

**Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 10th September 2025
10:00-12:30 Stoke Mandeville Stadium**

Attendance: *Leap Board: Sue Imbriano (Chair), Dr Martin McElhatton OBE, Alistair Patrick-Hesleton, Sophie Payne - Snr Independent Director (Buckinghamshire Council), Will Rysdale*

Leap Executive: Chris Gregory, Andrea Healy, Kirsty Ingham, Mark Ormerod (Director), Mark Stokes, Rhiannon Smith and Shay Fenlon (item 5)

Apologies: *Jules Anderson, Thomas Godfrey, Prof Paul Morgan, Yvette Thomas MBE*

1. Welcome & Introductions

Action

1. SI opened the meeting and welcomed board members and colleagues from Leap.
2. Apologies were noted.

2. Declarations of Interest

1. SI called for any declarations of interest
2. SI declared that she had recently become a trustee of the Kings Education Trust (July 2025).

3. National Context Setting

1. MO provided board members with an updated presentation to the one provided 12 months prior, setting out and reviewing the key policy drivers and their impacts to date:
 - a. **Reducing Inequalities:** Addressing deep-seated inequalities in access to sports facilities and opportunities is a major theme. Policies aim to ensure that everyone, regardless of background, has the chance to participate in sports
 - b. **Health and Wellbeing:** There is a significant focus on integrating physical activity into health and wellbeing strategies. This includes using sport and physical activity as preventive measures within the NHS and other healthcare systems
 - c. **Physical Education in Schools:** There is a strong push to elevate the status of PE within the school curriculum. This includes proposals to make PE a core subject and ensure better sports provision for children and young people (covered in more detail in item 6)
 - d. **Active Environment:** Policies are being proposed to include active environments in planning policies. This means designing urban spaces that encourage physical activity, such as more parks, cycle lanes, and pedestrian-friendly areas
 - e. **Regulation and Standards:** There are calls for greater governmental intervention to improve standards and introduce new regulations in the sports sector. This includes measures to tackle issues like doping, misconduct, and corruption
 - f. **Economic Development:** Policies are also focusing on the economic benefits of sport, such as improving productivity and creating jobs through the sports sector

2. Each driver was considered in the context of i) impact over the past 12 months, ii) the impact/response from the Active Partnership Network (nationally), iii) the impact response at Leap-level.
3. MO concluded the presentation with a review of changes to key parliamentarians.
4. MO added that he felt there was a likely step-change in the way impact is measured and communicated throughout the sector to Government, and measurement was likely to feature more prominently in the next 5-year investment strategy for Uniting the Movement.
5. MMc added that a more pronounced understanding of both the economic and social value of sport is required, and should be a central pillar of any measurement reforms.
6. SI added that significant investment had been announced by the government for the 'enrichment of young people' and that through Leap's place-based work all areas of intersectionality should be explored.
7. SP added that at local level Buckinghamshire Council would soon be launching its public consultation on budgetary expenditure.

4. **Understanding the Leap Ecosystem – focusing on developing place insights**

1. KI provided a presentation outlining Leap's approach to developing place-based insights that inform strategic decision-making, storytelling, and continuous improvement across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.
2. MO reinforced that it was predictable that Sport England will introduce a more rigorous system of monitoring, evaluation and learning; and that Leap along with all Active Partnerships would be wise to prepare for this.
3. SP asked how Leap's growing insights can be utilised to develop the proposition for shaping policy further.
4. MO responded that in isolation Leap may have moderate impact shaping national policy but collectively as a national network of Active Partnerships there is considerable opportunity.
5. APH reminded the Board about the DCMS Select Committee he spoke at, and that the final report was expected in the Autumn.
6. Sue thanked KI for her presentation.

5. **Place expansion investment**

1. CG opened the discussion with an update and context setting, explaining the difference between the greater Place Expansion investment (Milton Keynes) and the Place Universal investment (Buckinghamshire).
2. SF updated the Board on the application made to Sport England and summarised the work would at a micro-level target SW Aylesbury and a macro-level benefit all of Buckinghamshire. SF Added that Leap was awaiting a decision from Sport England.
3. SF agreed to share the plan on a page for the Bucks Place Universal application. SF
4. RS provided a broad update on the progress in Milton Keynes Discovery Phase and shared some initial responses from the resident voice research, the test and learn projects and feedback from the MK PEP Board.
5. SI thanked CG/SF/RS for their update and presentations.

6. **Children and Young People**

1. MS updated the Board on a renewed national strategy for physical education and school sport in England, which aims to embed physical activity into the fabric of school life and childhood development. Key reforms include reintroducing a version of School Sport Partnerships, launching School Sport Profiles, and promoting diverse extracurricular opportunities through an Enrichment Framework. Locally, Leap has supported schools across Buckinghamshire and

Milton Keynes through initiatives like School Games and Active Lives and Opening School Facilities.

2. APH mentioned a pilot programme in Dorset where schools were changing their uniform requirements to activewear to encourage great physical activity.
3. MMc mentioned the Equal Play Campaign from the British Paralympic Association which focuses on ensuring no child is left on the sidelines.
4. WR noted the importance of before and after school activity.
5. SI thanked MS for his update and presentation.

7. Impact Report – Board Update

1. KI provided an update on the mid-strategy review, highlighting the importance of articulating Leap's value and impact, sharing the hard copy which would be used principally in hard-copy for senior level engagement, along with a version available for the public online.
2. SI thanked Kirsty for her hard work leading the production of the review.

8. Finance, Audit & Risk Committee Report

1. AH spoke to the Financial Report which had previously been reviewed by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee. AH provided an overview of the financial position, highlighting a healthy budget and reserves.
2. KI spoke to the Balanced Scorecard, which was approved by the Board.
3. MO presented the updated Risk Management Plan, highlighting no new or exceptional risks.

9. Governance

1. MO briefly updated on the completion of action plan for full UK Governance Code assurance for Leap at Tier Three with one outstanding area of work:
 - a. The Board AGREED the updated Conflicts of Interest Policy.
2. MO noted that the 4-year cycle for the external Board Governance Review was due in 2026. The Board AGREED MO should proceed to explore option to seek an approved reviewer (consultant).
3. SI reminded board member to complete and return their Skills Audit to her.
4. MO updated the board that there is an on-going search for board members with skills particularly in accountancy/finance and communication/digital marketing. Board members were asked to explore their professional networks for colleagues matching these skill sets who may be interested in applying.
5. MS noted that formal safeguard training was still a requirement for board members. Board members agreed that MS and SI should agree options for the training, including possibly combining with the Board Away Day in January.

SI/MO
All

All

SI/MS

10. Minutes from the last meeting – 14th May 2025

1. The minutes of the meeting were agreed as correct and signed by the Chair.

11. Matters Arising from the meeting 14th May 2025

1. All matters arising were reported and agreed.

12. Any other business

1. MMc noted the National Spinal Unit Games would be taking place and Stoke Mandeville Stadium on 17th September and all were welcome.
2. APH mentioned the Marvel Superhero challenge and would like to explore how Leap could become more involved. CG would refer this to David Haggard.

CG

Dates of Future Meetings

Date of future board meetings	
2026	2027
28 th January	24 th February
20 th May	26 th May
7 th October	13 th October

Papers and presentations

- Item 3 – National context presentation
- Item 4 – Understanding the Leap Ecosystem presentation
- Item 6 – Children & Young People presentation
- Item 7 – Leap mid-strategy Impact Report
- Item 8 – Financial Report
- Item 8 – Balanced Scorecard
- Item 8 – Risk Management Plan
- Item 9 – Governance Code Requirement / Conflicts of Interest Policy
- Item 10 – Draft Minutes from Board meeting 14th May 2025
- Item 11 – Matters arising from Board Meeting 17th May 2025