



Academi Genedlaethol ar gyfer
Arweinyddiaeth Addysgol Cymru
National Academy for
Educational Leadership Wales

Minutes/Action Notes from Board Meeting 26th November 2021 via Zoom

In Attendance: Sue Davies (SD) (Chair)
Tegwen Ellis (TE) (Chief Executive)
Mike James (MJ)
Martin Price (MP)
Davina Payne (DP)
Paul Marshall (PM)
John Graystone (JG)
Rosemary Jones (RJ)
Kate Lewis (KL)
Michaela Renkes (WG)
Nia Miles (NM)
Gaynor Ace (GA) (Secretariat)

1. Welcome, confirmation of minutes and actions from previous meeting

SD opened the session and welcomed everyone to the final Board meeting of 2021. There were no apologies and no conflicts of interest.

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record. SD referred to the Action Log from the previous Board meeting and noted that most of the actions had now been completed.

With reference to ongoing actions:

- Actions 180 and 184 will be completed in the New Year as specified in the previous Board minutes.

2. Finance/HR Committee Report

MP provided a summary report on the last Finance/HR committee meeting held in early November.

The committee had been pleased to report that the health and well-being of staff was good at the moment and the organisation had gained a gold award for well-being (to be discussed under agenda item 6).

KL had run through the current budget at the meeting which was all proceeding to plan. KL and TE had reassured the committee that the current underspends would all be invested in projects and initiatives by the end of the year.

SD thanked MP for his report and the committee minutes were accepted by the Board.

3. Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Report

MJ presented the report from the Audit and Risk Assurance committee meeting also held earlier this month. This meeting focused on the reconstituted version of the risk register which had been deemed by all as a good intelligent approach to take. Jason Garcia of Audit Wales had found it very encouraging to see an organisation using judgement to evaluate risks rather than being more narrowly focused on risk colours.

A useful discussion had taken place on the nature and mitigation of risks. It had then been agreed to amend the Board Assurance Framework to reflect the revamped risk register.

MJ referred to Low Probability High Impact risks which are generally not planned for. A good example of these would be cyber security. It was agreed prudent to plan for a cyber breach even though this may never happen. A deep dive will be planned into this risk as soon as the Board Assurance Framework has been finalised. SD agreed this to be a sensible way forward.

JG suggested that it might be useful to flag when individual risks go up or down and also to consider the effects of mitigations.

MJ thanked JG for making these two points which will be taken on board. He added that some risks will always be around however and in these cases the organisation would need to examine its appetite for risk.

SD thanked MJ for his report and the Board was happy to approve the committee minutes.

4. Chief Executive Report against the Corporate Plan

TE began by pointing out that this report was aligned to the updated corporate plan and included the additional work streams.

The paper on well-being had been sent to the Minister at the end of October. A supportive response has now been received directing the Education Department at WG to work closely on this with the National Academy for Educational Leadership Wales. MR agreed that this fits in well with the much wider work being carried out on well-being but acknowledged that there was still a lot of work to be carried out here.

Para 1.1 Quality Assurance refers to providers being permitted to submit applications for endorsement on a more regular basis rather than the current system of twice a year. This more flexible approach should now be possible due to greater capacity to

hold selection panels and would better support innovation provision coming forward for endorsement . The National Academy for Educational Leadership is currently co constructing an event with providers which is planned for the New Year called the value of endorsement.

Para 1.2 Evaluation reports on the two successful series held on innovation are now complete. The organisation is now working with Apple and WG on the third series which is proving to be a very welcome approach with the sector.

MR pointed out that WG colleagues were not always aware of this work and also queried what exactly is meant by 'innovation'. TE agreed the importance of sharing this work as widely as possible but explained that project reports have not yet been finalised. WG will be informed of outcomes as soon as possible. TE also agreed that defining the meaning of the word 'innovation' could be challenging as this can mean different things to different audiences and in different contexts. MJ added to this discussion by emphasising that innovation is not the same as invention and could actually refer to an improvement of a current system rather than coming up with something totally new.

Para 1.3 System Leadership relates mainly to the work of the Associates. TE appreciated that Associates are currently going through a very tough time in their day jobs but praised their continued commitment to the organisation at these testing times.

Cohort 2 are currently working on their commission linking this with the WG 10 year strategy plan for Welsh in Education. Some headway is being made with the youth and post 16 sector and a meeting was held with Colegau Cymru this week to commission some work around strengthening and diversifying leadership and governance in the post-16 sector.

JG queried Colegau Cymru's response regarding Post 16 work. TE confirmed that . Colegau Cymru are keen to be involved and take the lead on this work.

Para 1.4 Leadership Development reported on the successful completion of the 5th series of Leadership Unlocked. TE had heard that podcasts from this series are also being used back in their organisations which is a very encouraging outcome. Work with the tri nations continues with a recent focus on middle leadership. It had been very pleasing to note the energy and enthusiasm of these inspirational middle leaders.

Para 2.1 details the evidence base for resources. There have been many restrictions on this work due to the pandemic but TE was pleased to relate that all hallmarks have now been through the very robust editorial group. The increased amount of references attached to these hallmarks allows individuals to go deeper and have a better understanding of evidence. TE was grateful for the additional funding from WG to support the media package to support this resource. It is planned to start filming in January which will include some high profile speakers. A video message from the Minister will be included which will assist in promoting a strong positive message.

MR was aware of the great extent of work being carried out and stressed the need to simplify the messages of professional learning to appeal to the widest possible audience. WG are currently working on a PL charter and a range of other things. It plans to send examples of this work to the Minister by February half term.

The System Leadership Insight piece has had 500 downloads to date and this number is increasing daily. It was used as a reference to the System Leadership seminar delivered by Alma Harris and also as essential reading for the Masters Degree in Education module on leadership.

The Middle Leadership Insight piece has now been launched and has already had 200 downloads. The Pedagogy Project, in partnership with WG, should prove to be another opportunity to build on the Insight series and demonstrate the importance of evidence. The organisation is currently working in collaboration with Mick Waters on another Insight piece – this one will explore what is meant by Leadership Principles. The Compassionate Leadership piece will be launched at the 2nd online conference for leadership to be held in January. It is hoped the Minister will be able to attend this conference or at least feature on video.

Regarding well-being, the head to head sessions are continuing and are proving very successful. These are also being piloted in the youth sector and will then be evaluated to agree the next steps. A pilot has also started for acting head teachers which will run until Christmas.

MR stressed the importance of reporting back to WG common themes coming out of these sessions. TE explained that the sessions are not always about discussing problems but are also around building networks and supporting well-being.

Strategic Workforce Planning has now been put into a separate work stream. Four LAs have agreed to work on a pilot which should provide a good spread across Wales. Colegau Cymru work could also fit into this workstream.

On the corporate front, regular weekly meetings are being held with staff to go through the corporate plan. TE stressed the importance of ensuring the whole team understands how the different workstreams work and fit together and the implications of their own role.

The Annual Report has now been published on the website and the reconstitution of the Board has taken place (more under agenda item 5). Risk management has already been covered but TE also emphasised here the importance of assessing risks against all areas of the corporate plan and at operational level.

A meeting was held with all Associates yesterday to share highlights from the corporate plan. The team is currently working on a budget plan not only for the immediate year but also for a 5 year overview.

TE was pleased to announce receipt of the first draft of the remit letter which covers the whole term of this government. Whilst it was acknowledged that there are further discussions to be held to ensure the organisation can deliver against this, TE was confident that agreement could be reached and praised the open relationship with MR and her team.

JG queried whether there would be any impact on the school day or school year in the light of recent agreements between Welsh Labour and Plaid Cymru. MR confirmed that there is a lot of work ongoing regarding this but it is still very early days.

There has been some increase in communications which demonstrates more interaction with social media. Twitter remains the most popular platform for interaction.

The stakeholder ToR will need to be revised to reflect the new direction. When vacancies arise on the current list, it is planned to encourage new members from youth and post 16 sectors. The organisation will be ready to move forward with this strategy in January from when regular meetings will be held.

RJ was very encouraged to hear of this work with the stakeholder groups. On a comms point, RJ suggested that the corporate backgrounds on Zoom could replace those on the website as they better reflect the new direction of the organisation. RJ would also like to see logos in both English and Welsh. TE will discuss with Charlotte Thomas.

SD thanked TE for a very detailed report and was pleased to see good progress in so many areas.

5. Board Re-constitution

MR confirmed that the adverts for new Board members have now gone live and it was pleasing to see that a few applications had already been received. The advert has also been emailed to a wide variety of organisations around Wales to ensure maximum coverage.

The online sift is now being set up and this will then be tested. All dates are in diaries for interviews. When all applications have been received, the Minister will be informed of the diversity outlook. Those Board members who have been reappointed have now received their letters to confirm this.

DP queried whether there would be any positive discrimination for women members given that the three members who have stepped down are all female. MR confirmed that whilst they would be looking to appoint the best possible candidates, the diversity of the Board would also be taken into account in the final decision.

SD thanked MR for all her hard work on this.

6. Well-being Action Plan

SD – welcomed NM to the meeting who was going to present on the well-being action plan.

NM said how thrilled she was to find out that the organisation had achieved the gold award for Investors in Well-being. The assessor had met with the team last summer, holding formal interviews online and also conducting surveys.

This award will last for 3 years and will also involve annual visits from the assessor who will check on progress with recommendations included in the report.

NM shared some highlight statements from the report which praised the organisation's strong deep rooted values and commitment to developing a culture that promotes all aspects of well-being.

NM has since met with the assessor to go through these recommendations and an action plan has been agreed to progress these. Well-being check-ins with staff are being piloted from next week. These will be evaluated at the end of January to see if they meet the needs of the team. Staff views will continue to be monitored through surveys.

Regarding physical well-being, yoga sessions have already been introduced but it is planned to provide a broader range of activities. Screen free days will continue to be scheduled.

Self care information and videos around healthy sleep patterns has been provided to staff also links to mindfulness and meditation programs. Mindfulness in particular has been found to be highly effective in promoting work/life balance. It is planned to hold a team health challenge in May. All of these activities will feed into the 5 ways of well-being.

PM was very impressed by the tremendous achievement to secure this award and commented that the organisation was now part of an 'elite club'. PM referred to the very detailed action plan outlined by NM and queried whether there would be any opportunities to engage with other organisations on this and share ideas.

Nia agreed that some organisations might be happy to collaborate and also suggested looking outside the field of education. At the Award Ceremony this week it had been very interesting to look at the winners and consider what they had done to achieve their awards. NM agreed to take PM's idea forward for consideration.

MR also suggested that this work could maybe link into the coaching and mentoring programme in schools.

SD thanked NM for a very detailed and informative talk and for all her work in this area. SD also commented on how well-being seems to be so effectively embedded in the organisation.

7. Date of Next Meeting, Any Other Business and Close

MJ queried recent proposals under the new Curriculum for Wales for science to be taught as a single subject in schools up to A level. MR confirmed that this had not yet been agreed but was still under discussion.

TE suggested that the team meet up before Christmas and agreed to arrange this.

The next Board meeting will take place on January 28th.

SD thanked everyone for their input into today's meeting which closed at 11.45am.

Action Log

No.		Owner	Deadline	Status
180	Invite CW to give insight into Cohort 4 experience	KL	March 2022	
184	Invite CT and an Associate to future Board meetings	KL	March 2022	
186	Plan deep dive into cyber security	MJ	January 2022	
187	Discuss possible website improvements re logos etc	TE/CT	January 2022	Completed
188	Consider collaboration on well-being	NM	Ongoing	
189	Arrange pre Christmas meeting for staff	TE	December 2021	Completed