

# Anglian Learning Trust Board Meeting Minutes



16 December 2025

## Trustees Present

Ken Murphy (KM Chair), Jon Culpin (JC CEO), Andy Brock (AB), Andy Robinson (AR), Adeline Winshaw (AW), Sylke Scheiner (SS), Sabrina Ahmed (SA), Phil Caroe (PC) and John Morgan (JM)

## Others Present

Charity Main (CM CFOO), Kerrie Jones (KJ Head of Governance, Compliance and Risk), Rachel James (RJ SET Head of Governance) and Nichola Pickford (NP Executive Headteacher, Meadow/Wimbish)

	ITEM	ACTION
1.	<b>Acceptance of Apologies for Absence</b>	
	Apologies were accepted from Annabel Curwen (AC) and Matthew Blake (MB)  The Chair introduced RJ who will be taking over the role of Head of Governance, Compliance and Risk from 1 Jan 2026	
2.	<b>Declarations of Interest with regard to agenda items</b>	
	There were no declarations of interest.	
3	<b>Agree minutes of last meeting and Matters arising not on this agenda</b>	
	The minutes and confidential minutes from 29 Sep 2025 were agreed as a true record.  Actions had been completed.  Revised KPIs for core standards were discussed at Education Standards Committee yesterday and will be reported to the next Board meeting.	March Board meeting item
4.	<b>RSM report</b>	
	This item is recorded as a confidential minute.	
5.	<b>Finance (CM)</b>	
	<b>Associated papers:</b> <a href="#">Period 2 Management Accounts p02 25-26 IMP forecast reports combined Revised Budget 2025-26 AL Reserves Policy v6.0 Draft</a>  The period 2 management accounts show a positive variance.  <b>2025-26 Revised budgets</b>  A significant amount of work has taken place in a short period of time. A detailed review of staffing has been included and there has been an increased focus on those schools with a financial notice to improve. Clarity is being sought from LAs around SEND processes  It has been challenging to re-budget SET schools incorporating them into Anglian Learning mid-year. Staffing has been examined in detail whilst non-staffing has used a 8/12 basis.	

Chair's signature.....

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Date.....

	<p>Reserves are forecast to be 3.5% but identification of other areas could increase this to 4% by the end of the year.</p> <p>Trustees had a number of questions:</p> <p><b>Q</b> <i>Can you explain how Netherhall seem able to make savings?</i></p> <p><b>A</b> They are able to make certain savings related to being in Cambridge city together with a different Alternative Provision model</p> <p><b>Q</b> <i>Could you clarify the temporary use of sinking funds to support reserves?</i></p> <p><b>A</b> Schools will continue to invest in the funds but some of this money will not be required till a later date.</p> <p><b>Q</b> <i>It was noted that some supply costs are already more than budgeted.</i></p> <p><b>A</b> JC confirmed that this is being closely monitored.</p> <p>Trustees suggested a dashboard with the direction of travel and benchmarking against similar Trusts would be helpful.</p> <p>The revised budgets were approved by Trustees.</p> <p><b>Reserves Policy</b></p> <p>This was approved by the Trust Board</p> <p>Trustees thanked everyone all for all their hard work.</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>2024-25 Accounts and annual report and Internal Scrutiny Annual Report</b>	
	<p><b>Associated papers:</b> <a href="#">Anlian Learning accounts for signing AL draft accounts 09.12.25</a>  <a href="#">AL draft management letter 09.12.25</a>  <a href="#">Anlian Learning 2025 Audit LOR</a>  <a href="#">Anlian Learning 2025 Regularity LOR</a>  <a href="#">Internal Scrutiny Annual Summary Report 24-25</a></p> <p>The Annual Accounts and Annual Report had been presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee by Price Bailey. Following scrutiny, the committee agreed to recommend them for approval by the Trust Board. Minor amendments have been made.</p> <p>It was noted that the management letter is very positive with few action points, all low priority.</p> <p>Price Bailey were very complimentary of the work carried out which puts AL in a positive position relative to many of their other clients.</p> <p>Trustees resolved to approve the Annual Accounts and Annual Report. The accounts will be signed by the Chair and Accounting Officer and submitted to the ESFA by 31 December 2025.</p> <p>Trustees approved the Audit and Regularity Letters of Representation.</p> <p>Trustees thanked everyone for all their hard work</p> <p>Trustees approved the Internal scrutiny report as recommended by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Committee Reports</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FEOC</li> <li>• ARAC</li> <li>• PCC</li> <li>• ESC</li> </ul>	

	Trustees had discussed at ESC yesterday the issue of communication between layers of governance, notably how to connect with LGBs. JC explained that KJ will be undertaking a project to look at a new model of local governance next year which will be a massive change programme.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Whistleblowing, Complaints and Critical Incidents (KJ)</b>	
	<p><b>Associated papers:</b> <a href="#">Whistleblowing &amp; Complaints report Dec 2025</a></p> <p>KJ shared the report for the autumn term. She highlighted that although no benchmarking data is available, anecdotally the Trust had not received a huge number of formal complaints compared with other Trusts of a similar size. One explanation for this may be successful handling of complaints at Stage 1. Data on Stage 1 complaints is not collected as Stage 1 (informal) is broad. All Headteachers have access to a Complaints Management Pack and training video.</p>	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Risk Report: Strategic risks (STR 5,6,9)</b>	
	<p><b>Associated papers:</b> <a href="#">Risk Report</a></p> <p>STR 5 Confidence and Trust: this is within appetite though it was noted that the communications strategy will come under more strain during a period of maternity leave</p> <p>STR 6 Size and Scale: this is above appetite reflecting growth and demographic changes. (We will be funded for 2% fewer pupils next year). We have ensured robust project management around growth</p> <p>STR 9 Adaptable: this is above appetite reflecting reduced capacity of CLT and pausing of formal risk management process in schools</p> <p><b>Q</b> Trustees asked how involved the HTs at the SET schools have been so far?</p> <p><b>A</b> They have attended 2 TLG conference days this time as well as primary and secondary TLG briefings. They have been involved in a broad range of conversations.</p>	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Ofsted Inspection Briefing (NP)</b>	
	<p>NP, Executive Headteacher and Meadow and Wimbish, is an Ofsted inspector. She provided Trustees with an overview of the renewed Ofsted framework and the role of Trustees and Governors.</p> <p>She highlighted that the Scheme of Delegation sets out the Board's responsibilities around education standards and this will determine Ofsted's expectations around Trustee or Governor involvement.</p> <p>Key highlights of the framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils.</li> <li>• Report cards introduced</li> <li>• Standards 'met' or 'unmet'</li> <li>• Schools should expect to have needs attention in some areas.</li> </ul> <p>A page of key points for Trustees/Governors would be helpful to prepare them for questions.</p> <p>[11am SA and JM left]</p>	
<b>13.</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
	There was no other business.	
<b>14.</b>	<b>Date time and venue of next meeting</b>	

The next Board meeting is on 11 March 2026 Meeting ended at 11.15am	
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Items for Future Meetings	
Meeting	Item
Trust Board 11 Mar 2026	Approve Extraordinary Board meeting 5.12.25 minutes Core Standards KPIs
ARAC meeting 18 Mar 2026	Consider response to RSM report

Action Log			
ITEM	ACTION	DEADLINE	RESPONSIBILITY
4	Produce slimmed down recovery plan with key actions		JC/CM
4	Draft Board action plan		SA/KM
4	Write to LAs re SEND responsibilities		KM