



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

Minutes/Action Notes from Board Meeting 8th October 2021 via Teams

In Attendance: Sue Davies (SD) (Chair)
Tegwen Ellis (TE) (Chief Executive)
Mike James (MJ)
Martin Price (MP)
Davina Payne (DP)
Paul Marshall (PM)
Kate Lewis (KL)
Michaela Renkes (WG)
Claire Williams (CW) – joined for Agenda item 3
Jason Garcia (JGa) (Audit Wales) – joined for Agenda item 5
Gaynor Ace (GA) (Secretariat)

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

SD opened the meeting and welcomed all. Apologies had been received from John Graystone(JG) and Rosemary Jones (RJ). There were no conflicts of interest to report.

SD congratulated the team on achieving the Gold award for Investors in Wellbeing and confirmed that all Board members had now received training in cyber security.

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 or would be discussed later in the agenda. Progress will be checked on RJ's action regarding Cymdythiau Cymraeg.

2. Finance/HR Committee Report

SD thanked both chairs of the committees for all their hard work.

MP provided a report on the last Finance/HR committee meeting held on 14 September 2021.

TE provided a staff and HR update at this meeting reporting a continuation of the current hybrid working pattern – now 90% online and 10% face to face. KL had managed to reduce storage costs of office equipment to a more manageable level.

The committee's Terms of Reference have been reviewed with minor changes needed to bring it in line with the other committee. In line with the Terms of

Reference, The Chair and Vice Chair have been reviewed. MP will take up the role of Chair following the Board meeting and JG would take on the role of Vice-Chair.

Consideration has been given to the constraints of the current system of managing budgets on a quarterly basis rather than annually. MR explained the rationale behind this but agreed to meet with KL to discuss further.

MJ questioned whether the current system of mainly online working would continue. TE confirmed that the 90:10 hybrid system of working would be trialled until next spring with no intention to increase face to face working at present. MR confirmed that this approach was in line with WG's commitment to continue with mostly home working.

SD thanked MP for providing the committee updates.

3. Update

CW had been invited to attend this Board meeting following her resignation as a Board member due to conflict of interest. SD congratulated CW on gaining a place as an Associate of the National Academy for Educational Leadership (Cohort 4).

CW thanked everyone on the Board for making her so welcome and spoke of how much she had gained from her time as a Board member. CW also expressed thanks to RJ who had been her mentor during this time.

CW was delighted to have been successful in securing her new role as Associate which was already proving very challenging and exciting.

SD thanked CW for all her valuable input as a Board member and wished her well in her new role. MJ and PM echoed these thoughts and spoke highly of the valuable insights CW had provided from her role as a serving Head Teacher.

DP hoped that CW could give some insight into her experience in Cohort 4 before the Board was refreshed. TE confirmed that this was duly noted and also added her thanks to CW.

4. *Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Report*

PM presented the report from the Audit and Risk Assurance committee meeting held on 24 September 2021.

Two internal audit reports have been considered one on communications and marketing and another on cyber security. Both had received extremely positive reviews with substantial assurance from internal audit with no formal recommendations identified.

Charlotte Thomas (CT) attended the committee meeting and provided a very impressive presentation on her marketing and communications work. PM recommended that this be circulated to all Board members.

The Risk Register and the Board Assurance Framework were discussed. No changes had been made to these at this time and a full explanation for this was included in the committee minutes. TE had explained the need to step back to ensure these were completely up to date in terms of the current situation. There is an expectation that there will be a rethink at the next committee meeting.

PM raised an issue around the Terms of Reference in relation to TE's role on the committee. It was agreed that this should be standardised across both committees. This was put to the Board to decide. MR explained that TE sits on the Board as a non-Executive member with no voting rights. It would therefore seem logical to also reflect this in both committees. SD will work with both committee chairs to agree wording to reflect this in all Terms of References.

MP queried the fairly low return rate for visitors to the website as stated in Para 7 of the committee minutes. TE confirmed that this rate has greatly increased since the new website was launched.

5. Presentation of ISA 260 report by Audit Wales

SD welcomed JGa to the meeting. JGa referred to the audit information circulated to Board members and expressed thanks to KL for all the support she had provided to the audit team.

JGa reported that the Contents page had the same wording as in previous years and confirmed the level of error for materiality and senior officer remuneration. The final set of accounts had been received yesterday so there were now very few things still outstanding.

Exhibit 1 which detailed the impact of Covid revealed that there had been no changes to the timetable and all deadlines had been met by the due dates. Home working had brought about some agreed changes such as the acceptance of electronic signatures and different ways of gaining evidence.

JGa confirmed that there were no misstatements that remain uncorrected. The only issue had been regarding the way the balance for pre-payments had been dealt with. This problem has now been resolved and the relevant adjustments have been made.

JGa requested that the signed set of accounts be submitted to Companies House. The Auditor General will then sign off the Audit opinion in Appendix 2 by the end of next month. JGa informed the Board that this will be his last meeting as he is moving on to a new role. He thanked everyone for their support during his time with Audit Wales.

SD thanked JGa for a very comprehensive report and was very pleased regarding the positive endorsement. SD congratulated JGa on his new role and wished him well.

6. *Chief Executive Report against the Corporate Plan*

TE began by thanking KL for all her work with audit this year and also expressed thanks to Kirsty Payne for the previous year.

The Results and Evidence Framework had been used to review the corporate plan over the summer period. Three extra work streams have now been added in respect of leadership development (1.4) , workforce development (2.4) and stakeholders (3.4).

TE reminded Board members for online events such as Leadership Unlocked – there was no need to book online just let CT know.

A forum had been held on quality assurance which afforded opportunities for conversations with providers. The call for endorsements closed on 1st October with only two applications.. TE remains keen to consider how best to identify types of provision and plans to work with WG to consider how to carry out an audit.

MR pointed out that there is a lot of information available including many online opportunities and also opportunities from England. Although three audits have already been carried out it is proving difficult to get a definitive picture.

MJ queried whether there were any plans to expand the programme and consider different customer bases. This would then meet future ambitions in the corporate plan. TE reflected on the need to think of ways of achieving this and commented on issues around regional provision and making opportunities equitable and accessible to all.

Para 1.2 Innovation refers to continued support for projects right through the pathway. It is hoped that some models will soon come forward for endorsement . Although others would need more evidence. Learning from the projects needs to be shared more widely between clusters and networks at local level as well as national level. TE emphasised that the innovation pathway is all about taking risks being creative and innovative in planning and practice

MR had recently shared the list of innovation projects within Welsh Government and has since received a lot of enquiries. MR stressed the importance of spreading the word here.

TE expressed her support for all these projects that aim to get leaders to think creatively and innovatively. TE also considered the issues when leadership of curriculum areas is often given to other members of staff. As some head teachers have moved away from delivery, it is important to ensure that the message regarding curriculum is understood by leaders.

Para 1.3 system leadership, refers to the ARAD report. This was somewhat disappointing as although it mentioned some positive aspects the tone of the report felt less positive. SD agreed that this report did not seem to capture the passion behind a lot of the work that has been going on. TE stressed the need to take into account all findings across the board when identifying improvements that need to be made.

MR commented on all the reports that had come out over the last 18 months on different aspects of professional learning. There were some very common themes emerging around leadership roles which will now be very useful in briefing the Minister.

Para 2.1 details the evidence base for resources . Work on leading professional learning has developed over the summer period although there are some sensitivities at the moment around timing. CT has written a detailed marketing and media strategy to support the Leading Professional Learning resource. TE was grateful to WG for the extra funding to enable films to be made. The Minister has also agreed to do a video and seems very positive in supporting work going forwards.

The first draft of the paper on Compassionate Leadership has been received. This will complement the All Wales Strategy for the well-being of leaders. TE welcomes the views of the minister when he receives the papers at the end of October.

The paper on middle leadership will be used as a base for developing conversations around what middle leadership actually means. This will be useful preparation for the planned conference around this topic in the New Year.

Commission 2 launched in July and has been shared with the minister. Cohort 2 Associates are now self directed and operating without direct influence of the National Academy for Educational Leadership.

Para 3.1 refers to board governance. TE thanked everyone for their attendance and input at Board meetings and committee meetings. All the scrutiny carried out during these meetings is moving the organisation forward and providing substantial assurance in areas such as cyber security. This has also resulted in positive external audit reports with no recommendations.

TE highlighted the need to capture information from the youth sector regarding leadership as there are still gaps to identify here.

The organisation has now moved out of its physical office and is operating very effectively as a digital organisation. There has been some sick leave and one incidence of Covid amongst the staff. Associates are reporting that the situation in schools is becoming increasingly challenging with the current increase in Covid numbers.

The most downloaded document in July was the Commission 2 report with the Welsh version closely following the English. In August the youth survey and the paper on the value of the asymmetrical working week proved most popular. September placed the Welsh Commission report first then the English one, followed by the system leadership paper.

MR reported that the paper on the asymmetrical working week had been shared in WG who had been looking at possible changes to the school day

DP commented on the noticeable dip to visits on the educational part of the website through August although social media stats had remained high. TE confirmed that stats had returned to normal levels with the return to school in September.

SD thanked TE for her comprehensive report and for all the hard work of TE and her team throughout the year. PM endorsed this and was very impressed at the massive amount of output and achievement from such a small group of people.

7. Board re-constitution

MR spoke of last year's decision by the Minister to reappoint all to the Board. In August this year it was agreed to refresh the Board by up to three members. A rolling programme of Board refresh would then ensue to bring in new members with the requisite skills to help the organisation move forward.

It is planned to advertise widely for new Board members from November using a variety of platforms such as Twitter, website and also drop in sessions. A panel has already been selected for interviews which will take place in February.

DP queried what skills would be looked for in new Board members. SD would consider further but would be looking for a broad understanding of education but also an understanding of the working and responsibilities of a Board. This could also be a good opportunity to increase the diversity of the Board.

MR confirmed that Board remuneration would remain at the same level as there was no ability to make changes at this time. DP pointed out that this could deter younger people from applying for these positions.

8. Review of Terms of Reference

JG had queried one possible omission in the Terms of Reference (TOR) relating to the Board being the employer of the staff. MR will check the Articles of Association to confirm the situation here.

SD confirmed that all were happy to accept the current ToR.

9. Date of next meeting, future agenda items and close

There was no other business to consider. SD thanked all Board members for their contributions to this meeting and also for all their hard work over this challenging year. SD also thanked CT and remained in awe of all the work she has undertaken. SD suggested that CT be invited to the Board to give her presentation.

KL asked for the Board's views on inviting an Associate to the next meeting. This was deemed useful especially if they could bring a different angle to focus on.

MR also suggested inviting Owain Lloyd to a future meeting in the New Year. SD will do this now in view of his calendar filling up quickly.

The next Board meeting will take place on 26 November. This meeting was closed at 12.00pm.

Action Log

No.		Owner	Deadline	Status
176	Contact chair of Cymdeithiau Cymraeg	RJ	November 2021	
179	Discuss quarterly budget constraints	KL and MR	November 2021	
180	Invite CW to give insight into Cohort 4 experience	KL	January 2022	
181	Circulate CT's presentation with Board papers	KL	November 2021	
182	Agree wording for TE's role in committees	SD/Committee Chairs	November 2021	
183	Check Articles of Association in relation to the Board being the employer of staff	MR	November 2021	
184	Invite CT and an Associate to future Board meetings	KL	January 2022	
185	Invite Owain Lloyd to Board meeting	SD	November 2021	