

Minutes of the Members General Meeting



Where?

Online using zoom

The meeting has been recorded and can be viewed [here](#).



When?

2nd December 2025 at 10am



Meeting Opening

Jodie welcomed everyone to the meeting.

We asked everyone to fill in a poll to say which membership voice group they belonged to so that we could check that the meeting was quorate.



There needed to be 4 members from each voice group and 15 members at least that means it could make decisions.

There were:

- 13 self-advocacy voice group members
- 8 family or friends group members
- 9 paid supporter group members
- 3 person who was unsure



1. Who was there?

Jodie Williams	Trustee (co-chair)
Sarah Maguire	Trustee (co-chair)
Kristiina Cooper	Trustee

Angela Catley	Rep Body
Tim Keilty	Rep Body
Nathaniel Lawford	Rep Body



Paula Strike	Rep Body
Liz Tilly	Rep Body
Dave Smith	Member
Marsh Stitchman	Member
Vicky Forfar	Member
Michael Donlevy	Member
Chris Stringer	Member
Helen Guest	Member
Ramandeep Kaur	Member
Tony Boden	Member
Ellie Rossiter	Member
Philip Gibson	Member
Carinder Malhi	Member
Pagane Gacheva	Member
Mollie Mattingley	Member
Frankie Dunmow	Member
Christine Towers	Member
Michele Munro	Member
Matthew Lester	Member
Casper Rioseco	Member
Jillian Pawlyn	Member
Elmi Terjavjainena	Member
Nigel Joseph	Member
Sean Dempsey	Member
Ashley Pearce	Member
Ellie Spirrett	Member
Wendy Burt	Member
Karen Holdsworth-Cannon	Member
Kim Oakes	Member
Tania Woodhouse	Member
Colette Armitage	Member
Heidi Smith	Member
Rebecca Lunness	Member
Alison Giraud-Saunders	Member
Hannah Morrison	Member
Daniel Walker	Member
Ella Sky	Member



Apologies – Who could not come:

Parmi Dheensa	Trustee
Chris Maxsted	Trustee
Paula Braynion	Trustee

Kumudu Perera	Rep Body
Kate Chate	Rep Body
Liz Wilson	Rep Body



2. Minutes of the last AGM in December 2024

The minutes and recording had been sent in advance. They are also on LDE's website.

Jodie asked if there were any questions or concerns about them.

The minutes of the AGM in December 2024 were agreed as a good record.



3. Trustees report on the work and accounts from April 2024 – March 2025

Sarah talked about what we have done.

Learning Disability England exists to make life better for and with people with learning disabilities, and their families.

How we work

- Support others work
- Celebrate others action or achievements
- Lead when taking action together is best

We do this through

- Membership – for people and organisations creating stronger links together
- Influencing and campaigning – speaking up and sharing others important work
- Solving problems together and sharing what works



- Sharing information and building networks so that we learn together

At the end of March 2025 there were

- 171 organisation or group members
- 535 individual members

This is 40 more members than 31st March 2024

We have lost some members, mainly due to financial reasons. Another reason is due to companies merging.

Examples of what we have done:

Building Good Lives

In 2024-2025 we worked with members to take action for Good Lives by:

- Building the Good Lives Manifesto which people used ahead of the elections. This was viewed or downloaded by 8,500 people.
- Members used this when meeting with their MP's and attending events to help the government understand what's important to people with a learning disability and their families.
- The Good Lives Manifesto was refreshed. A chapter on health was added and launched in March 2025

Sharing Solutions

We bring members together to learn from each other or understand new ideas or research together.

This year we held:

- 13 member network meetings
- 28 member or public webinars

More than 1,500 places were used at these meetings.





Speaking up together

- Responded to 10 consultations and open letter responses with members.
- Supported member-led campaigns, including Social Care Future. Joint letters were sent out regarding the National Insurance increases.
- 22 research and improvement projects involving member reps on topics such as COVID-19 learning, digital inclusion, DNACPR decisions, and self-advocacy
- There were 54,000 visits to the Learning Disability England website
- Members represented on key national policy and advisory groups, including the Social Care APPG and NHS 10-Year Plan Partners Council



Bringing people together to learn or act together

Worked in partnership with others on projects including:

Hosting The How we Survive and Thrive Commission that is looking at the learning from the Covid pandemic.

Including people in research projects as part of a project called "No Research About Us Without Us".

Creating a film with SpeakUp self-advocacy on 'The Impact of Advocacy'

Some partnerships we carried on:

The Valuing People Alliance – one of six organisations working as part of the HWA that supports the NHS and Government to reduce inequality in health and social care

JMS Trust: LDE continued to host a worker and collaborate on their work on Supported Living Led by families



Action towards Good Lives

We held 2 conferences in February and March 2025

480 people attended

58 different speakers sharing what they are doing to support Good Lives

In our feedback;

75% of people said they would do something different because they came.

90% of people felt more connected as a result of the conference.

Accounts

Lisa explained that the Trustees have checked and agreed the accounts for 2024 – 2025. They were also checked by an independent accountant (Polkadot & Ellis).

Total income for the year was £381,000. 22% higher than the previous year.

This came from:

- Grants (£150,000)
- Membership payments (£131,000)
- Donations, Conferences and workshops (£100,000)

How we spent the money:

- Staff costs (£218,000)
- Conference, Projects & Event costs (£52,000)

We had a surplus of £25,000 left over due to extra donations relating to the COVID commission and extra income from the conference.

The Trustees have a policy on what reserves or savings Learning Disability England has and check that regularly.



The policy says that LDE will have six months' running costs in savings to manage big changes or unexpected problems.

LDE ended the year with £231,000 unrestricted reserves.
The accounts were agreed by the meeting



4. Report from the Representative Body

Paula introduced the report by giving an example of how the Representative Body works and who they are.

The Rep Body is a group twelve people elected by members to:

- Make sure Learning Disability England works on the things that are most
- important to members
- Connect to members and feedback

Representatives come from all three voice groups:

- People with a learning disability and self-advocacy groups
- Family and friends, and family/carer groups
- Paid supporters

What they did to help make Learning Disability England stronger and member led:

- Shaped the campaigns and policy work Learning Disability England does
- Were part of interviewing for new staff
- Worked with the Trustees to choose new Trustees
- Help organise the big events like the conference



Angela explained about some of the work that the Representative Body had done in 2024 – 2025. There are more things than are listed below, but this is a selection of what some of things we have been doing;

- Meeting Stephen Kinnock – Social Care Minister several times
- Sharing members' priorities civil servants
- Representing members on the Down Syndrome Act Advisory Group
- Attending the launch of the NHS Change consultation
- Linking with Shared Lives Carers
- Sharing information with family networks



5. Appointment of Auditors

Sarah asked if members support keeping the same auditors.

It was agreed to keep Polkadot and Ellis as independent examiner of the accountants.

6. Appointment of Bankers



Sarah explained that Learning Disability England's current account is with Cater Allen. The trustees check that the bank we use is in line with our values and that we get some money in terms of interest.

We also have a savings account with the Charity Aid Foundation and Charity Bank.

It was proposed that we continue using these bank accounts and this was agreed by the meeting.





7. Appointment of Officers

Jodie made the following announcements;

Sarah Maguire is standing down as Co-chair from January 2025. Lisa will be the now Co-chair beside Jodie.

Debbie Neil stood down as a Trustee in October 2024.

Jan Walmley stood down in October 2025 and has been replaced by Chris Maxstead.

They were thanked for their hard work.

The Rep Body chose new 3 new Trustees to join the board last year.

The following people were welcomed by Jodie;

Jordan Smith
Kristiina Cooper
Parmi Dheensa

8. Future Plans



Gary & Rachael spoke about Learning Disability England's Big Plan 2024 – 2029

Rights based approaches are well used

Some examples of what we will do to make a difference:

- Update and share the housing guide on choices and rights
- Embedding rights-based approaches into our responses to government policy change
- Finding opportunities for members to engage in Casey Commission on Social Care

The way that people and society think and feel about people with a learning disability has changed for the better.



- Developing and improving engagement with members and partners who are currently underrepresented in our work.
- Involving people in a commissioning project with Turning Point
- Members coming together to discuss new national policies

People with learning disabilities of all ages and their families are living Good Lives.

- Continue to build a movement and collect examples of action and impact
- Help members use Good Lives to campaign with policy makers and politicians
- Gathering evidence and bringing together organisations to coproduce a transport chapter
- Build our evidence base through the Good Lives Action collection
- Demonstrate the impact we can make when we connect

Learning Disability England is a creative and strong organisation that is trusted by its members and partners to make change

- Creating accessible information to show our policy positions
- Conferences in 2026 to bring members together
- Keeping a strong and growing membership

9. Any other business

Jodie asked if there was any other business.

Jodie mentioned that Learning Disability England was nominated for an award at Inclusion Norths Gala dinner celebrating 25 years. Sam and Jodie attended and accepted a certificate.





Sam picked up a question from the chat “is there a formal process to engage with Learning Disability England if you are working on projects around Good Lives?”

Rachael answered telling people to email in so we can find the best way to promote them.

Rebecca from SeeAbility promotes everyone with a Learning Disability to get their eyes tested. She is going to try and sign up as an Individual Member of Learning Disability England.

Sean said that he would like to be a Learning Disability England Rep again. Reiterated the importance of co-production.

Vicky and Russell congratulated Learning Disability England on our award. Asked how they go about booking for the Birmingham conference. Sam confirmed they will be sent an email with the link.

Mathew also congratulated us on the award. A lot of work will be taking place around benefits and well fair. There will be many webinars offered. Wants to set up policies, etc for the benefit changes next year.

Meeting Closing



Jodie thanked everyone for being a member and all the help and support over the last year. Hopes to see everyone at the online and/or in person conference.

Sam closed the meeting by thanking everyone for joining.