaluation areas graded on an inspection and the 5-point evaluation grading scale.

One school in the Trust remains on the Ofsted window.

The DsoE are currently focusing on the new updated SEF.

CFO and DoG Interim positions

Further detailed context was provided by the CEO in relation to the achievements, successful projects and future financial qualification of the CFO. Linked to this was the work and position of the DoG within the ELT.

Resolutions

To approve for the interim appointment of the CFO to continue until the early '26 review point, to appoint Jane Starbuck to the ELT, as Director of Governance until (31.8.25) and to accept and approve the Teachers and Support Staff Pay Awards 2025-26.

Any votes against or abstentions with reasons

None.

Actions

ACTION 2: For GCSE national results data to be provided to the Board.

12. Financial KPIs for 2025-26- FOR APPROVAL

Presenter: CFO

Documents provided

KPI reporting 2025-26 for Trust Board 16.09.25

Summary of: questions raised / clarifications sought / challenges / points to note

Trustees thanked the ELT for the re-assuring update.

Summary of: Management response

Two new KPIs have been added to the existing version of the KPI reporting document.
Income from LEARN's trading activity will be included in future reporting going forward.
The new Commercial Director will progressively report on profits from traded activity across the Trust.
A task for this year is to develop an action plan to audit all traded activity, prioritise and maximise income and increase dividends.
The December's Trust Board level report will be based on the proposed KPIs presented today.

Resolutions

To approve the proposed *KPI reporting 2025-26*.

Any votes against or abstentions with reasons

None.

13. Governance Documentation - FOR INFORMATION AND APPROVAL

Presenter: Chair/ DoG

Documents provided

FOR INFORMATION

Ofsted Framework 2025.
Governance Oversight and Assurance Framework v2.
Governance in Practice 1st September 2025.
Trustees Code of Conduct changes 2025-26.
Members Code of Conduct changes 2025-26.
Board TOR changes 25-26.
LSB Terms of Reference 2025-26 changes.

FOR APPROVAL

Draft RD CoC Trustees v5- Reviewed 2025-26.
Draft RD CoC Members- Reviewed 2025-26.

LSB Terms of Reference v3 2025-26 DRAFT.
Board TORv10 2025-26.
DRAFT LSB Role Description and Code of Conduct 2025-26.

Summary of: questions raised / clarifications sought / challenges / points to note

The TB Chair noted that the Onboard portal is difficult to navigate and not fit for purpose. She suggested the creation of a Trustee working group for the re-organisation of the information currently held on the portal.

Assurances are provided to the Trust Board by the ELT, LSBs and all Board Committees. There isn't currently a 'one-stop' document that reflects these assurances.

A Trust Assurance Rag document (TAR) is underway for information purposes. Assurance rag rating will be carried out on receipt of relevant assurances and not during TB meetings.

The TB Chair advised that the *Governance in Practice* document is the reviewed and updated version of the CIT Team Approach to Governance. No material changes have been made apart from the inclusion of a Careers Trustee.

Current Board Committee membership is limited therefore committee members were encouraged to attend their respective meetings to ensure quoracy; no meetings can go ahead if quoracy is not met.

Summary of: Management response

The *Governance Oversight and Assurance Framework* document is now live.

The LSB SOAP report has been updated in line with the *Governance Oversight and Assurance Framework*. Open and honest feedback has been requested from CIT LSBs. Also requested was the allocation of sufficient meeting time for discussion and completion of the SOAP report.

The additional proposed wording change in section 2.3 of the *LSB Terms of Reference v3 2025-26 DRAFT* document and reasoning behind it was noted and discussed.

Resolutions

To approve the following governance documents:

- *Draft RD CoC Trustees v5- Reviewed 2025-26.*
- *Draft RD CoC Members- Reviewed 2025-26.*
- *Board TORv10 2025-26.*
- *DRAFT LSB Role Description and Code of Conduct 2025-26.*
- *LSB Terms of Reference v3 2025-26 DRAFT* subject to the temporary delegation of authority to the CEO for the appointment of a member of the ELT or an appropriately skilled member of the CIT Central Team as Interim Chair.

Any votes against or abstentions with reasons

None.

Actions

ACTION 3: For an email to be sent to Trustees to establish a working group for the re-organisation of the Onboard portal.

14. Points of notes for Board Committees- FOR DISCUSSION

Presenter: Chair

Documents provided

Verbal update.

Summary of: questions raised / clarifications sought / challenges / points to note

The TB Chair advised that this new standing agenda item will inform Board Committees regarding matters for agendas and points for discussion at their meetings. Board Committee feedback will be received at each Trust Board meeting.

The TB Chair will not be in attendance to any Board Committee meetings.

The E&SG Committee previously piloted a 10-minute pre- meeting discussion amongst Trustees which was found to be beneficial by its members. As a result, the TB Chair encouraged Committee Chairs to adopt this approach to streamline their meetings.

15. GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL MATTERS- FOR INFORMATION

Presenter: Governance Professional

Documents provided

CIT Governance Training Padlet UPDATE MAY 2025

Links to online DOI form and LEARN CPD Brochure

Summary of: questions raised / clarifications sought / challenges / points to note

Trustees queried the requirement to complete CIT statutory training should the same training had been undertaken through their own employment.

Summary of: Management response

All were reminded regarding the completion of the outstanding online DOI forms and Companies House statutory Directors' ID checks.

The CIT Training padlet and LEARN's CPD offer were provided for information purposes only.

Statutory training is required to be completed once. If a Trustee has already completed the relevant training through their own employment, a copy of the certificate should be submitted to the CS for record-keeping purposes.

16. Chair's Closing remarks

Presenter: Chair

Summary of: questions raised / clarifications sought / challenges / points to note

The TB Chair thanked all for their attendance and participation at today's meeting.

Meeting closed at 2:45pm.