



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

Minutes/Action Notes from Board Meeting 15th July 2022

In Attendance: Dr Sue Davies (SD) (Chair)
Tegwen Ellis (TE) (Chief Executive)
Mike James (MJ)
Martin Price (MP)
Dr Debbie Nash (DN)
Yusuf Ibrahim (YI)
John Graystone (JG) – via Teams link
Katie Phillips (KP) – via Teams link
Sarah Coombes (SC) (Associate)
Gaynor Ace (GA) (Secretariat)

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

SD opened the session and welcomed everyone to the first face to face meeting for the new Board members.

Apologies had been received from Paul Marshall and Kirsty Payne. There were no conflicts of interest to report.

SD commented on the excellent training she and MP had recently received on equality and diversity which covered issues such as protective characteristics and unconscious bias. SD reminded Board members that appraisals would be due in September/October – KP will be asked to arrange.

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. TE reminded directors to indicate which work stream areas they would prefer to lead on so that responsibilities can be allocated.

2. Finance/HR Committee Report

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

Staff have now been appointed to the Digital Marketing post (Geraint Roberts) and the Head of Insight post (Nia Miles). The Head of Leadership Development post had been re-advertised. *TE now updated the Board that Mr Richard Edwards has been appointed to fill this vacancy.* The three secondees will be returning to their substantive posts from August 31st. JG has been meeting with all staff as lead director for well-being.

MP referred to the political monitoring reports he has now been receiving. MP agreed to highlight anything that would be of relevance to the Board.

Face to face events such as the Urdd Eisteddfod had been very successful in raising the profile of the organisation and forging links with stakeholders. TE will shortly be attending the National Eisteddfod in Tregaron. The search engine on the website will be enhanced over the summer.

The committee had looked in detail at the budget which had been slightly revised and is balanced to within WG guidelines. There had been nothing to query on the first 3 months of the management accounts.

The draft Annual Accounts 2021/22 had been circulated. There were minor revisions on text to be carried out and directors' names to be updated. KP had worked closely with the accountants on this so was fairly confident with the draft. Once the revisions have been made the draft accounts will be submitted to Audit Wales for the external audit to begin

The Board approved the committee minutes and SD thanked MP for a comprehensive and detailed report.

3. Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Report

MJ presented the report from the Audit and Risk Assurance committee meeting held earlier this month.

A draft audit plan had been received from the external auditors. The Board was happy to accept this and agree the audit fees. The new audit manager had attended the committee for a preliminary meeting.

Communications issues had been raised, both in regards to the risk register and the deep dive. A discussion ensued regarding the difference between building awareness and building understanding. The organisation was deemed to be very effective at the former through existing comms channels but still needed to do more work on the latter via effective PR work.

MJ referred to the excellent presentation from Dr Chris Lewis (CL) on his policy work on well-being which is now part of the organisation's remit. CL had provided a very clear definition of well-being differentiating between professional well-being and

mental health issues. He stressed the importance of creating an environment where people can thrive in their professional life.

MJ referred to CL's work here as exemplary as it had contributed to a shift in WG's policy on well-being. This had been much more than just raising awareness as referred to above but had definitely moved into the realms of persuasion.

MJ thought it would be beneficial for the Board to see that the organisation has this capability so SD will invite CL to share this presentation at a future Board meeting.

MP agreed the importance of stepping up PR work to enhance the credibility of the National Academy for Educational Leadership. He suggested briefings with the press, interviews and blogs. TE agreed to consider.

The Board accepted the committee meeting minutes and SD thanked MJ for an informative and thought provoking report.

4. Chief Executive Report against the Corporate Plan

TE began by saying that the layout of the Board report has been refreshed to align with the updated corporate plan. TE then outlined highlights and progress against each work programme in turn:

Para 1.1 Quality Assurance – Endorsements have now been completed for the last cycle on the following two programmes: National Coaching and Development by the Cross Regional Consortia and Lead Creative Schools Scheme which has come in via the Innovation Pathway. The next call is now live and will close at the end of October. Previous calls were 'open calls' but it is now planned to move towards targeted calls on areas linked to the remit such as ALN, the new curriculum, equality and diversity, anti-racism, governors etc.

There are 13 endorsed provisions in the prospectus to date. TE reported that people want tangible hard copy documents to take away at events so will bear that in mind for future visits.

Para 1.2 Innovation – The final report has been received from the youth work sector following their innovation grant to develop a programme. It is hoped that they will bring forward that provision for endorsement. A newly strengthened application for Innovation Pathway funding has been received from Chrysalis – this now includes a complete module on leadership.

Para 1.3 System Leadership – Recruitment of Cohort 5 is now complete and includes a balanced mix from all educational sectors. There will be a 2 day residential induction course for this new cohort. An event was held at Llandrindod Wells in June to get all Associates together. TE spoke of the energy and enthusiasm generated at that event and the really good focused discussions that took place.

Mark Isherwood will be carrying out professional conversations with all Associates. These will focus not just on how they have personally benefited from the experience but also what impact they have had on other organisations going forward.

Para 1.4 Leadership Development – TE spoke here of how each one of the work streams touches and overlaps with the others to contribute towards a joined up vision. At a recent event with Dr Ali Davies, head teachers all felt that well-being was a priority for them. TE also referred to Professor Andy Penaluna's paper 'Are we playing not to lose when we should be playing to win?'. The team will consider how to take this work forward. The IPDA partnership event 'Shining a Light' was successful and the participants will be invited to contribute to the next Blether.

Para 2.1 Resources – TE recently attended the BELMAS conference in Liverpool and co-presented a paper with Professor Ken Jones around Leading Professional Learning. This focused on the 8 hallmarks embedded in endorsed provision and also considered how these hallmarks fit in with WG's Professional Learning Entitlement. These hallmarks are integral to all professional learning especially in the new curriculum.

Para 2.2 Insight series – Professor Carol Campbell has now been commissioned to produce a new insight series on reflective practice. This work will be carried out over the Autumn period with the aim of holding a launch event in the spring. Working groups and consultative groups are subsequently tasked with unpicking all these papers to help generate activity around the thinking.

2.3 Well-being – TE co-presented on well-being for leaders at the Belmas conference alongside Gavin Gibbs, an Associate from cohort 4. This conference provided really good opportunities to network and build relationships.

2.4 Strategic Workforce Planning – Two projects are now ready to be uploaded onto the site – research into ex Head Teachers, commissioned by the Independent Welsh Pay Award Body, and also the work with 6 local authorities on qualitative data research which looks at why we are facing a recruitment crisis for school leaders in Wales especially in the Welsh medium sector.

A discussion ensued around sub-scale schools and the particular problems faced there by school leaders. It is hoped that this research will help highlight these issues.

PCET research is also underway and is on course to be completed in the Autumn term.

3.1 Corporate – The Board refresh is now complete and all paperwork has been finalised for the 3 new Board members. A training programme is being planned to include existing directors as well as new Board members.

The format has been changed for the Operational plan for WG – this is now an Excel spreadsheet which is very much a working document that can be easily updated.

3.2 Executive Function – New staff have now been appointed as outlined in Para 2 above. An advertisement for a Business Support Officer has just closed and consideration will be given as to whether to interview the one suitable candidate.

A secondee has been appointed on a part time basis to lead on the pedagogy project.

3.3 Comms and Marketing – More opportunities are now emerging to partake in face to face events which are proving very valuable in meeting stakeholders and increasing engagement. Geraint Roberts will be designing an engagement strategy for TE to travel around Wales, beginning with Associate schools. TE will then produce a briefing note for SpAds so make the Minister aware of this planned programme. MJ suggested lining up local media opportunities to coincide with such visits and then scanning social media after the events to measure the impact. MJ and DN also suggested big bright exhibition bags and giveaways to maximise event publicity for the organisation.

3.4 Stakeholders and Partnership Work – The stakeholder group meeting last month had relatively poor attendance so consideration is being given to slightly increasing the numbers of this group. A date has now been set for a big stakeholder forum in November.

There have been two meetings of the Cross Regional Partnership and an action plan has been agreed. This could be used as a pilot for fast track endorsements. It is also planned to look at improving comms with the cross regions who will be invited to co-construct the Middle Leaders' conference next March.

TE thanked the team for the impressive progress made across all work streams. Events for the Autumn term include 'Curriculum Unlocked' with 3 high profile speakers lined up including Professor Graham Donaldson, Professor Ken Muir who carried out the Scottish review on Curriculum of Excellence and Professor Priestly who will speak on curriculum design and progression.

MP referred to the partnership with the consortia and highlighted the new self-evaluation toolkit for school governors which is designed in a way that focuses on the leadership aspect. TE confirmed that an application had recently been received to fund Governors PL from the CSC region. TE has a meeting with Estyn next month to discuss the thematic review which will hopefully consider further the role of governors as school leaders.

JG had met with TE and Mark Isherwood recently to discuss the pay and conditions of teachers and leaders. JG would also be keen to get views of governors on this. JG also commented on the minutes from the last stakeholders' group meeting which highlighted the need for additional work in the Post 16 sector.

YI was impressed at all the progress that is being achieved across all key work areas. He commented on the earlier discussion around moving from awareness to understanding and highlighted the value of looking at educational governance in a broader sense to provide a more balanced view. YI also queried how the organisation is trying to drive forward digital innovation.

TE referred to the recent digital innovation event that was unfortunately quite poorly attended. This could have been due to the fact that it was run by Apple which some schools do not use. In response to YI's comments on anti-racism and equality and diversity, TE felt that the organisation has much to learn here and a training programme will need to be devised for the group. YI offered to put TE in touch with the Black Leadership Group who could assist with this.

MP pointed out the increase in home schooling as a result of Covid. This is a growing problem as home educators are not registered and do not get inspected.

SD thanked TE for a very informative report highlighting all the key issues and inspiring some useful conversations.

5. Training for Board Members

SD has been working with KP to draw up a training plan for new and existing Board members. This will include anti-racism, ALN reform, middle tier and partnerships.

KP will be in touch with everyone when dates have been finalised.

6. External Audit Plan

This has been covered in Para 3 above.

7. Associate Update

SC gave a presentation on her role as an Associate in Cohort 2. SC began by setting out her background and professional experience as a Head Teacher in Cardiff then outlined the commission brief for Cohort 2 on 'The role of educational leadership in realising the vision of a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language'.

As a result of the work on this commission Cohort 2 have now been given the task of working alongside WG in implementing change direct into policy. This is a huge interface that has impacted and will impact on schools very soon and SC was very pleased to see that Associates would have such power of influence.

SC has now been asked to join the taskforce to develop a dual language school project which would result in a school being 50% Welsh medium and 50% bilingual which is a new model for Cardiff. It is planned to set up a couple of satellite schools like this to work towards achieving the ambitious target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

MP questioned why WG were so receptive to ideas put forward by the Associates. SC believed it was due to the reputation of the Academy, results of research and also extensive meetings to put forward the benefits. The targets were aspirational but also achievable and were evidence based.

SC also spoke of the additional part she had played in providing school leadership support to a school that was in special measures. The future of this small school had been in doubt but SC assisted the Head Teacher in regenerating the school and applying for funding. This transpired into an informal arrangement or partnership between the two schools and a new leadership team. The Local authority have now agreed to keep the small school open and it is hoped to increase its capacity.

An application is being made to the innovation fund for research into new school structures and to look at collaborations which could offer benefits to smaller rural schools.

SC's experiences here sparked an interesting discussion around scale and structure and how leadership is affected. MJ was very keen on the idea of collaboration as a means of creating a meta structure and network of educational services. He stressed that the relationship between structure and strategy is fundamental in making schools perform effectively. SC agreed and believed the creation of a different model could save some rural schools from closure. It was acknowledged that crossing county boundaries could complicate matters here however.

SC pointed out that new school leaders coming through could feel very isolated and saw a real need for meaningful professional learning. SC was very pleased to see that the Professional Learning Entitlement now provided a clear pathway for all.

SC had attended the Global Leadership in Singapore where she had had experience of some very inspirational speakers. She spoke of the educational model in Singapore which had previously been wholly interested in academic results but was now moving to focus on the whole child more widely.

SC also talked about how useful she had found the coaching training she had received especially during periods of lock down. She had worked with the training provider to develop a programme for challenge advisers. This training has been rolled out to every improvement partner across Wales.

SD thanked SC for a very interesting talk and was very pleased to hear how the Associates' work was making such a difference.

DN asked how the organisation is promoting all this excellent work. TE informed the meeting that Charlotte Thomas was making a film of the Associates' achievements and the Associates were also producing blogs of their individual success stories.

SC thanked the Academy for all the help and support she had been given in her role as Associate. SD urged her to continue to maintain the link when moving forward as alumni.

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

SD thanked everyone for their participation in today's meeting. It was acknowledged that face to face meetings provided a much better opportunity for in depth conversations around issues.

The next meeting will be held on Friday 30th September at 10am. This will be an online meeting

The meeting was closed at 1.05pm

Action Log

No.		Owner	Deadline	Status
188	Consider collaboration on well-being	NM	Ongoing	
205	Volunteer to be lead director for work streams	All directors	September 2022	
208	Arrange appraisals for September/October	KP	September 2022	
209	Highlight anything relevant from Political monitoring report	MP	Ongoing	
210	Invite CL to a future Board meeting	KP	September 2022	
211	Inform Board members of training programme	KP	September 2022	