



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

**Minutes/Action Notes from Board Meeting 28th January 2022 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 OBE (RJ)  
Kate Lewis (KL)  
Gaynor Ace (GA) (Secretariat)

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

SD opened the session and welcomed everyone to the first Board meeting of 2022. Apologies had been received from Michaela Renkes. There were no conflicts of interest to report.

SD reported that the Board reconstitution was all going to plan and it was hoped to appoint new Board members following the interviews.

SD congratulated the team on the wonderful conference held yesterday. In response to a request from JG, KL will send out a link to the conference for Board members who were unable to attend the live event.

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record. SD thanked GA for a swift turnaround on these minutes.

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:

- 180 - Claire Williams will be invited to next Board meeting;
- 184 - Charlotte Thomas will be invited to attend when the next comms plan is available;
- 186 – MJ confirmed that a deep dive into cyber security has been planned for the next committee meeting. MJ attended a SIRO meeting 2 weeks ago when

it transpired that the UK government had decided that in cases of ransomware, ransoms are **not** to be paid;

- 188 – this action was ongoing.

SD thanked both sub committees for their thorough and detailed work in terms of making recommendations following their scrutiny of operational work. This support and challenge through deep-dive activity enables the main Board to make its strategic decisions.

## *2. Finance/HR Committee Report*

MP provided a summary report on the last Finance/HR committee meeting held earlier this month.

Committee minutes had been circulated regarding HR issues discussed. MP confirmed that there were no plans in place for an imminent return to the office but that mechanisms were in place to resume face to face meetings as soon as this was deemed safe.

The budget was on track to end this year within normal limits. MP thanked KL for her excellent work in managing the budget. Quarter end issues with budget carry overs have now been resolved.

SD referred to this month's problem with the late payment of budget money which WG advised had been due to human error. This had caused the organisation considerable stress and concern due to staff wages and invoices that needed to be paid. TE has informed Owain Lloyd of the issue with the hope of receiving a full explanation and avoiding any recurrence. If no satisfactory response is received, SD will take this up with WG on behalf of the Board.

KL will make individual salary payments to staff today as it is now too late to do a full payroll run with the bank.

RJ thanked MP for his report and suggested that although the committee minutes were quite detailed, an additional summary document on income/expenditure might also be useful to inform the Board. MP agreed to consider this at the next committee meeting.

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.

There was not a great deal of change to the Risk register this time. PM had raised a question as to whether a new risk could emerge following the publication of Dr Alma Harris' Leadership Review. This will be considered when appropriate.

There had also been a thought provoking discussion regarding the organisation's position as an Arms Length Body and the blurring of lines between providing advice and advocacy.

As the Risk Register had been reconstituted to align with the corporate plan, the Board Assurance Framework had also been changed to reflect. The committee gave in depth consideration to the 3 lines of defence which proved a very useful challenge.

It had been decided to have a deep dive into cyber security at the next meeting.

SD thanked MJ for his report and the Board was happy to approve the committee minutes. All were in agreement that we take on all recommendations from both committee meetings.

#### *4. Chief Executive Report against the Corporate Plan*

TE gave a huge thankyou to all staff for yesterday's well-being conference which had been a great achievement with some 245 attendees. Although there had been some technical hitches at the beginning, these were swiftly resolved thanks to Charlotte Thomas' assistance.

The conference opened with a video address from the Minister which gave support to the National Academy for Educational Leadership. The Director of Education also spoke very highly of the work being carried out by the organisation and agreed to a follow up meeting on how to move the 'Heads Up' paper forward. This event has therefore proved to be a great launch pad and should ensure that conversations around well-being continue.

Dr Ali Davies outlined findings from her work on compassionate leadership which included interviews and focus groups with Head Teachers who had left the profession for various reasons. It is hoped that this can soon be made available on the organisation's website.

TE then went through her report considering each programme of work in turn.

Para 1.1 Quality Assurance – following the closure of the last endorsement process, there had been 2 successful submissions. The endorsement call is now open again until February 18<sup>th</sup>. TE emphasised the need for WG to be fully on board in considering the true value of achieving endorsement.

MJ queried the reasons why WG seem reticent to agree that endorsed provision should be the preferred choice. MJ also queried the timescale of the endorsement process.

TE explained that this was quite a complicated process with WG funding a lot of work from the regions. The endorsement process takes around 12 weeks from the initial submission. It is a two stage process with a 3<sup>rd</sup> stage outcome so quite lengthy in terms of waiting for a response.

MJ commented that this did seem a lengthy timescale and possibly over engineered.

TE agreed that providers do sometimes find the set of criteria quite lengthy and laborious. The process has been evaluated from the start and feedback from providers has been taken on board. The new Providers' Forum should hopefully help streamline the system further.

MJ queried whether approval related to each provision or service rather than to the Provider as a whole.

TE confirmed that each provision needed to be approved although if more than one was submitted in the same cycle then these could be considered together.

MP queried whether non endorsed training was in relation to companies not submitting their service for approval or having actually failed in the endorsement process.

TE confirmed that in the example in question, the provision had been submitted and failed. This has been raised with WG.

PM spoke of previous organisations he had worked with who had developed systems of charter marks which provided assurance on good healthy organisations who were offering training provisions.

TE agreed this might be worth considering although could prove difficult across the regions due to them operating in different ways.

JG queried whether providers are given straight pass or fail in the endorsement process or whether there would be any flexibility.

TE explained that sometimes it becomes very clear at stage 1 that they would not be able to proceed any further. Some provisions have got through to stage 2 but have then failed as they are unable to deliver bilingually. Sometimes more of a light touch approach is adopted encouraging additional work from providers which has assisted them in gaining endorsement on resubmission.

RJ had found this a very interesting discussion and declared her interest as working with one of the regions. RJ thought the 12 weeks of work might prove to be an obstacle to many providers and was also in favour of streamlining the process to identify organisations as trusted provider in Wales.

MJ spoke of the possibility of scrutinising the design processes of providers and looking at their track records to provide assurance. MJ suggested further discussion along these lines in the audit and risk committee.

TE thanked everyone for a great conversation around endorsement where many interesting points had been raised.

Para 1.2 Innovation – this area clearly demonstrates that leaders are considering new ways of working and the organisation provides opportunities to allow this to happen. 13 case studies had been generated from series 2 for instance. The 3<sup>rd</sup> series is planned for March in collaboration with WG. This will include digital innovation which is one of the Minister’s priority areas.

Para 1.3 System Leadership – now includes a list of all areas of involvement for Associates. When the pandemic allows, schools will then be able to carry out much more collaborative working. TE acknowledged that Associates are giving a lot of their time to the organisation at a time when they have many demands in their day jobs. A lot of requests are being received to secure Associates’ attendance at forums. TE was pleased that they now seem to represent the voice of leadership in various different ways.

Para 1.4 Leadership Development – the Leadership Unlocked series is becoming very well known for informing professional learning in organisations. TE outlined the programme for future speakers who will all highlight different ways of delivering leadership and also provide an international focus to the next series.

TE referred to the Blether which had over 300 attendees and demonstrated that middle leaders were inspirational and enthusiastic. A conference entitled ‘Leading from the Middle’ is planned which aims to get younger leaders involved in this work.

Para 2.1 details the evidence base for resources. The hallmarks for leading professional learning have all been agreed. Agreement has now been reached to take film crews out to schools to record senior leaders talking about how they are leading professional learning. An online recording from academics with a video address from the Minister will also support the resource which will be available to support schools who need it. This resource will be launched the week of March 21-22 which will coincide with the world wide education summit.

EIE work commenced pre pandemic and 12 schools have been funded to look at leading enquiry. Interim reports have now been received once the final reports are received they will be posted on the website as part of the Leading Professional Learning resource

2.2 – Leadership Principles paper has been commissioned which is now in final draft. This is part of a campaign to target aspirant leaders and develop them at whatever stage they are at.

Cohort 2’s commission regarding the provision of the Welsh language in education has managed to influence policy at a national level. Associates have now been asked to contribute to a 10 year plan. This is an excellent example of influencing at a high level.

RJ was very interested to hear the feedback at a recent event which covered all groups from teaching assistants to school leaders. RJ commented that it was very pleasing to see that Cohort 2’s work was so influential particularly in the context of the new curriculum.

2.3 Well-being – the organisation will now need to consider how to progress this work and welcomed the endorsement of the Minister here.

2.4 – Strategic Workforce development - TE and Chris Lewis will be meeting the Director of Education of Swansea this afternoon as part of the pilot. Chris will also be meeting with Cohort 3 to consider the best way to recruit and retain Head Teachers as a focus for their commission work

On the corporate front, SD has already referred to the appointment of new directors. TE has held meetings with the deputy directors in the Education Department regarding the remit and has discussed the Minister's priorities with WG. TE was pleased to report that more regular meetings will now be arranged with WG. Discussions have taken place regarding next year's proposed budget increase and WG have requested more detailed information regarding the current budget spend. TE was not anticipating any cut backs on the current budget.

JG queried whether the new Minister had a slightly different steer than the previous one or would push for any changes. TE had not detected anything like that and pointed out that the Minister spoke very highly of the work of the organisation. The Minister's priorities include the Welsh language, digital, equity in education, the structure of the school day and well-being which align very well with the corporate plan of the National Academy for Educational Leadership.

MJ asked whether anything had been said regarding raising standards. TE confirmed that the Minister was focused on ensuring that disadvantaged areas had access to the same opportunities.

3.2 – the budget has already been referred to. Re staffing, TE confirmed that Kirsty Payne has now officially finished her maternity leave and is currently on holiday leave. Kirsty plans to return to work on 15<sup>th</sup> February and will be working 3 days per week until April and using holidays for the other days. KL will continue in post until Kirsty returns full time.

RJ commented that it would be nice to see Kirsty return but also praised KL for the excellent job she has done in Kirsty's absence. RJ was pleased to have confirmation that the organisation is working in line with the Minister's priorities but stressed the need to ensure effectiveness in terms of improving standards. RJ also emphasised the continued need to be mindful of accountability.

TE thanked RJ for these comments and pointed out that this will be useful to consider when Estyn resumes their school inspection programme.

MJ referred to the Pisa testing programme which doesn't seem to figure so much in the Welsh education system. TE confirmed that this does not seem to be high on school leaders' priorities at the moment, partly due to the pandemic.

RJ felt that this was a really interesting point to raise and would be more than happy to discuss further with TE and/or update the Board at the next meeting. TE would be happy to take up RJ's offer here.

3.3 Comms and Marketing – this area is doing very well. The top download for November and December was the System Leadership paper by Professor Alma Harris.

The stakeholders' group is almost complete although getting representatives from small rural schools has proved challenging. The first meeting has been arranged for February.

Re partnership work, Qualifications Wales has been in touch regarding working with Associates on co-construction. TE praised the good working relationship with Estyn and the EWC. The organisation also has good working relationships with the regions individually although this does need some work at a national level.

SD thanked TE for a very comprehensive detailed report and was pleased to see good progress in so many areas. SD had found the in depth discussion on endorsement very interesting and thanked everyone for their input here.

JG mentioned that he sits on the body which reviews pay and conditions of teachers and has now been asked to look at the pay and conditions of leaders. JG would welcome a discussion with TE on this at some point. JG also queried whether the Board would be considering face to face meetings going forward.

SD confirmed that the plan was to meet face to face in the future when it was safe to do so. SD suggested a hybrid plan of doing half of all Board meetings face to face. This does have plusses and minuses as consideration would need to be given to the cost of travel and overnight stays in terms of budgets. When WG does relax restrictions the Board will think seriously about following suit.

The next meeting will be held online by which time more might be known about new Board members. TE pointed out that there might be a need to adjust some timings of Board meetings to take into consideration holiday times.

#### *5. Date of Next Meeting, Any Other Business and Close*

The next Board meeting will take place on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

SD thanked TE and team for all the excellent work they have been carrying out and also thanked Board members for their input into this morning's meeting.

The meeting concluded at 11. 50am

#### **Action Log**

No.		Owner	Deadline	Status
188	Consider collaboration on well-being	NM	Ongoing	
190	Circulate link to conference	KL	February 2022	

191	Raise matter of budget payment with Owain Lloyd if needed	SD	February 2022	
192	Pay staff individually this month	KL	January 2022	
193	Consider providing budget summary to the Board	MP	March 2022	
194	Consider scrutiny of providers	MJ	March 2022	
195	Discuss Pisa programme	RJ and TE	March 2022	
196	Discuss pay and conditions of leaders	JG and TE	March 2022	
197	Consider dates of future Board meetings	All	March 2022	