



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

Minutes/Action Notes from Board Meeting 14th May 2020 via Zoom

In Attendance: Sue Davies (SD) (Chair)
Tegwen Ellis (TE) (Chief Executive)
Kirsty Payne (KP)
Claire Williams (CW) (CW left meeting at 11:45)
Mike James (MJ)
Martin Price (MP)
Davina Payne (DP)
Rosemary Jones OBE (RJ) (RJ left meeting at (12:35)
Paul Marshall (PM)
Olivia Stemmer (OS) (Secretariat)

Apologies: John Graystone (JG)

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

SD welcomed everyone to the meeting. SD shared well-wishes to the board and staff she has received from Huw Foster Evans. SD also welcomed TE to her first meeting as Chief Executive. The Leadership Academy was launched 2 years ago this month and has been successful in fulfilling its remit to date. Plans have had to be put on hold due to COVID-19 but it is important to maintain presence in the sector. SD is confident that TE will look after this. SD expressed her gratitude to the associates for stepping up and filling the gap that has been left whilst a new Assistant Director is recruited.

There were no conflicts of interest registered.

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as accurate with the following amendments:

- **CW would like her comment in the 7th bullet point in the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Report reworded to say that she has enhanced knowledge of the Leadership Academy due to being a board member**
- **DP would like to change the 8th bullet point in the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Report to say the 'Future Generations Commissioner'**

SD went through the action log:

- Action 83 – SD has been meeting with WG regarding refreshing the board and has submitted a report on the board to the Minister. All board members' terms finish on 30th April 2021. This was due to the initial funding term of 3 years. There needs to be a phased approach to refreshing the board. **All**

board members to notify SD whether they would be interested in serving an additional term or if they wish to step down on 30th April 2021.

- Action 84 – The terms of reference will be reviewed in the July meeting. The recent internal audit recommended that the Nolan Principles be included immediately. **Agreed that the Nolan Principles be added to the terms of reference immediately**
- Action 105 – SD suggested that this action is postponed until it is possible to meet on a face-to-face basis. **Mark as postponed**
- Action 113 – Conversation has taken place. **This action can be marked as complete**
- Action 115 – Action postponed as the Audit and Risk Assurance committee are unable to hold the proposed ‘risk workshop’ until they are able to meet face-to-face. **Mark as postponed**
- Action 125 – A communications strategy has been created and the task and finish group have met. This will be discussed later on the agenda. **The action can be marked as completed.** The strategy will be revisited when the communications manager is in post
- Action 131 – KP has contacted the internal auditor to make the change. **Mark as complete.**
- Action 133 – SD’s enhanced role ended on 1st April and WG have been informed. **Mark as complete.**
- Action 134 – This action is not appropriate during the COVID-19 pandemic. Will revisit at a later date. **Mark as postponed**
- Action 12 - TE asked for clarification. DP explained that the Board agreed it would be beneficial to have case studies to draw on when needed during an early meeting. TE requested that this be moved from the action log to the communications strategy and it was agreed by all. **Mark as complete**

2. Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Report

PM presented the report from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (AARAC) meeting on 20th April 2020. The meeting had 3 key focuses – external audit, internal audit and the review of the risk register.

PM explained that there was a detailed discussion for each risk about how they have been affected by COVID-19. The responses to the risks were greatly informed by the current situation in terms of unknowns and changes from Welsh government.

The Board discussed the following points:

- The AARAC has received the audit plan from Audit Wales relating to the external audit of the accounts for the 2019/20 financial year. The committee recommends that the plan be approved by the board. **The board approved the external audit plan.**
- The AARAC received the report from the Strategic Controls and Corporate Governance internal audit. The result of the audit was reasonable assurance and the auditors were very positive overall. There are number of

recommendations made and their implementation will be reviewed at the next AARAC meeting.

- The risk register was reviewed in great detail in light of COVID-19. A new risk around the corporate plan was added.
- The committee had a discussion about creating an exit plan following COVID-19. MJ suggested that management present an outline plan at the next board meeting. MJ added that there may be a need to plan for multiple scenarios due to the current level of uncertainty
- SD presented a question from John Graystone asking whether further reference should be made to COVID-19 on the risk register and if a 'COVID-19 risk' should be added in its own right. PM confirmed that this discussion had taken place in depth at the meeting and the committee felt that the impact of Covid-19 on the current strategic risks are what is important, rather than Covid-19 being a risk in its own right
- The Board discussed the Leadership Academy's inclusion in Welsh Government's plans for schools re-opening for education. The Leadership Academy is a partner in the 'Continuity of Learning' and that both the staff and associates are part of the deliverable groups referenced in the document. CW feels that it is crucial that the Leadership Academy be involved in the 'return to school' planning so that it is able to support leaders through the process. RJ agreed with CW and pointed out that this is an opportunity for the Leadership Academy to be more visible in the sector. TE has written to WG to request that the Leadership Academy be included in the planning but added that it is important to consider the capacity of the Leadership Academy staff and associates.

SD thanked CW and RJ for sharing their vast experience at this time. It is important to take the positives and to follow the guidance of the minister at this time. CW confirmed that the profession feels supported by the minister.

SD also thanked Chris Lewis, Assistant Director for Policy, Research and Strategic Workforce and the Associates that stepped in to help fill the Assistant Director role while a new member of staff is being recruited.

3. Finance / HR Committee Report

John Graystone has offered apologies for this meeting, so MP presented the report from the Finance / HR committee meeting on 6th May 2020. The following points were discussed:

- The budget report for Q4 of 2019/20 was reviewed and there were no anomalies to report. An amount of money from last years budget has been paid to Four Cymru to produce a promotional video for but work cannot start due to COVID 19
- The budget for this financial year has been reduced following a request from WG. The new grant amount for 2019/20 is £900,000. Strategic priority functions such as endorsement and innovation have been paused and

- expenses have been reduced in order to find the savings. The budget has been accepted by WG but will still need to be formally signed off by the Board
- No appointment was made to the Assistant Director post as there was not a wide enough field to shortlist. The post will be re advertised with a start date in January 2021
 - The Communications Manager advertisement is live and is a more senior role with a higher salary than the previous advert
 - 3 secondments will be advertised in June with a September start date
 - The political activities policy was reviewed and recommended for approval. The committee have asked for some clarity around who the policy applies to.

The following points were agreed by the Board:

- **Action 42 has been completed**
- **Change MJ to MP in the minutes**
- **The revised budget was formally approved by the Board**

4. Chief Executive Report

SD thanked TE for the letter she sent to the Board and congratulated KP on her wedding. TE reiterated her thanks to the Board and the staff for their ongoing support. TE explained that future Chief Executive reports will aligned more closely to the corporate plan as recommended in the most recent internal audit.

The following points were discussed:

- Due to COVID-19, Welsh Government is unable to conduct the independent evaluation of the Leadership Academy in September as planned and is unable to provide a new remit letter. These actions are now planned for early 2021
- Chris Lewis is conducting an internal review of the Leadership Academy's work to date. The Education Development Trust is carrying out independent work on system leadership and have interviewed several Associates. Both pieces of work will be used to inform the rewrite of the corporate plan which will include a high level 3 year plan and an annual strategic plan. The operational plans put together by the Assistant Directors will sit underneath this
- All staff are currently working from home. Regular staff meetings are being held. All meetings are now held online which has been very effective so far
- The Leadership Academy is contributing to the Continuity of Learning (COL) which has improved visibility in the sector
- TE and Chris Lewis are having regular strategy meetings and are looking at the vision and values to see if they are fit for purpose and adding value. MJ asked if permission would need to be sought from WG ahead of changing the vision and values.
- An all-Wales well-being strategy is in production. A survey will be issued to all school leaders in Wales to inform the strategy. The survey has been piloted in Carmarthenshire and the data is of excellent quality.

- Weekly bulletin being produced to inform internal stakeholders of updates
- Innovation funding has been stopped for Q1 and 2 but innovation is still being encouraged through other avenues. 4 projects were funded in March before the budget was reduced
- Associates have been leading on workstreams to support TE whilst the recruitment of a new AD takes place.
- COPA meetings have been replaced by online CYD meetings to bring all 3 cohorts of associates together
- The audit of leadership provision within the special sector has been paused
- Leading Professional Learning has also been paused as OB3 are not able to continue with the evidence collection whilst the schools are closed
- EIE! has also had to be paused as schools are unable to continue with their projects during this challenging time
- Alma Harris undertaking a research project for Leadership Academy on system leadership and Christine Ford has been approached to carry out a research project on middle leadership.

The following action was agreed:

- **TE will check if the new visions and values will need to be reviewed by Welsh Government once they are agreed**

SD thanked TE for her report and for keeping the well-being of the staff and associates at the forefront of her mind.

5. COVID-19 Update

TE shared the well-being strategy from Ian Gerrard (Cohort 2 Associate). TE explained that there are discussions about the definition of well-being as it may have a different definition for everyone. We are currently working on identifying practice, developing practice and sharing practice.

MJ asked if the well-being strategy should be added to the agenda for one of the sub-committees to ensure regular reporting. RJ pointed out that well-being is now the core activity of the Leadership Academy. SD feels that it fits better with the main board rather than one of the committees as it is relevant to all. SD suggested it be a standing agenda item on the main board agenda. **The board agreed to add the well-being strategy as a standing item to all future board agendas.**

DP asked how long it is likely to be before learners in schools are able to get back to a normal school life. RJ believes that there will be a hybrid system of distance learning and being in schools until the health aspect is solved. The University of East London is launching a dual delivery mode in the autumn so that learners can be on campus where possible or access learning from home where it is not. TE doesn't believe that there will be high attendance even if schools do reopen in the near future. There will be a huge gap in the experiences that children have had during this lockdown period. There are issues around social and technological disadvantages. MJ feels that the economic issues are driving the reopening of schools in England.

TE provided a COVID-19 update to the Board (much of which has already been discussed during the meeting).

A series of professional learning webinars are planned through June and July. The webinars are only available to associates at present but there is the possibility of extending the reach should they be a success. One of the speakers has requested that the session not be live streamed but the others will be recorded.

SD congratulated the Leadership Academy staff on the recent award of their Cyber Essentials Plus certification. SD and TE recorded thanks to KP for her work.

6. Communication Task & Finish Group Update

TE presented the outcomes from the task and finish group meeting:

- The Leadership Academy is preparing to hold interviews for the Communications Manager digitally and has received guidance from Welsh government about conducting digital interviews. MP has also written a blog on digital interviews which will be published on the Leadership Academy website
- The group reviewed the draft comms strategy that was written last year. MJ is keen to pull out the key points of the strategy into a side of A4. It will be difficult to action everything in the strategy until a member of staff is in place
- Richard Monteiro has put together a communications strategy during COVID-19 which KP will share with the board
- Richard Monteiro is putting together a team of associates to action the communications strategy
- DP thanked TE and KP for listening to her views about the communications role and increasing the salary and responsibilities
- John Graystone is keen to host a session in the Senedd building to promote the Leadership Academy. There is likely to be a new Educational Minister in May and it would be pertinent to raise awareness with other Ministers. **The board agreed that this is a good idea and will discuss further when circumstances allow face-to-face events to resume**
- MP thinks that it might be worth considering one-to-one sessions with the shadow educational secretaries. TE thinks that the launch of the well-being strategy could be a good time to engage with other Ministers. **TE to look into engagement with Ministers.**
- DP thinks that this could be a good time to share the work of the Academy and get involved with some external media opportunities. PM agrees and thinks that the Leadership Academy should be engaging with the media to get involved in the discussions around returning to school. SD asked if DP could share any contacts she has in the media sector to help the LA engage. SD suggested sharing an external bulletin with Ministers and Ambassadors.

7. *Date of next meeting, future agenda items & close*

SD thanked everyone for their attendance and their patience with the online meeting environment. SD expressed the importance of taking the positives from the COVID 19 situation and not focusing on the threats.

SD reminded the group to respond to the Doodle poll about future Board meeting dates.

SD closed the meeting at 12:55

Action Log

No.		Owner	Deadline	Status
12	NAEL to explore developing some case histories	HFE	September 2019	Completed
83	Check public appointments process for future board members	SD	September 2019	Ongoing
84	Annual review of terms of reference	SD	July 2020	
105	Agenda Tegwen Ellis to attend future board meeting to present her Doctorate work to date	KP	September 2020	Postponed
106	All future agendas and minutes to be bilingual	KP	January 2020	Completed
107	Publish board minutes on Leadership Academy website	KP	January 2020	Completed
111	Look into networks to find possible connections in England	All	January 2020	Completed
113	Heads of both subcommittees to meet and discuss a succession planning strategy	JG & PM	January 2020	Completed
115	Create a second risk register for operational risks	A & RA Committee	January 2020	Postponed
125	Create communications strategy once communications officer is appointed	All	September 2020	Completed
131	Move the audit on marketing to Quarter 1 of 2021/22.	KP	April 2020	Completed
133	Inform WG when SD's enhanced role as chair ends	SD	May 2020	Completed
134	WG representative to attend next meeting to discuss the new curriculum If a WG representative cannot attend, ask CW to lead	TW/CW	September 2020	Postponed

135	Inform Chair of request to continue/step down as board member after April 2021	All	July 2020	Completed
136	Add Nolan Principals to Terms of Reference	KP	July 2020	Completed
137	Amend previous minutes and action log as outlined	KP	May 2020	Completed
138	Amend Audit and Risk Assurance minutes as outlined	KP	May 2020	Completed
139	Amend Finance and HR minutes as outlined	KP	May 2020	Completed
140	Check if amended Vision and Values will need to be agreed by Welsh government	TE	September	
141	Add well-being strategy as a standing agenda item	KP	July 2020	Completed
142	Share COVID-19 communications strategy with the Board	KP	May 2020	Completed
143	Consider strategy for engaging with Ministers ahead of the election	TE	September 2020	
144	Explore possibility of holding event in Senedd to launch well-being strategy	TE/KP	September 2020	