



Central Executive Committee (CIO)

Minutes

Minutes from the meeting on 16 November 2017.

1 Welcome and apologies

Chair: Sheila MacNeil

Present: Peter Bryant, Elizabeth Charles, Nic Whitton, Martin Weller (virtually), Sarah Sherman, James Clay, Daniel Clark, Lorna Campbell, Bella Abrams, Neil Morris (virtually), Maren Deepwell

Apologies received from: Shirley Evans, Martin Hawksey

2 Any other business to be added to the agenda at the end of the meeting

No other business was added to the agenda.

3 Approve the Minutes of the last meeting held on 15 June 2017

Trustee reviewed the Minutes from the previous meeting and approved them as an accurate record.

4 Matters arising from the last meeting.

Trustees reviewed the report covering all matters arising from the previous meeting. Many actions were completed with a few outstanding actions picked up elsewhere on the agenda. Any ongoing actions will be reported back on at future meetings.

5 Transition [confidential]

Context

ALT changed its legal status to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) [9 Sept 2015] and is now in a position to employ staff directly. The Trustees have undertaken a review of the operations for the launch of a new strategy in early 2017 and have identified a clear need to move to a more distributed model of operations. This has led ALT to the decision to move away from the current hosting agreement with Oxford Brookes University. A strategic partnership will continue.

The key reasons why ALT's Trustees have decided to undertake the transition are:

1. ALT's activities have increased across the UK, making it more effective to have staff distributed in different regions to better support Members;
2. ALT has been operated as a blended organisation for a number of years, with the majority of the activity taking place online;

3. Moving to a distributed model will enable ALT to spend less charitable income on operations and more of resources for strategic work.

The key factors that informed the decision to do so at this time are:

1. ALT is in a stable financial position
2. ALT has completed the first year as a CIO
3. ALT new strategy sets out an ambitious vision for a growing community and staffing/operations need to meet these aims

Where we are currently

Since the last Trustee meeting work has continued led by the Trustee working group with regular reporting to all Trustees via GPC. The process plan set out by our HR Advisor Jo Cairns has been updated and we are on track.

We are now in the main phase of the transition and this paper includes the following recommendations for Trustees:

1. Note progress made consulting staff about the transition and TUPE transfer
2. Agree the framework for the new employment contracts from ALT incl pensions
3. Note plans for office transition and formally agree to terminate current licence agreement
4. Approve the new Partnership with OBU from 2018
5. Formally note the outline of next steps for completing the transition

6 Finance

Daniel reported on ALT's current financial position. The current financial position at the end of Q3 is positive and in line with our current financial strategy.

Overall we are close to meeting our targets for income generation. The figures below show that membership and CMALT income are close to meeting the targets and are set to exceed them. Events income for the Annual Conference was good and together these increases income made up for a shortfall from OER17 income earlier in the year.

Income from the BLE project is greater than expected but includes a proportion of fees for Digital Champions which ALT is managing, so that the increase won't have much impact on the overall income for ALT itself. It does however enable us to cover costs of internal resources devoted to project work to a larger extent.

Expenditure at the end of Q3 is lower than planned, resulting in a currently higher positive outturn. One factor in keeping the expenditure low is the journal publication being suspended and saving 6 months of publication costs. Some of this surplus is due to expenditure being only involved in the final quarter. It is also part of our strategy to provide a bit more flexibility during this transition period.

It is usual that we see very little income in Q4 and steady expenditure, which is why the end of Q3 shows a larger positive balance.

Year end forecast

Led by Daniel the TRustees then discussed the forecast: Membership and CMALT are both set to achieve or exceed the budget. This will support us putting in place additional resources for developing CMALT and Membership services as planned.

By making savings we were able to achieve a good outturn for events, even though income was lower than expected.

The Governance costs include transition costs, which are added to the expenditure.

There is some income to be deferred to the next financial year, which the auditor will advise about.

Overall we anticipate to achieve a balanced outturn, hopefully slightly better than the budget and absorbing a proportion of the transition costs such as additional HR and pension advice.

Our budget and financial strategy for next year will focus on stability for the year in which ALT starts being an employer and covering the costs of the transition, with a view to increasing our ambitions the following year for the third year of the current strategy period.

7 Communications and Publications

Neil Morris reported on from the October meeting of the Communications and Publications Committee and the Research in Learning Technology Editorial Board.

Starting with the work of the Committee, Neil reported good progress across all areas and specifically recommended to Trustees:

Recommendation: The Committee formally reports this progress made with submissions and publications to the Trustees.

Recommendation: The Committee seeks Trustees' formal approval for setting up this new Steering Group to undertake strategic development of the journal and report directly to Trustees until the end of the current ALT strategy (2 years).

Going on to discuss the work of the Editorial Board, Neil reported the following changes to the Editorial Board's membership:

First, we record our thanks to Members coming to the end of their term/stepping down:

1. Brenda Bannan, Learning Technologies Division College of Education and Human Development George Mason University, United States
2. Stephen Brown, De Montfort University, UK, United Kingdom
3. Martin Ebner, Graz University of Technology, Austria
4. John Hedberg, Macquarie University, Australia, Australia
5. Robert Michael Ker Fox, School of Education, University of New South Wales, Australia
6. Mark J.W. Lee, Charles Sturt University and Federation University Australia, Australia
7. John Terence Mayes, Glasgow Caledonian University, UK
8. Holly McCracken, Capella University, USA
9. Robbie Melton, Tennessee Board of Regents
10. Marina Papastergiou, University of Thessaly, Greece
11. Caroline Helen Steel, The University of Queensland; ascilte, Australia
12. Michael Thomas, University of Central Lancashire, UK

Then, we consider new Members who will be recommended to Trustees to the Editorial Board:

1. Dr Chris Rowell, Deputy Learning Technology Manager, Regents College
2. Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl, Associate Professor & Senior Research Fellow, DCU
3. Lorraine Locke, Associate Professor, Educational Development, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
4. Richard Walker, Head of E-Learning Development, University of York
5. Frances Bell, Senior Lecturer (Retired) now Independent Researcher

Finally we note current and active Members who will continue their term:

1. Jo Axe, Royal Roads University, Canada, Canada*
2. Mark Brown, National Institute for Digital Learning Dublin City University, Ireland
3. Laura Czerniewicz, University of Cape Town, South Africa
4. Jason D. Baker, Regent University, USA
5. Thom Cochrane, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand, New Zealand
6. Sarah Cornelius, University of Aberdeen, UK*
7. Linda Creanor, Glasgow Caledonian University, UK*
8. Laurence Habib, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, Norway, Norway
9. Richard Hall, De Montfort University, UK

10. Chris Jones, Liverpool John Moores University, UK
11. Jane Seale, University of Exeter, UK, United Kingdom
12. Steve Wheeler, Plymouth University, UK, United Kingdom
13. George Veletsianos, Royal Roads University, Canada

Recommendation: The Board seeks Trustees' formal approval for these changes.

Trustees then discussed Editorial Board duties and outreach. In addition to the work of the Editorial Board, which is largely focused on current submissions, reviewing and special projects/issues, we are now seeking to establish a small journal steering group to directly support Trustees in the governance of the journal.

This new group will include the Chair of the Editorial Board who is also a Trustee, 1-2 Editors, a representative from Open Academia and up to 3 representatives from other professional bodies. As well as providing strong and focused governance the group's purpose will be to share knowledge and best practice with similar professional bodies who publish journals for example in view of applying for review for gaining an impact factor and improving the peer-review process. Currently, we propose to invite Dr Jill Buban, Senior Director for Publications and Research at the Online Learning Consortium, alongside Dr Paul Gormley, executive director of the Irish Learning Technology Association and a representative from ascilite, Australia, to join this new effort.

Recommendation: The Board seeks Trustees' formal approval for setting up this new Working Group to undertake strategic development of the journal and report directly to Trustees until the end of the current ALT strategy (2 years).

The Trustees approved all recommendations.

8 CEO Report

Maren presented her report to Trustees, covering developments since June not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda and looking ahead to the end of ALT's financial year in January 2018. Trustees discussed the entire report covering recent work with partners, operations and risk management. The following items were discussed in more detail:

Item	Recommendations/actions
OER18 strategic partnerships	Trustees are welcome to provide input
Nominations to the REF panel	Trustees decided to nominate Prof Nicola Whitton (Vice-Chair) to the main panel, Prof Jane Seal and John Traxler to sub-panels
Research Award	Neil Morris will Chair the panel to set up the Terms of Reference for the Award alongside Martin Weller, who as President chairs the Learning Technologist of the Year Judging Panel
Operational and strategic plan	Trustees noted progress overall and in relation to strategic aims in particular. Sheila and Maren will update Members in a joint report.
Risk management	Trustees formally noted the updated risk register and the actions taken to mitigate the risks identified.

9 Membership

Sarah reported from the recent meeting of the Membership Committee and the Membership Report (from Tom Palmer). Sarah welcomed the new Members on the Committee and then went on to report

key actions from the Committee, starting with Committee Members volunteering to take part in the Winter Conference. Sarah reported on the Committee's discussion about support for CMALT and the expansion of the framework with the CMALT Pathways project. The Committee has identified ways in which it can contribute to the CMALT Pathways project and support the development of support for Assessors as part of the project. Alongside other Committees this Committee will provide 1-2 volunteers to help inform the Terms of Reference for the inaugural Research Award.

Trustees particularly noted thanks to Tom Palmer for his outstanding work on membership and CMALT.

Recommendation: Trustees formally approved the Committee's recommendation to establish the ALT Members Group North East.

Recommendation: Trustees formally approved James McDowell's appointment as Vice-Chair.

10 Further Education and cross-sector engagement

Bella reported from the recent meeting of the Further Education and Cross-Sector Engagement Committee and also the FE & cross-sector Report. Bella has had new Members join the Committee and their meeting covered a lot of recent developments. Bella discussed work from the meeting which focused on Members promoting the Blended Learning Essentials course and contributing to the ongoing work writing a collaborate guide about how Learning Technologist can engage with startups. The Committee focused also on the work of the FELTAG SIG, which seems to be transitioning to a different phase of its existence. The Committee also touched upon events and noted how the Winter Online Conference has encouraged participation from across sectors in recent years. Committee Members have offered mentoring to authors for conferences. Members also discussed about how they could link up better with sector bodies.

Recommendation: Trustees formally appointed Rachel Challen's appointment as Vice-Chair.

11 Events Report

Trustees then discussed the Events Report from Jane Marsh. The report covers the period between June and September 2017, which included the 2017 Annual Conference and looks ahead to April 2018, taking in the Winter Conference and OER18. It has been a busy and successful summer and we thank you for your help in making it so.

The report included the following actions for Committee Members:

1. Promote the members only call for proposals to the ALT Online Winter Conference.
2. Promote the call for papers for OER18.
3. Disseminate opportunities for sponsorship and exhibition for OER18 and the Winter Conference.
4. For each committee to put forward two volunteers to help moderate sessions during the conference.

Trustees discussed the report in detail including reflecting on the success of the Annual Conference, plans for the Online Winter Conference and OER18 Conference and the conference next year. Maren and Nic to pick up Playful Learning conference as part of the ALT events programme. Trustees welcomed the upcoming Tender for Conference Venues.

Thanks noted to Jane Marsh for her work.

12 Trustees and staff working together

Trustees explored a discussion paper about how Trustees can develop how Trustees and staff working together. In the context of the current transition away from the university and to a fully distributed model it seems like a good time to consider ideas.

Collaboration and support for all staff

The aim is to ensure we maximise how Trustees can support the work of the staff team and continue to get more insight into how ALT operates day to day. Current suggestions include:

- Consult staff on future ways of working together;
- Update both Staff Handbook and Trustee Code of Practice with updated information;
- Joint away day 2018 in the first half of 2018 to mark the completion of the transition;
- Informal invitation for Trustees to occasionally visit and observe team meetings;
- Trustees to provide informal mentoring for individual members of staff in areas of their expertise and as part of continued professional development for staff and Trustees.

Support for senior staff

The aim is to review how ALT supports senior staff in the long term. Current suggestions include:

- Consult senior staff on future ways of working together;
- Update both Staff Handbook and Trustee Code of Practice with updated information including for processes like taking research leave;
- Set out what liaison between senior staff and relevant Trustees should look like;
- Consider and report back to Trustees the implications for the Chair's term being limited to a single year and seek to propose alternatives that will help mitigate risk and provide greater continuity;
- Ensure that appropriate mentoring/coaching is in place for senior staff;
- Review arrangements in place to review senior staffing, succession planning and recruitment.

Individual Trustees shared their perspective and suggestions and offers of input for work in this area. There was a useful reflection on the role and responsibilities of Trustees, particularly in relation to the turnover between the rotating Chair of ALT role.

Action: Trustees to collaborate on a Google doc for this between now and the next Trustee meeting.

Trustees then noted the dates for 2018 meetings: 15 February (Manchester), 21 June, 12 Sept (Convening Meeting) and 15 November 2018 (Hosting orgs to be confirmed).

Minutes written by MD, 16 Nov 2017

Reviewed by SMN, 20 November 2017