



MotherBoard

Terms of Reference

Version	6.0
Date	May 2026
Approved by	APF Executive Team
Review date	May 2027 (or earlier if required)
Supersedes	Version 5.0 — March 2022

These Terms of Reference (ToR) set out the working arrangements between the MotherBoard (MB) and the Active Pregnancy Foundation (APF). They cover the purpose, scope, responsibilities, membership, code of conduct, and operational arrangements of the board.

This document should be read alongside the MotherBoard Role Description (May 2026), which provides fuller guidance on the day-to-day experience of being a member.

1. Purpose

The MotherBoard is the PPIE unit of the Active Pregnancy Foundation. It comprises two groups with relevant expertise. One is a group of people with lived experience (we refer to this as the MotherBoard or MB), and the other is a group with professional knowledge and experience we refer to this as the MotherBoard – Pro or MBP). These ToR relate to the lived experience Mother Board. The purpose of the MB is to ensure that the voices, insights, and experiences of pregnant and postnatal women — and those who have been pregnant — are embedded at the heart of APF's work.

Members are active partners in shaping APF's work, not consultees or audiences. The MB is invited to provide insight, feedback, and challenge across APF's projects, campaigns, resources, and evidence work — from early-stage development through to review of final outputs.

During the Sport England investment period (2025–27), the MB has a particular role in contributing to APF's four programme goals:

- Developing a diverse, high-quality image library that better represents women in all their diversity and across a variety of physical activities
- Updating existing resources (such as our 'Find Your Active' guides) to be more inclusive and relevant
- Launching a national health messaging campaign
- Developing a new digital tool to support women to access local physical activity opportunities

The MB also contributes to APF's monitoring, evaluation and learning programme, helping to ensure that evaluation questions, methods and findings reflect the realities of the communities APF serves.

2. Accountabilities

The MB is an external advisory board. It reports to the APF Executive Team via the Head of Insights & Impact (Dr Lou Atkinson), who holds the day-to-day relationship with the board.

Members of the MB are not employed by APF. Advice and feedback provided by members is non-binding. APF will always aim to explain how member input has been used and, where a suggestion has not been acted on, to explain why.

The MB does not hold governance responsibilities. These sit with APF's Board of Trustees and Scientific Advisory Board (SAB). Where MB input is relevant to decisions taken at SAB or Trustee level, the Head of Insights & Impact will ensure it is surfaced.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 All members

All MB members are expected to:

- Provide honest, constructive feedback on APF's projects, resources, campaigns, and research outputs
- Attend at least two ordinary MB meetings per year (approximately 90 minutes each, held via Zoom)
- Review materials and respond to requests for input between meetings where reasonable and practical
- Promote the vision and values of APF within their own networks, where they feel comfortable doing so
- Declare any conflicts of interest promptly and in accordance with Section 7 of these ToR
- Maintain the confidentiality of MB discussions in accordance with Section 8 of these ToR
- Adhere to the Member Code of Conduct (Section 6)

Members may also be invited to:

- Join sub-committees or working groups (e.g. a campaign feedback panel or resource review group) — always optional and agreed in advance
- Participate in focus groups or insight sessions feeding into APF's evaluation programme
- Contribute to publications, briefings, or reports — with consent and appropriate acknowledgement

3.2 Chair

In addition to the responsibilities above, the Chair holds the following duties:

- Lead and facilitate meetings, ensuring all members have the opportunity to contribute
- Manage conflicts of interest as they arise
- Act as a point of contact between the MB and the APF Executive Team
- Sign off meeting minutes before circulation
- Support the Secretariat in ensuring the board runs effectively

The Chair for this group is Dr Lou Atkinson, Head of Insights & Impact. If the Chair is unable to attend a meeting, the meeting will be chaired by another member of the APF Executive Team, agreed in advance.

Dr Lou Atkinson (Head of Insights & Impact, consultancy basis) holds the day-to-day relationship with the MB and is responsible for:

- Coordinating the MB's contribution to APF's monitoring, evaluation and learning programme
- Ensuring that MB insight is used to inform evaluation questions, methods and interpretation of findings
- Reporting MB input into Sport England's Story of Change reporting and other funder reporting
- Acting as a named point of contact for members between meetings
- Reporting to the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) on the MB's contributions and emerging insights

3.4 Secretariat

The Secretariat is responsible for:

- Compiling and distributing the meeting agenda and accompanying papers at least one working week in advance of each meeting
- Taking minutes at each meeting on a non-attributable basis, except where the views of individuals need to be recorded
- Circulating draft minutes to the Chair for approval within one week of the meeting
- Distributing approved minutes to all attendees within two weeks of the meeting
- Providing members with at least six weeks' notice of upcoming meeting dates

The Secretariat role is to be confirmed. APF welcomes expressions of interest from MB members who may wish to take on this role.

4. Membership

4.1 Eligibility

Membership is open to anyone who is planning a pregnancy, is currently pregnant, or has been pregnant (including pregnancy loss, termination, or birth at any gestation) or given birth within six months of appointment to the MB. There is no professional qualification required.

APF particularly welcomes applications from:

- Women from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities
- Women with disabilities or long-term health conditions
- Women who have experienced pregnancy complications, high-risk pregnancy, or pregnancy and infant loss
- Women who have experienced mental health challenges during or after pregnancy
- Women from lower-income households or who have experienced socioeconomic disadvantage
- Women who are, or have been, physically inactive during or after pregnancy

4.2 Appointment

Members are invited to join the MB following an application process. Acceptance will be confirmed in writing by the Chair. New members may be appointed on an ongoing basis, with consideration given to continuity, fresh perspectives, and the diversity of the group.

The maximum number of members at any one time is 25, excluding the Chair and Secretariat. Membership is currently open to UK-based individuals only.

4.3 Term

Members are invited to serve a minimum term of two years, aligned with APF's current Sport England investment period (2025–27). Membership may be extended by mutual agreement.

Membership will be reviewed annually by the APF Executive Team, in consultation with the Chair.

4.4 Stepping down

Members may step down from the MB at any time by notifying the Chair in writing (letter or email). APF may also end a membership at any time where a member is in breach of the Code of Conduct or where their continued membership would not be in the best interests of the board or APF.

5. Remuneration and Expenses

APF recognises that lived experience expertise has real value. The current position is:

- Payment for members' time will be no less than £25 per hour, paid as a digital voucher for use at a large online retailer.
- Where members are asked to attend an in-person meeting, all reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred in doing so will be reimbursed promptly (including travel, childcare, and accessibility costs)
- Where expenses reimbursement or payment are not practical for you (for example, if they would affect welfare benefits), APF can discuss alternative forms of recognition
- Members may also be offered free or discounted products through APF's partners

Important: Any payment for involvement — including expense reimbursements in some circumstances — may be considered income by HMRC and may need to be declared for tax purposes. It may also affect welfare benefit entitlements. APF will provide clear information about this before any payments are made and can signpost members to free, confidential advice if needed.

6. Member Code of Conduct

Members of the MB are expected to provide feedback honestly, openly, and fairly. The following principles apply to all members and to all MB activities, including meetings, sub-committee work, and communications.

Be kind and courteous
Treat everyone with respect. There is no judgement here, and kindness is expected in all interactions.

Respect privacy
Being a board member requires mutual trust. Discussions may be sensitive — treat all personal information shared with care and discretion.

No promotions
The MB is not a place to promote personal businesses or services, even where those services support pregnant or postnatal women.

No hate speech or bullying
Bullying of any kind is not acceptable. Degrading comments about race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender, or identity will not be tolerated.

No medical advice
Neither APF staff nor MB members should provide medical advice. APF can signpost members and others to appropriate support.

Share your experience — at your own pace
You are always welcome to share relevant experiences, but never feel obliged to share more than you are comfortable with.

Celebrate your role
Please share your MB membership with others — it is something to be proud of.

Acknowledge limitations
The MB advises; it does not govern or make binding decisions. Members should be clear about this distinction in any external communications about their role.

7. Conflicts of Interest

Members must not participate in any discussion or decision in which they have a personal or professional conflict of interest that would compromise their ability to act in the best interests of APF and the communities it serves.

Any potential conflict of interest must be raised with the Chair as soon as it becomes apparent, and recorded in the meeting minutes. Where a conflict is identified, the relevant member will be asked to withdraw from the discussion or decision in question.

A conflict register will be maintained by the Secretariat and reviewed annually.

8. Confidentiality

Members must respect the confidential nature of MB meetings and communications. This includes:

- Not sharing unpublished documents, draft materials, or meeting discussions outside the MB without APF's consent
- Not attributing specific comments or views to named individuals in any external communications
- Treating personal information shared by other members with discretion and care

Meeting minutes are recorded on a non-attributable basis except where the views of specific individuals need to be captured. Members will be notified when attribution is intended.

Confidentiality obligations survive termination of membership.

9. Frequency, Timing and Commitment

Ordinary meetings	Minimum of twice per year, approximately 90 minutes each, held via Zoom
Notice of meetings	At least six weeks' notice of meeting dates; agenda and papers at least one week in advance
Quorum	A minimum of five members must be present for any ordinary or extraordinary meeting to proceed
Extraordinary meetings	May be convened at the request of a MB member, subject to agreement by the Chair
Sub-committees	May meet at other times as agreed in advance. Participation is always voluntary
Between meetings	Occasional email requests for input (e.g. reviewing a document or giving brief feedback). Never onerous or compulsory
Overall time commitment	Approximately 6–8 hours per year including meetings and between-meeting tasks
Term	Minimum two years (2025–27), renewable by mutual agreement

10. Induction and Ongoing Support

APF is committed to ensuring every member feels confident, informed, and valued in their role. All new members will receive:

- A welcome pack covering APF's mission, the current programme of work, Sport England's involvement, and how the MB fits in

- A one-to-one welcome conversation with the Head of Insights & Impact before their first meeting
- An e-learning induction module covering key background knowledge
- Pre-meeting briefing notes for every formal meeting, sent at least one week in advance

Throughout their membership, members will receive:

- A named APF contact as first point of call for questions or concerns
- Regular updates on how the MB's input has shaped APF's work, closing the feedback loop after each meeting and major contribution
- An annual check-in on how the role is working for them and whether anything needs to change
- Reasonable adjustments to enable full participation, agreed on an individual basis

11. Reporting

The Head of Insights & Impact will report on the MB's contributions to:

- APF's Sport England Story of Change reporting (six-monthly)
- The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB)
- The APF Executive Team and Board of Trustees, as relevant

APF will produce a brief summary of key themes and learning from each MB meeting, shared with members within two weeks. This summary will capture how the board's input is influencing APF's work and what actions have been agreed as a result.

Where MB input contributes to publications, briefings, or external reports, members will be acknowledged appropriately and with their consent.

12. Review of These Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed:

- Every two years as a minimum (next review: May 2027)
- At any point where significant changes to APF's programme, funding, or governance require the ToR to be updated

Any proposed amendments will be shared with MB members for comment before being finalised. The version history will be maintained as a record of changes and the reasons for them.

13. Contacts

General enquiries	motherboard@activepregnancyfoundation.org
Chair	Dr Lou Atkinson, Head of Insights & Impact lou.atkinson@activepregnancyfoundation.org
Co-CEOs & Co-Founders	Dr Marlice De Vivo marlice.devivo@activepregnancyfoundation.org Sally Kettle sally.kettle@activepregnancyfoundation.org