Learning
Belonging
Doing

# Governance at Likewise

## A Human, Living Practice

Honest
Optimistic
Playful
Authentic
Supportive

# Governance at Likewise

## A Human, Living Practice

Governance is how we work together, learn together and move toward our purpose. It's not just about systems — it's about people, relationships, values and collective intelligence.



# Contents

**4 Governance At A Glance**

**6 Governance In Depth**
6 Likewise And Governance
7 In Our Work At Likewise We Are....
8 Pillars Of The Likewise Approach
9 How Are We Approaching The Process Of Governance At Likewise?
10 Certainty, Uncertainty And Ambiguity
11 Individual And Group / Learning Together
12 Power, Decision Making And Accountability
14 Decision Making
17 Organistional Policies

**18 Appendices**
18 Appendix 1: The Leads Role
21 Appendix 2: Trustee Board
24 Appendix 3: Consent Based Decion Making Process

# Governance At A Glance

## FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

**Purpose is our North Star**
Governance helps us align our actions with purpose, not hierarchy.

**Relationships First**
Connection, honesty and trust come before structures and systems.

**Power is Shared**
We approach leadership as collaborative and responsive to context.

**Learning is Central**
Mistakes are part of the journey – we learn, adapt, evolve.



## WHO WE ARE IN THE WORK

**Honest –** Straightforward, kind and curious.

**Optimistic –** We trust, try, and learn from challenge.

**Playful –** We take the work seriously, not ourselves.

**Authentic –** Inclusive, open, and human.

**Supportive –** We energise and care for each other.

**Open –** We surface what matters, even when it's messy.

## PILLARS OF OUR APPROACH

**Learning**
We're all co-learners. Curiosity and humility are key.

**Belonging**
People feel valued as they are.

**Doing**
Everyone contributes. People are active participants.



## DECISION MAKING AT LIKEWISE

**"Change the lightbulb" –** If it needs doing, and it helps, do it.

Use **collective intelligence**

Seek **input, expertise, empathy**

Ask: Is *it good enough for now, and safe enough to try?*

We often use **consent-based decision making:** "No objection" ≠ "My favourite choice" — It means we can move forward together.

## POWER, RESPONSIBILITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

We value:

- **Mutual accountability –** to purpose, values, and each other.
- **Adult-to-adult dynamics –** not parent-child.
- **Clarity with humanity –** policies that support trust, not control.

We use frameworks like R-A-C-I to define roles and keep things flowing:

**Responsible Accountable Consulted Informed**

## GOVERNANCE IS A PRACTICE

We make space for:

- Uncertainty and ambiguity
- Constant feedback and adjustment ("dynamic steering")
- Honest conversations about tension and change

## WHAT MAKES GOVERNANCE WORK AT LIKEWISE?

- We begin and end meetings by connecting as humans.
- We welcome discomfort in service of growth.
- We lift the lid, not sweep things under the rug.
- We trust, reflect, and see the *whole* together.



## GOVERNANCE AT LIKEWISE IS NOT ABOUT CONTROL

**It's about culture, care, and our shared sense of purpose.**

# Governance In Depth

## LIKEWISE AND GOVERNANCE

Governance can be seen as the process that supports us to navigate our collective endeavour and work towards Likewise purpose. Governance is how we operate together, and includes culture, systems, processes, and decision making, as well as how we approach power and accountability.

The organisation Practical Governance says "We believe good governance is about the right people, with the right attitudes, working to the right strategy, who share good quality information and are supported by the right systems and structures to deliver their best". They also talk about focussing first on people and purpose before systems and processes.

Governance at Likewise is informed by who we are as people in the work we do and the values we bring to that.



## IN OUR WORK AT LIKEWISE WE ARE...

Here are qualities and ways of being that we support in each other to make our work at Likewise as human as possible:

**Honest**
It's important that we are straightforward, honest and curious together. We talk with each other not about each other.

**Optimistic**
We see opportunity in challenge, trust each other and know that we will learn from our mistakes.

**Playful**
We take our work seriously, but we don't take ourselves too seriously. Lightness, humour and humanity mean we enjoy our work and stay grounded.




**Authentic**
We bring our humanity to work, try to be open and truly see each other beyond our roles, professional identity or labels. We're inclusive, accepting of difference and do our best to listen with presence and communicate in straightforward ways.

**Supportive**
We know that we impact each other and seek to create an environment that energises. We're conscious that maintaining energy requires good self-care and regenerative practices as part of our culture.

**Open**
We don't bury thoughts and feelings about each other or our work. We seek to be non-judgemental and accepting of ourselves and each other, listening and responding in service of an open culture. We love supporting each other's enquiries, helping to dig deeper, see and understand more.

## PILLARS OF THE LIKEWISE APPROACH

We keep coming back to these pillars to keep us grounded and orientated in the work we do

**Learning**
Learning summarises our entire approach to the work. We believe everyone – staff and clients alike – are engaged in a constant process of learning.

The learning frame of mind is an open one – for staff, it means we are always open to our clients and community members rather than fitting them into our pre–conceived notions. It also means we can be open about mistakes – a learner is not tied to the expectation of expertise, and is more inclined to accept and build on their mistakes rather than hide or dismiss them

Learning

**Belonging**
At Likewise, we aim to create a real sense of belonging: people feeling genuinely valued as they are so that they can better and more sustainably engage with learning, discovery, and opportunity.

We practice acceptance of ourselves and others, making space for difference, noticing when we are judging or excluding.

Belonging

**Doing**
Doing refers to the active role our clients and community members play – not as passive recipients, but as doers themselves. We recognise our community and clients for what they can do rather than framing them by their problems.

This doing is vital for change – we only learn and discover our capacity to feel and act differently through doing.

Doing

## HOW ARE WE APPROACHING THE PROCESS OF GOVERNANCE AT LIKEWISE?

We know we want to do governance in a way that puts learning, relationship and being human at the heart of things; we know we want this to be about approaching power and participation in ways that support decision making to happen in the most useful place.

We know we want collaborative leadership and trusting relationships where people are safe to be themselves. We know we want people to feel their interconnected place across the organisation, experiencing and drawing on each other's resources.

We think about power and participation a lot in our client work, and it's the same dynamics that we want to attend to in our organisation. The following are some areas for evolution and experimentation at Likewise, just as they are part of the systemic change we want to see in social care and systems of support:

- Paying attention to how power works when people have professional identities, roles or labels. Bringing awareness to positional power and how it's used.
- How a sense of ownership, decision making and leadership can become concentrated in one person or small group. How to notice and attend to this.
- The possibility for a loss of humanity when the focus is on task, outcomes, and professional identities. The lack of permission to bring your whole self to a situation.
- How linear 'top down' approaches lack the dynamism to respond to the complex reality of human systems and people's lives within them.

**Here are some principles that inform our approach to governance, strategy and decision making**

At Likewise we see developing strategy (our roadmap) as an organic process of listening and responding to organisational purpose. Ideally 'purpose' is our north star rather than one person or group asserting positional power to dictate direction. This requires a sense of ownership through the organisation, and tuning to collective intelligence (the combined capacity and capability that grows out of a group, an intelligence that cannot exist on an individual level).

1. Strategy is an organic process. It's about a process of listening to organisational purpose and responding. This requires collective intelligence and reflection.
2. Purpose is our north star – rather than one individual. The organisation has its own creative impulse.
3. The organisation evolves in response to collective intelligence.
4. We pay attention to where the energy is in the organisation (and where it wants to go) – what works gathers momentum.
5. An organisation based on sense and respond as opposed to command and control can evolve and move with changes to the environment.
6. Dynamic steering means constant adjustment in light of feedback, which makes for a more organic and emergent path. We try to face reality and adapt.



## CERTAINTY, UNCERTAINTY AND AMBIGUITY

At the heart of all our relationships is to view each other as co-learners. The intention is to meet each other with curiosity, learning through discovery and doing together. This approach is supported by:

- Cheering each other on and sharing kindness
- Coming together to solve or meet challenges
- Seeing mistakes as an inevitable part of being human, and opportunities for learning
- Building on the strengths of the organisation
- Building on each other's contributions

One of the challenges of holding the useful uncertainty of a learner is the pull towards certainty, structure, and control, and whether we can hold our nerve together. Can we tolerate ambiguity within ourselves, between each other and in the organisation?

Arnie Mindell, founder of Processwork says "New order can always be discovered in chaos if we have the tolerance and patience to follow instead of programming nature – if we learn to live with the moving ground instead of pressing for solutions"

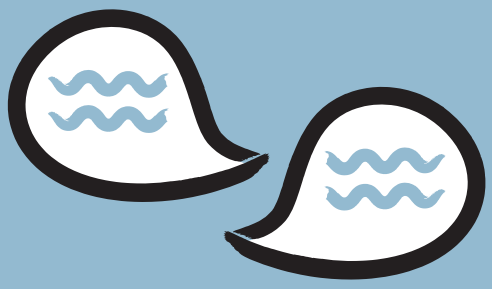
Part of our enquiry is how roles that traditionally have a degree of structural and positional power can work in a way that doesn't "press for solutions" but supports what wants to emerge in the organisation. It requires a sense of community trust and collective intelligence, and that can only come from a commitment to shared engagement.

What has helped is putting the emphasis on building relationships first, allowing as much transparency as possible, and a commitment to helping each other 'see the whole'.

**Some organisational practices that support our relational approach to governance**



We start each meeting by reflecting on and including the feelings and emotions in the room.



We have explicit agreements to have an open culture, naming things that might usually be avoided for fear of getting uncomfortable.



We end meetings by reflecting on how we related to and impacted each other during the meeting.

## INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

A challenge for all of us is to grapple with finding our own voice and personality – our difference within the cultural norms of the organisation and our permission to add to culture, challenge assumed norms and shine a light on what the organisation might not be seeing. While also seeing that individually we are part of a whole that exists beyond us.

## LEARNING TOGETHER

There is much to grapple with, learn and discover. It's also true that learning together rather than 'being the expert' takes time.

We're always learning about the tension in upholding responsibility and sharing power, between knowing and not-knowing, between order and chaos. In our work with clients we're great at being willing to navigate grey area, tolerating ambiguity and working with complexity.

As much as possible we want to bring that carefully refined work into the organisational life. Our commitment to ways of working alongside clients is kept alive and dynamic by making and renewing that commitment in all the relationships across the organisation.

## POWER, DECISION MAKING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

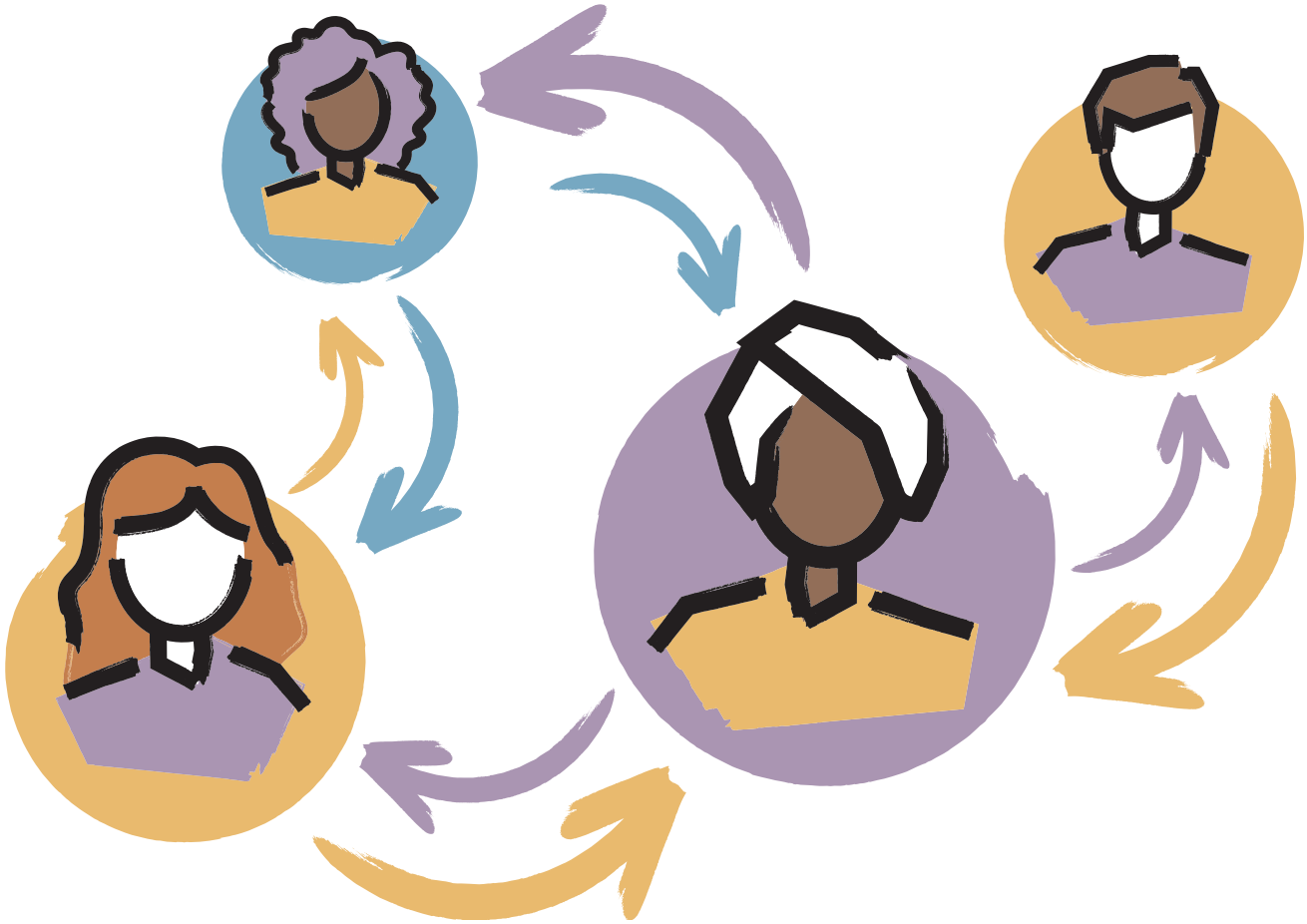
**Mutuality**
We orientate to each other as co-learners in a mutual relationship, collaborating on a shared endeavour. In part this means an adult-to-adult relationship, avoiding the pitfalls of dependent, transactional, compliance based approaches more akin to a parent-child dynamic that can arise with traditional forms of line management.

**Accountability**
Accountability is mutual. We are accountable to our values, ethics, and sense of shared purpose, as well as to each other. We're committed to reflecting on our roles, attitudes, and world views and considering how they might be contributing to the wider purpose.

Mutual accountability is supported by:

- Having a positive mistakes culture where risk and failure are seen as opportunities for learning together.
- Having an open culture that normalises both support and challenge. We endeavour to keep everything "above ground".
- Prioritising relationship and being human together.

| Directive, compliance based akin to "Parent-Child Dynamic" | | Adult-Adult Dynamic |
|---|---|---|
| Manager makes decisions. Team members follow instructions. | **Decisions** | Decisions are collaborative. Employees make decisions within their roles. |
| Limited autonomy. Employees are dependent on their manager. | **Autonomy** | High autonomy. Employees are trusted to work independently. |
| One-sided | **Respect** | Mutual |
| Shameful failures | **Mistakes** | Learning opportunities |
| Mostly top down | **Communication** | Open and two way |
| Based on position | **Authority** | Shared or based on context |



**Power**
Power shows up in different ways in the organisation, whether that's through roles that have structural power or ultimate veto, different levels of professional experience, length of time in the organisation or different life experiences.

We work to share power and promote voice and participation across the organisation. We look for each other's strengths and resources and seek to amplify them. By maintaining open, trusting relationships we want to keep having healthy dialogue so that leadership is collaborative.

We seek to acknowledge the different types of hierarchies that exist intentionally, and emerge at work and between human beings, and try to use these consciously, carefully and in service of the purpose of the organisation. We want to cultivate and make use of healthy power. Responding to need, context and purpose there may be times when role based structural power is required for decision making or other forms of intervention in service of the organisation, team and purpose.

**Tension Points**
A tension point is when someone is aware of, or experiencing, a gap between our current reality and the potential of the organisation or team.

Everyone, including trustees, can raise a tension that they see or sense in the organisation, or a decision that they think is required.

Tension points hold creative possibility. If trustees spot a problem their agreement is that they feed it back into the system and participate in the inquiry if they want to/it's appropriate, rather than try to solve it on the board.

## DECISION MAKING

**Doing and deciding in the work**
It's important that people working with clients feel they have the power, autonomy, trust and support to make decisions in the work. Being adaptive, responsive "humans alongside humans" in our client and community work requires structural flexibility.

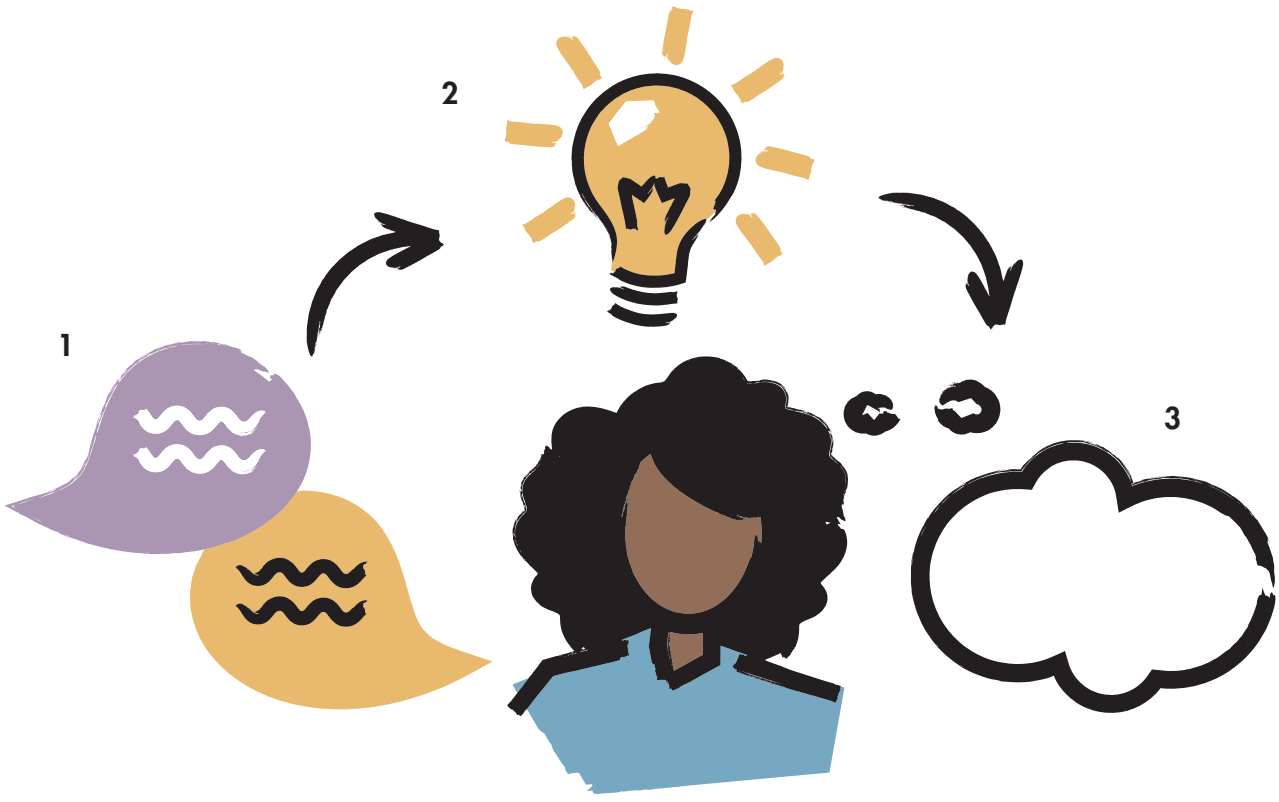
Responding to people humanely and in their wholeness requires diversity and adaptation – acceptance and doing look continually different as people themselves change and diversify. People working with clients are given the autonomy, freedom, and responsibility to act based on who their clients are at any particular time and in ever-changing contexts. A supporting concept is 'change the lightbulb' – a phrase used to encourage the common-sense approach to getting things done that need doing, something that stands in contrast to traditional service approaches of having particular remits or areas to focus on.

**Approach to Decision Making**
Generally speaking, decision making has three components:

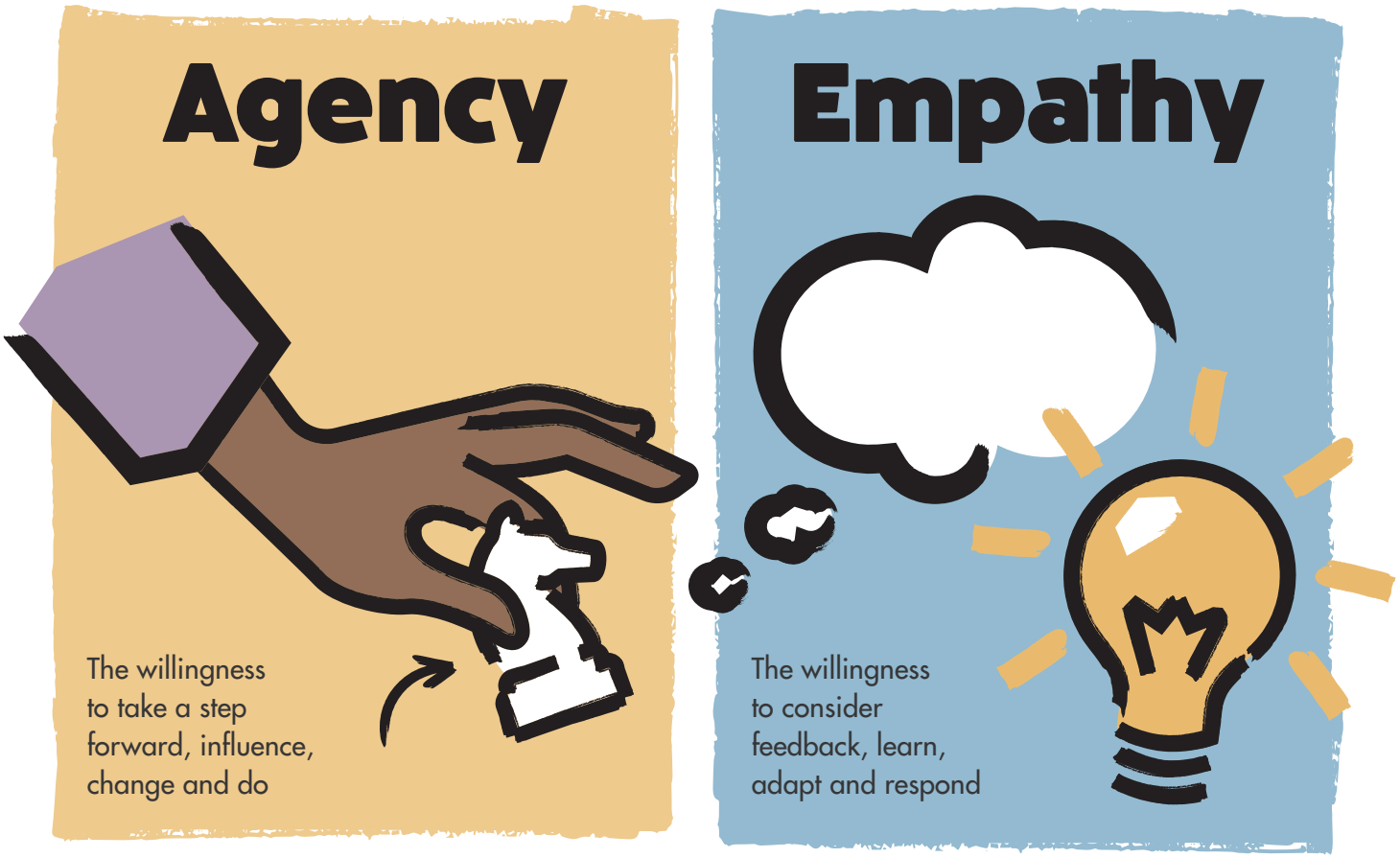
1. Seek input from others
2. Draw on specific expertise and experience if available
3. Consider those impacted

We can ask ourselves the following questions about a decision:

- Will it be better than before? (long term)
- Can we explain it to everyone? (transparency)
- Has everyone who'll be affected by the decision and who has relevant, important knowledge been involved or consulted? (seek advice)
- If we put ourselves in the shoes of those who'll be impacted, would we make the same decision?



At the Transition Network they talk about two useful capabilities when it comes to action and decision making. These are:




Using agency and empathy supports us to take decisions, experiment, notice tensions and keep adjusting.

When a decision is taken that you may not agree with or would have chosen differently there is always a choice point. Do I challenge, is it helpful to add my voice, do I need to object, can I live with it not being perfect from my perspective?

The responsibility for some decisions is held by certain designated roles or groups.In particular this relates to the responsibility of Trustees and Directors in financial risk, budget setting, governance, contracts of employment and staff pay, terms and conditions.

Sometimes, deciding who needs to be accountable or responsible for a decision will require common sense, emotional/social intelligence and developing the ability to navigate organisational life and relationships.

Generally speaking, it is better to ask forgiveness than ask permission. We follow the principle of "change the lightbulb" to support the right decisions happening in the right place at the right time.

Where organisational common agreement is needed, something impacts the whole or collective intelligence would really serve, we can use "consent based" decision making.

**Consent Based Decision Making**
Consent is not the same as consensus or democratic voting. It's about finding a way forward that is good enough for now, and safe enough to try.

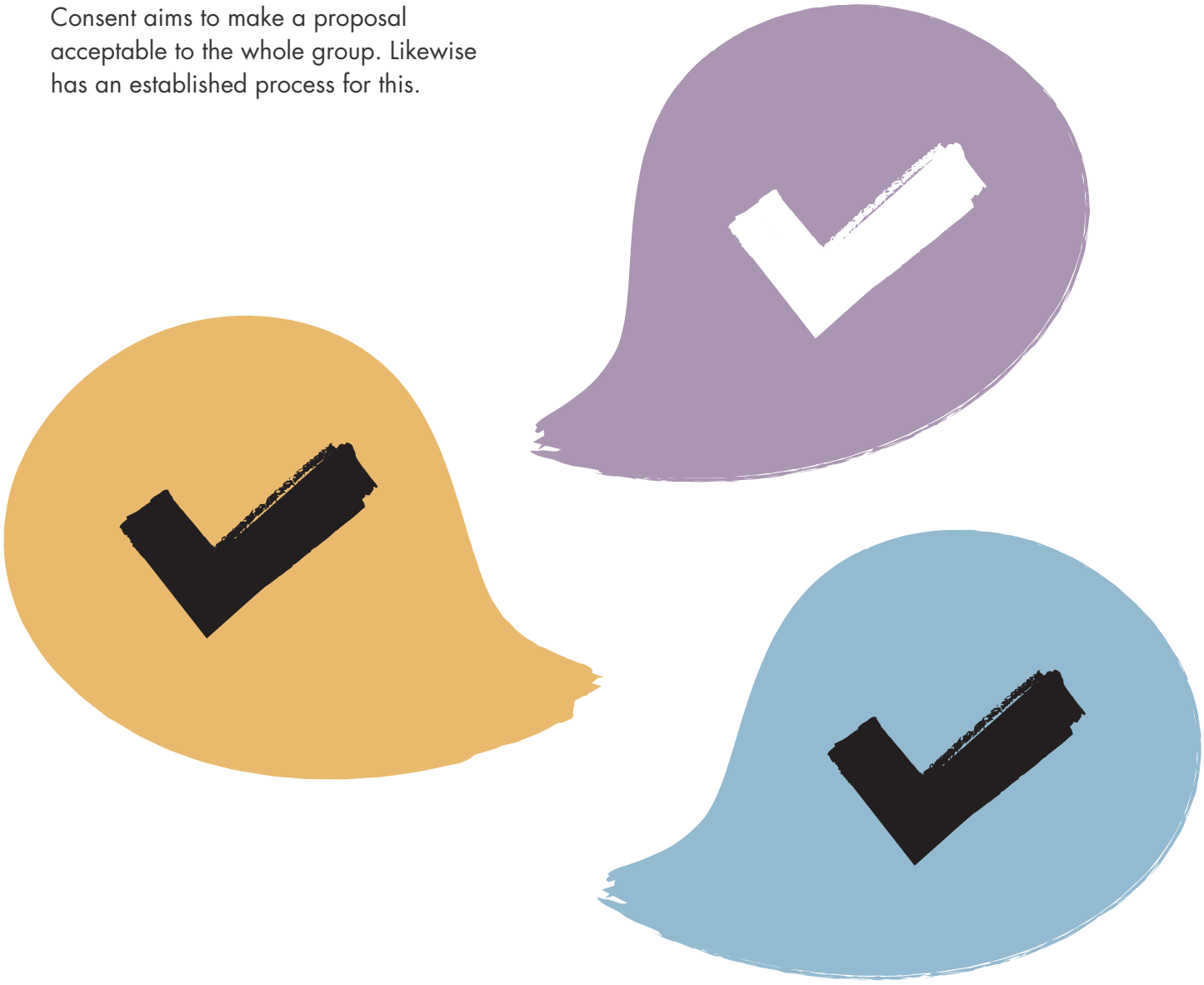
In this context, consent is defined as "no objection". We're asked to act for the good of Likewise (aligned with purpose, values, beneficiary stakeholders) and consider our range of tolerances when responding to a group proposal. Something may not meet my personal preference, but do I agree that it is for the good of Likewise's endeavour in the world, and is safe enough to try?

Consent aims to make a proposal acceptable to the whole group. Likewise has an established process for this.

**Pop-Up-Groups / Working Groups**
Working groups or "Pop-Up" working groups can be convened to work with or develop a particular agenda in service of the purpose of the organisation.

Depending on the business of the group, these can come back with recommendations to "whole team" spaces for collective buy-in, influence or consent decision making.

When setting up a working group it I important to establish the scope/remit or the "what's it for".



Where working groups or projects are formed on behalf of the organisation, then we want to use a RACI framework for keeping things on track.

Here, for each project we need to define who is Responsible and Accountable, who needs to be Consulted and who needs to be Informed.

- Who is Responsible? (The person or people responsible for doing the work, making sure things go smoothly and stuff gets done)
- Who is Accountable? (The sponsors of the project, the person or people accountable for oversight, who need to know if things are on track, who have ultimate power of veto, who provide feedback when asked etc)
- Who needs to be Consulted?
- Who needs to be kept Informed?

## ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES

At Likewise we want to base as much as possible on trust. We trust each other, we have trust in everyone's intrinsic motivation, trust in mutual accountability and each other's humanity. We also want to build as much space as possible for being human beings responding to human beings.

We want to remove 'chain of command' thinking and support everyone's ability to 'change the light bulb' when its needed.

We want our policies to be a healthy psychological contract, an articulation of our culture and an opportunity to support a sense of safety and belonging at Likewise.

Our organisational protocols should be known, transparent and accessible. Ideally our policies provide the scaffold for guiding our thinking and decision-making on a day-to-day basis. They might be a combination of very clear "dos and don't" and looser guidance (e.g. what to think about/ consider when we encounter this or that situation).

We're also mindful that policies can begin to take the humanity out of a workplace, removing flexibility, adaptability and the ability to respond to a situation, and missing the reality of complexity in the organisation and the work we do. This is what we want to avoid in our work together at Likewise.

# Appendix 1
# The Leads Role

People at Likewise are expected to be self-managing, rather than having a manager who manages their experience, their work, their contribution, their wellbeing. And, Leads have a responsibility to support and steward the conditions in their teams (and the organisation) for good experience, good work, good contribution and good wellbeing.

Leads and people in their teams will be accountable for certain outputs and outcomes they need to bring about.

Everyone at Likewise is expected to be a leader, contributing to a dynamic, alive values driven culture. And Leads play a key role in modelling and supporting this.

As a Leads circle we want to face challenges together, learning from things that go wrong, building on successes and cultivating healthy relationships.

The relationship between Leads and Directors is important for organisational stewarding. We want to work together in a way that is rooted in mutuality, saying what we mean and meaning what we say, championing each other, challenging each other, supporting the best in each other. We want to keep each other informed so that we have the best data for decision making.

## OVERVIEW OF LEADS ROLE:

Leads have a distinct role in shaping conditions that enable people to thrive, ensuring alignment with the organisation's values and objectives.

**1. Strategic Stewardship**

- Acting as a steward for the organisation and its direction by:
  - Supporting the development of Likewise's strategy and intentions.
  - Providing dynamic stewardship, responding to emerging issues and themes within the organisation and our community/stakeholders.

**2. Accountability and Progress**

- Holding accountability for the achievement and progress of Likewise's objectives.
- Responding proactively when progress falters and celebrating successes.
- Supporting mutual accountability across directors, leads, and the rest of the organisation through caring challenge and support.
- Responsible for the outputs and outcomes in your area/programme – this may be through individuals, teams, or sometimes larger groups/whole org.

**3. Problem Solving and Organisational Alignment**

- Collaborating to address problems both within specific work areas and organisationally.
- Acting as a conduit between the team and directors to share concerns and perspectives, and to diversify voices in decision-making.
- Ensuring effective communication and information flow between all-team spaces (e.g., BM) and other circles.

**4. Learning, Reflection, and Insights**
- Facilitating quarterly processes for learning and reflection on work areas, focusing on data and key themes arising from the work.
- Highlighting and tending to organisational blind spots and tension points.

**5. Stewarding Organisational Culture**
- Help set the frame for Likewise as a learning organisation, with reflective practice, curiosity, mutuality, kindness and cheering each other on at its heart.
- Encouraging the flow of important discussions to broader team spaces, fostering transparency and engagement.
- Supporting a culture of mutual accountability and dynamic problem-solving throughout the organisation.
- Modelling Likewise values and practice.
- Model an open culture with social/ emotional intelligence.

**6. People**
- Model a collaborative approach to leadership.
- Accountable for the learning, doing, belonging, wellbeing of people in your area/team.
- Stewarding culture and conditions for people in your team to do their best work.
- Responsible for ensuring people in your team have the information they need to do their roles
- Support voice and participation in the team.

## LEADERSHIP AND SELF-MANAGEMENT

At Likewise we are all learners and leaders. We are committed to our own learning, growth and development. We value being able to sit with the discomfort of being outside our comfort zone, engage in the diverse experiences of our work, and bring a learning attitude to everything we do.

We all need to be able to tap into our own leadership, take responsibility for finding the potential in ourselves and others, and have the courage, commitment and care to develop that potential.

We are all self-managing in that we are all trusted and autonomous. We uphold an adult-to-adult relationship where we believe in everyone's intrinsic motivation to do their best work and trust each other to manage themselves in the way that best serves the work we're doing.

Our organisational intention is to delegate as much decision making, leadership and autonomy to those that are responsible for tasks and functions. We want the right people trusted in making the right decisions with as much agility and responsiveness as possible. And we have an organisational structure where there are different levels of risk and accountability holding in different roles, and where some roles have a remit for decision making over areas of the organisation that others don't.

Responding to need, context and purpose there may be times when role based structural power is required for decision making or other forms of intervention when this is clearly in service of the organisation, team and purpose. In some areas final veto or lead decision making is used more regularly, such as budget setting, or allocating resource, employment contracts or governance structures.

## SUMMARY OF CORE PRINCIPLES:

**1. Self-Management:**
- Everyone is trusted and autonomous, responsible for managing their own roles, outputs, and contribution.
- Decision-making is delegated as much as possible to those closest to the task, ensuring agility and responsiveness.
- A learning mindset, personal growth, and navigating discomfort are central to the organisation's ethos.

**2. Leadership for All:**

- Every team member is a leader, contributing to a dynamic, values-driven culture.
- Leadership is rooted in collaboration, mutual support, and the courage to develop personal and collective potential.

**3. Role of Leads:**

- Leads focus on creating conditions for good experience, work, contribution, and wellbeing across their teams and the organisation.
- They model collaborative leadership, uphold Likewise values, and champion practices like reflection, curiosity, mutual support and caring challenge.
- Leads ensure teams have the information, support, and accountability needed to do their best work.

**4. Balancing Self-Management with Organisational Structure:**

- While self-management is emphasised, organisational roles include varying levels of risk and accountability.
- Some roles involve decision-making authority in specific areas, such as budget setting or governance, to safeguard organisational needs.
- Role-based power is used consciously and transparently, always in service of the organisation's purpose.

# Appendix 2
# Trustee Board

As a charity we need to have a trustee board, and as such they are an important part of our governance.

Our current board brings expertise and experience in communications, health and social care policy, strategic finance, as well as community asset development, urban regeneration, and mental health services. Our chair has a long history with co- production, community based mental health and roles within the Green Party.

Trustees hold the organisation to account as a critical friend. Trustees have the opportunity to provide a supportive but external perspective, highlighting areas that might be missing or where we could improve. This is done in the spirit of a community rather than a hierarchy.

We have four Board Meetings a year along with trustee involvement in working groups that arise for specific projects, challenges, or areas of focus. Board Meetings focus on:

- Finance, funding, and risk
- People and wellbeing, EDI
- Programmes, services, and partnerships
- Strategy, learning, adaptation, and dynamic steering
- Board and organisational dynamics
- Sharing, noticing, reflections and tension points

Board Meetings are attended by our two Directors and other representatives from the Likewise system, usually in the form of a "postcard".

There is an agreed delegation of authority from the Trustee Board to the Directors which should be reviewed periodically.

## BOARD PRINCIPLES

This board guidance has been developed through drawing on our own experience as well as using the 'Charity Governance Code' and 'Essential Trustee' as guiding principles.

We'd like to be a part of evolving how boards work in a way that best supports ways of being and working that are human and effective. So we'd like this board guidance to evolve over time, and eventually model new ways of doing things to the charity sector.

**Principle 1: Organisational Purpose**
It's important that the board is clear about Likewise's aims and does all it can to ensure that these are being delivered effectively, sustainably and in keeping with our values.

Trustees play an important part in nurturing and championing the essential purpose of Likewise. Everything we do needs to orientate to this purpose, and be embedded in our values, and the board act as stewards and guardians of this.

The board are ambassadors for the purpose, vision and values of Likewise.

**Principle 2: Leadership**
Together, the board and the co-directors, in collaboration with key staff, develop long term strategy for Likewise. Meeting agendas reflect the key points of the strategy to guide the organisation over time.

The board commit to an ongoing enquiry into what leadership means and the complexity of power

and its use. The board supports the evolution of leadership approaches most appropriate to the complex challenges of the current human context.

*Appoint, manage and support the Co-Directors*
The board creates policy covering the employment of the Co-Directors. It formally appoints and supports the Co-Directors, and ensures recruitment appropriately involves and includes the Likewise staff team and relevant stakeholders.

**Principle 3: Integrity and culture**
The board acts with integrity, adopting Likewise values and creating a culture which helps achieve the organisation's charitable purposes. The board is aware of the importance of the public's confidence and trust in charities, and trustees undertake their duties accordingly.

Our approach is based on the principles of acceptance and belonging, continual and active learning, genuine human relationships and practical support. We have a unique workplace culture that allows these principles to flourish.

Our organisational promise is to be person centred, emotionally intelligent, mutually accountable to each other and aware of our power. We can only do this if we are dedicated to being reflective, both in the moment, and through our organisational practices. The board works to integrate this way of being into their approach and the organisation as a whole, being co-guardians and cultivators of our organisational culture.

**Principle 4: Decision making, risk and oversight**
The board recognises and respects the domain of the staff responsibility. At the same time, it creates policies and controls to maintain oversight and to ensure wellbeing of the organisation and staff.

The board makes sure that its decision-making processes are informed, rigorous and timely, and that effective delegation, oversight and risk-assessment, and management systems are set up and monitored.

Trustees delegate authority but not ultimate responsibility, so the board needs to implement suitable financial and related controls and reporting arrangements to make sure it oversees these delegated matters. Trustees must also identify and assess risks and opportunities for the organisation and decide how best to deal with them, including assessing whether they are manageable or worth taking.

The trustee board co-creates the policies to govern the organisational activity. These cover:

- Guidance for staff
- Systems for reporting and monitoring
- Conduct of trustees and board business

*Maintain proper fiscal oversight*
The Board is responsible for effectively managing the organisation's resources so it can meet its charitable objects and:

- Monitors spending
- Approves the annual financial statements and budget
- Controls investments
- Seeks to understand and mitigate risk
- Participates in fundraising
- Ensures legal compliance

**Principle 5: Board effectiveness**
The board works as an effective team, using the appropriate balance of skills, experience, backgrounds and knowledge to make informed decisions.

The Board monitors its own performance. It takes steps to establish:

- Productive meetings
- High standards of Trustee conduct and role modelling of values
- Effective committees and adequate resources
- The appropriate levels of input, preparation and work outside of board meetings
- Development activities
- Recruitment and induction processes
- Regular reflections and review of board performance
- Diversity of thought and representation

**Principle 6: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**
The board values and actively promotes equity, diversity and inclusion to enhance its leadership, decision-making and accountability. We seek trustees with a broad range of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives, and aim to remove barriers to participation so all members can contribute fully.

**Principle 7: Openness and accountability**
The board leads the organisation in being transparent and accountable. The board should ensure that the organisation is accountable as required by law to bodies such as:

- The Charity Commission
- Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)
- Companies House

The board also needs to make certain that the organisation is accountable to its beneficiaries, staff, and the general public. This means publishing annual reports and accounts and communicating effectively.

Through its own behaviour, governance oversight and activities on behalf of the organisation the Board enhances and protects the reputation of the organisation, acting as ambassadors.

# Appendix 3
# Consent Based Decision Making Process

Consent is not the same as consensus or democratic voting. It's about finding a way forward that is good enough for now, and safe enough to try.

In this context, consent is defined as "no objection". We're asked to act for the good of Likewise (aligned with purpose, values, beneficiary stakeholders) and consider our range of tolerances when responding to a group proposal. Something may not meet my personal preference, but do I agree that it is for the good of Likewise's endeavour in the world, and is safe enough to try?

Consent aims to make a proposal acceptable to the whole group.

If someone holds an objection to the proposal, it is up to the group to work with the tension and attempt to resolve it. The Transition Network say "objections motivated by this desire to protect our joint endeavour are treated as a gift and the whole group looks for ways to resolve them."

When considering a proposal, discussion and sharing is done in rounds, giving everyone the opportunity to speak and be heard. When using this consent-based decision-making process we appoint a facilitator to guide the process. The facilitator will usually be someone who is not making the proposal.

A note keeper is also appointed to record any agreements, comments and concerns made during the process.

The facilitator asks the person holding the proposal to present it to the participants.

The facilitator asks the participants if there are any clarifying questions regarding the proposal. At this point no objections or suggestions on how to improve the proposal are voiced, but only specific questions are asked to understand the details of the proposal. The proposal presenter can answer the question posed by the participants, while the facilitator guides the question round.

Once all the clarifying questions have been addressed the facilitator asks whether this proposal as it stands is good and safe enough to try or whether there are any objections.

The participants then can choose one of three hand signs to voice their opinion: Thumbs up means "I agree on the proposal", a shaking hand means "I agree on the proposal but would like to voice a concern or suggestion" and a hand with the palm facing up means "I object to the proposal and have an idea to improve the proposal".

Concerns and suggestions can then heard.

When no objections are voiced by any participant, a decision has been reached and the facilitator asks the participants with a concern to express it. The concerns are documented by the note keeper in the logbook where the agreement is kept.

In case an objection is voiced the facilitator initiates another round to ask if any participant has an objection to the objection. In case there are objections to the objection the facilitator seeks to mediate in order to find a solution that includes all points of view. Once the participants have agreed on the objection to be relevant, the facilitator asks the person with the objection to suggest an amendment to improve the proposal.

If the person with the objection does not have an immediate improvement the amendment suggestions can be opened to the rest of the participants. The facilitator guides the discussion to reach a new proposal that the participants then can vote on again with the three signs: Thumbs up, shaking hand and a hand with a palm up. In case another objection is voiced the process is repeated until an agreement can be reached.

**Process**

1. A proposal is made and shared with enough information and context
2. A facilitator and note taker are nominated
3. Proposal is given
4. Clarifying round to ensure understanding
5. Hand signals invited ('safe/good enough to try', 'concern/suggestion', 'objection')
6. Concerns and suggestions are noted
7. Objections are heard, suggestions for incorporating the objection, amendments
8. Amended proposal or agreement

Likewise

www.likewise.org.uk | 020 7278 4437
Registered Charity in England and Wales (No.1109639)