

MSP Board Meeting

Action Notes

Date & Time	Wednesday 16th September 2026 1pm - 4pm
Venue	Liverpool Hope University, Hope Park Campus, Childwall, Liverpool L16 9JD
Board Members (BMs) Attendees	Rachel Fowler* (RF) (Chair); Darren Simpkin* (DS); Ian Parkinson (IP); Gaby Crolla (GC); Omid Khaiyat* (OK); Simon O'Brien (SO); Sue Forster* (SF); Jacqui McKinlay (JM)
MSP Team Members	Justine Blomeley**^ (JB) (CEO of MSP); Danny Woodworth^ (DW) (Partnership Manager); Jo Schumann*^ (JS) (Finance, Compliance and Operations Manager); Jennie Platt^ (JP) (Partnership Manager); Lisa Smalley (LS) (Business Support Officer)
Apologies	Sophie McNally (SM); Andrea Farrell* (AF); Judith Cummings (JC); Jessica Jeffreys (JJ); James Cole (JaC); Anthony Judge^ (AJ); Jo Richmond (JR)
Audit Committee	* Denotes the Audit Committee
Nominations Committee	“ Denotes the Nomination Committee
Leadership Team (LT)	^ Denotes Leadership Team (LT)
Distribution (internal & external)	www.merseysidesport.com , MSP Team, MSP Board

	RF asked if there was a policy around AI. JB confirmed that Liz Cross has developed a policy and JB has shared with Kenny Chu (MSP Learning, Research & Insight Officer) for feedback, Kenny is currently on leave but JB will check with him when he is back. ACTION - JB to get feedback from Kenny. - Board Welfare & Safety Lead Role Title to be updated - approval needed ACTION - LS to seek board approval in email sent with action notes - Board Senior Member Role Description to be amended to show attendance as minimum 3 meetings - complete	JB LS	
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T3 Governance/Compliance (JS)		Outcome / Actions	Who	Deadline
A - FOR DECISION				
JS sent out MSP Board Mileage and Expense Policy with board papers and asked for feedback/comments to be tabled at this meeting. The policy is due for its annual review by board and mirrors LCC/MSP's. SF queried that as she lived 'out of the area' does this mean she is unable to claim any travel expenses. She also said that the policy states train travel should be booked via MSP but that sometimes this may not be the most cost effective way and adds to MSP admin time. JB agreed that expenses should be looked at on a case by case basis and if it is more cost effective for board members to arrange their own travel, the policy should capture this. OK said that the current policy title may be misleading, as expenses do not always include mileage and suggested renaming it to 'Board Expenses Policy'. Additionally, OK highlighted that the policy is outdated and no longer aligns with current hotel room rates, policy currently states up to £60 per person, per night.				

	JB also stated that the expense policy needs to align with the work that Kyle Tunstall is currently doing on the Environment policy. ACTION - JB to speak with Kyle to ensure the policies align. JB asked SO if he could share what LCRCA policy includes around cycling. ACTION - SO to share. OK noted that in section 3 of the policy it states 'Any wilful breaches of this policy will be dealt with by the MSPB Chair, sanctions may include refusal to pay expenses incurred or dismissal from the Board.' OK questioned whether this should include a formal disciplinary procedure rather than immediate dismissal. All feedback to be shared with JS for her to review the policy in line with LCC policy and procedures and to look at changing the name to 'Board Expenses Policy. ACTION - JS to review policy. B - FOR INFORMATION Other documents/policies due for board review: Board Member Appraisals, Board skills, performance and effectiveness evaluation and Board Action Plan RF confirmed that all 1:1 appraisals have now been completed and she is in the process of writing them up. Once done, she will pull out the key points, circulate with all BMs and then feedback to JB. ACTION - RF to circulate key points from 1:1's with BMs. Feedback from the appraisals was that nobody wanted any specific training or additional support but RF stated that if this changes, can they let her know. RF also wanted to re-assure BMs that all feedback from the appraisals remains with her and JB, it is not shared anywhere externally such as Sport England or other external partners.	JB SO JS RF	
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	External Board Evaluation RF updated that as part of T3 compliance the board has to be evaluated. The timing of the evaluation will be early next year and will involve interviews with some BMs. JB confirmed that MSP has held off on the external evaluation until the 'new' board was established but it is now important to get the evaluation in the calendar as this is something that is required as part of the road map for the new application for funding. JB knows someone who has completed board evaluations with other Active Partnerships and has sent an overview of how they approach them. RF to share her feedback with JB and then JB will share with the rest of the board. ACTION - RF to send comments to JB. JB to share with all BMs. GC asked if Sport England had a procurement grid of consultants that can do board evaluations. JB agreed that Sport England and ANPO will have a list of people that MSP could use which would ensure credibility. RF stated that it is important to have the same person that completed the evaluations to ensure consistency. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) As per JS item cover sheet - As a hosted AP we follow LCC's policies regarding this. There is no overriding policy to share, it is broken down into many different areas that fall under CSR. Three examples of LCC documents have been shared with the board as reference so BMs can see the level of detail they cover. ACTION - If there is a particular aspect you want to ensure is covered please identify this.	RF & JB All BMs	
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	Training Needs Analysis for staff in Financial Positions As per JS item cover sheet - As a hosted AP we follow LCC Financial Protocols that all staff have access to. Contract Standing Orders and guidance documents have been shared with the board for reference. RF suggested that DS and SF could look at this with JS at the Audit/Finance sub-committee meeting. ACTION - DS & SF to discuss with JS.		DS & SF with JS	
5	Finance Update (JS) FOR INFORMATION As per JS item cover sheet - No major issues to report. 2025-26 Annual compliance and first 2026 payment claims have been approved by Sport England. Time in diaries has been planned to complete the half yearly Apr to Sept 2026 compliance early Oct. Predicted underspends in Place Expansion, Place Universal and SWO may be used to contribute to working with Getty Images around our Women & Girls work. JB will explore the possibility with Sport England. OK queried how MSP complete finance approval. JB confirmed that the Scheme of Delegation confirms the approval amounts in line with LCC. JB stated there are some levels that MSP can approve themselves and beyond that approval is required from LCC. RF said that Liz Cross confirmed that finance information for the board should be simplified and that spend is itemised against budget lines that the board would recognise. JM agreed that the finance information for the board needs to have a simple narrative behind the figures to allow for the board to be drawn to any issues.			

	Future queries can be sent to DS and SF to be discussed further at the Audit/Finance Sub-Committee meetings. GC asked if the board would be part of an audit. JB confirmed that MSP are audited annually by an external auditor and the board would be part of this. JM asked if MSP held their own reserves, JB confirmed that MSP did hold their own reserves in line with the LCC reserves policy. JM advised that information on reserves should also be included in the narrative report. RF added that detail on underspend could also be included in the narrative.				
	Board Champions / Sub-Committees (JB)		Outcome /Actions	Who	Deadline
6	FOR DECISION				
	Sub - Committees agreed				
	Audit and Finance - DS and SF confirmed.				
	Originally SM expressed an interest in this role but she has now taken on a new role at Everton and cannot commit to the extra time.				
	Nominations and Remuneration - AF and OK confirmed.				
	JB is keen to get the sub-committee meetings underway. JS asked that the meetings be quarterly and proposed for them to be 4 weeks prior to the board meeting, so they can feed into the board agenda and provide supporting papers ready for when they are issued 2 weeks before the board meeting. ACTION - LS to send proposed meeting dates for both sub-committee meetings.				LS
	Board Champions / Leads Health - SF				

	Children and Young People / Education - GC Safeguarding - JaC with support from GC Active Travel - SO Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) - SO Women & Girls - SM (confirmed via email after the meeting) Data/Digital - To be confirmed Workforce - To be confirmed Disability - To be confirmed Sport - To be confirmed RF asked that if anyone is interested in any of the above roles, can you put your name forward before the next board meeting. ACTION - BMs to put name forward for Board Champion roles. RF will send an email to all, especially those BMs that couldn't attend the meeting. ACTION - RF to email all BMs.			BMs RF 10.12.26
	Safeguarding Update and Review (JP)	Outcome /Actions	Who	Deadline
7	JP confirmed she has just completed the Ann Craft Trust review. She submitted it in August, now just awaiting a decision. Once a decision is received, JP will meet with the Ann Craft Trust to review the feedback and go over what is required in order for the framework to be fully met. JP stated how it's important to evidence the discussions had around Safeguarding so this will now be a standing item on the board agenda. Also important to ensure the whole team are confident talking about welfare and safeguarding.			

	JP thanked everyone that attended the Safeguarding training, for anyone that was unable to join, there will be mop up sessions. ACTION - JP to confirm the dates once finalised. OK suggested that the training could have been condensed into a 1 hour slot rather than 2 hours. JP asked if anyone else had any feedback to let her know and she will pass it on to the Ann Craft Trust for future session development. ACTION - any further feedback from Safeguarding Training to be sent to JP. JP confirmed that JaC will be the Safeguarding Board Champion, with GC to support. JP will be meeting with JaC to discuss the role description. JP will share the Safeguarding policy and action plan for adults with JaC and GC. She will be looking at CYP next. ACTION - JP to share Adult SG policy and action plan with JaC and GC. RF suggested JP could present the policy to the board with support from JaC and GC.			
	Reflective Practice and Live Sensemaking (DW)		Outcome /Actions	Who
	DW gave an introduction to the process of Reflective Practice and how to collectively turn those reflections into live actions. MSP and partners have been embedding Reflective Practice and Sensemaking into their work for some time now, and MSP would like board members to feed into this too at every Board Meeting. DW asked everyone to work in pairs and to discuss for 10 minutes anything they had seen or noticed since the last board meeting about sport or physical activity in LCR. Everyone then answered the following three questions: 1. Describe the experience (The What?) 2. Make sense of the experience (The So What?)			

	3. Identify your next steps (The Now What?)				
	DW collated everyone's responses and will feed them into a collector sheet, to be shared with the action notes from this meeting. ACTION - DW to share collector sheet with responses Board Members to do a 'sensemaking session' (aka Campfire) at the December Board Meeting to look at the responses. JB also reminded everyone that they are welcome to join the MSP campfire session in January (9.30am to 12.00pm Tue 19th Jan 2027). ACTION - LS to send calendar invite to BMs for January campfire session.			DW LS	
	Leadership Team Update (AJ, DW & JP) - AJ - Sefton/Halton, Place expansion and Children and Young People - DW - Liverpool/Wirral, Health and Evaluation & Learning - JP - Knowsley/St Helens and Workforce			Outcome /Actions	Who
	FOR INFORMATION AJ gave an overview of Sefton/Halton. Place Expansion and CYP in line with the item cover sheet provided. OK asked if he could see a copy of the job description for the Clinical Role in Halton. ACTION - AJ to circulate job descriptions to board. JP confirmed the new MSP website will have a section for jobs. RF asked if MSP have used Moving Communities data. JB has tried in the past but has not had a response. ACTION - RF to speak with Moving Communities System Leadership Course - a free course offered through Place Expansion. It has been completed in Liverpool and Wirral and the next course is in Sefton on 23rd and 30th September with Knowsley planned for November. Also looking to deliver in St Helens, they are not part of Place Expansion but				AJ RF

	keen to offer across the region. If anyone is interested in joining the course, let JB know but you will have to be available for the full 2 days. ACTION - let JB know if you want to take part. GC asked about the School Games Organisers and how they are working with young women and girls. JB confirmed the School Games Network is changing and it is still being shaped from a DfE perspective. APNO are developing a joint bid alongside consortium partners (YST and afPE) and are also working with ETIO to help shape their proposal and future delivery model. DS asked where MSP are with Place work, JB confirmed the end date has now shifted from March 2028 to March 2029. By 2031, Sport England want to bring everything together. DW gave an overview of Liverpool/Wirral, Health and Evaluation & Learning in line with the item cover sheet provided. JP gave an overview of Knowsley/St Helens and Workforce in line with the item cover sheet provided. JB gave an overview of the Women in Coaching Taskforce workshop - it came from a parliamentary session where JB spoke with Leanne Norman, who had just started at The Women's Institute of Sport at Loughborough. Leanne usually works with Elite Sport but JB discussed with her how grassroots is so important. Leanne has now come to MSP who ran the 1st workshop 2 weeks ago for Knowsley and St Helens. JP confirmed that since the item cover note went out, MSP has also been invited to a roundtable at the Labour Party Conference to discuss youth employment and how physical activity can support this. MSP's attendance is yet to be confirmed due to associated costs. JP stated that one ambition for Active Bystander is to have a Senior leadership course and to host it within the 16 days of Activism which is a United Nations campaign from 25th Nov to 10th Dec, this would help to influence organisations to buy into the training. ACTION - if anyone wants to attend or knows of any senior leaders that would like to attend then let JB know.	All BMs	All BMs
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	RF and the rest of the board agreed that it is helpful to get the leadership cover sheet notes prior to the meeting.			
	CEO Update (JB)	Outcome /Actions	Who	Deadline
	FOR INFORMATION JB gave an update in line with the item cover sheet provided. Cross System W&G, in the process of gathering more people to this group. Update on AP Application • £160 million across 42 APs • SE are holding £30 million back for innovation • MSP plan to apply for the full award offered. • Now includes Place Universal offer, Sport Welfare Officers and CYP role • Costing current structure and what we need going forward. • Decision expected mid-December JB - AJ attended a meeting regarding Place Expansion - £675k development award. Sport England are closing the window on full awards as they have a new Director, the last window to apply for the full award is January, MSP are looking to apply in November. Decision expected mid-December. JM asked if Sport England were prepared for any devolution asks. JB said that the 'Rewiring the State' paper talks about arms length bodies. CEO and Chair of Sport England will visit in January, JB has booked time with Steve Rotherham.			

	RF stated there will be a new fund from Sport England for ageing assets, once RF gets more information - she will share with the board. ACTION - RF to share information with board on Ageing Assets fund from SE			
	JB confirmed that MSP are still working on the rebrand name, currently working with LCC legal team and OSCH around trademarking and due diligence.			
	Feedback from IWG Summit (JB)		Outcome /Actions	Who Deadline
	Feedback provided in JB's item cover sheet.			
15	AOB			
	None			
11	Has there been any change in risk as a result of today's decision making			
	No			

DATES TO NOTE

	MSP Board Meetings	Board Development
	Thurs 10th December 2026 13.00-16.00 Cunard Building, 1st Floor, Foyles War 4	Wed 21st October 2026 - LCR Place Partners Day 09:30-13:00 - Venue TBC
	Wed 17th March 2027 10:00 - 13:00 Venue TBC	Thurs 3rd December 2026 - LCR Place Partners Day 09:30-13:00 - Venue TBC
	Tues 22nd June 2027 10:00 - 13:00	Tues 19th January 2027 - 'Campfire' Sensemaking Session 9:30-12 - Room TBC,

Venue TBC	Cunard Building, Liverpool L3, UK
Wed 15th Sept 2027 10:00 - 13:00 Venue TBC	
Wed 8th Dec 2027 10:00 - 13:00 Venue TBC	