

Minutes of the Central Executive Committee Meeting, 20 November 2014

1 Welcome

Chair: Doug Gowan (DG)

In attendance: Haydn Blackey (HB), Fiona Harvey (FH), Matt Lingard (ML), Sheila McNeill (SM), Sarah Sherman (SS), Alastair Clarke (AC), Claire Donlan (CD), James Clay (JC).

Staff: Maren Deepwell (MD), Anna Davidge (AD).

Apologies: Diana Laurillard, Shirley Evans, Malcolm Ryan, Martin Hawksey.

2 Any other business

Sarah Sherman requested that a brief update on Jisc's Co-Design programme be added to the agenda. This was added to item 14.

3 Minutes from the last meeting

Trustees reviewed and approved the Minutes from 20 June 2014 as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 Matters arising

Trustees reviewed the Matters Arising Report. Trustees reviewed all matters arising and noted that many had been completed and other items are picked up elsewhere on the agenda.

5 Events and Conference 2014 and 2015

A new report on conference and events was presented to Trustees who welcomed positive feedback overall from participants in this year's annual conference. The report set out brief highlights and lessons learnt. Trustees provided personal perspectives and feedback. Learning points included more prominent roles/identification for Trustees, organising chairing of sessions longer in advance and emergency chairs and considering more ways of Trustees to have active involvement. Trustees also took note of progress currently going on planning events for 2015 and current progress with the conference and the forthcoming winter conference on 2 December 2014.

6 Chief Executive's Report

MD presented the report which Trustees noted. The following points were individually discussed:

Matters arising

Claire Donlan and Matt Lingard both expressed an interest in joining the Steering Group for the MOU with the Irish Learning Technology Association and it was agreed Matt would join the group.

Action: MD to action in liaison with ML.

Trustees also discussed how to manage MOUs in future and decided on reviewing current arrangements.

Action: MD to work with Trustees to review current arrangements. Relates also to Item 12 on the agenda.

Community liaison

Trustees noted that there has been much liaison with stakeholders including the Ufi Trust, the FOSTER project, Jisc and others. MD also provided a verbal update on a recent partnership meeting with Jisc.

Website

The report highlighted how a recent security threat to the main ALT website had been managed, Trustees discussed this and the related change to risk register. Thanks were noted to Martin Hawksey for managing the process well. JC suggested changes to the risk register to reflect the management of risks associated with ALT's growing online infrastructure and how ALT manages personal information.

Action: MD and MH to review risk register in regards to technical risks and management of privacy/personal information and update it in time for the new financial year, February 2015.

Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

Trustees discussed the statement drawn up by SE, Honorary Secretary, and how its impact could be measured once it has been adopted. Trustees noted their thanks to SE. Trustees agreed to adopt the statement (with a minor grammatical change) and to an annual review of its impact.

Action: MD to ensure the statement is published and promote it and ask for it to be considered by all Operational Committees.

Research in Learning Technology

Trustees noted progress made in relation to the appointment of a new Editor in Chief and Editor in general, with a good number of expressions of interest having been received. Further Trustees welcomed an update that the Editorial Board has now been refreshed and was convened a few weeks earlier. Trustees also noted progress on trialling the addition of a 'Junior Editor' to assist with factual checking of submissions to improve how quickly papers can be reviewed.

Projects

The report showed that a number of projects have now successfully been delivered. Currently ongoing is a small role for ALT on the Steering Group of a new project led by the Tinder Foundation. Bids and plans for new projects are also currently underway.

Risk management

Trustees reviewed the risk register and in particular risks which have increased or decreased over the last reporting period. Trustees noted that thanks to the now confirmed office move, associated risks had decreased. Trustees further discussed how to manage risks associated with falling project income and the current membership recruitment drive.

HR

Trustees welcomed an update that the restructure has largely been completed, with Anna Davidge taking on the new role of Events and General Manager and the Support Officer role, also restructured, temporarily being covered by Diane Keel. It was also noted that the role of Communication and Publications Manager would be covered internally until the new year. Trustees expressed their thanks to all the team.

CIO transition

Trustees signed the form needed to set up the Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

The report concluded with an overview of progress made in relation to the overall operational plan and a preview of ALT's new Open Badges design.

7 Office move

The office move has now been confirmed for the week of 15th December. ALT's office will move to a different part of the Headington campus of Oxford Brookes University and will be located in the Gibbs Building. The location of the office being the only substantive change to the current hosting agreement, Trustees approved the signing of the Deed of Variation on their behalf by Doug Gowan as Chair.

Action: DG to sign Deed of Variation

Trustees also reviewed the costs of the proposed upgrading of current office furniture of £3,500 and approved this expenditure, which had been budgeted for in February.

8 Finance

HB provided a comprehensive finance report based on the narrative and figures circulated in advance reflecting ALT's current financial position at the end of quarter 3 and forecast for the year end which has been adjusted from the budget set in February. The proposed forecast is to achieve a balanced budget for this year and not achieve a surplus.

Trustees then discussed the financial outlook and strategy including a focus on ensuring ALT's central costs are met by core activities, in particular membership and events.

Trustees agreed to endorse the forecast and the financial strategy proposed in the report.

Trustees also noted that in line with ALT's purchasing policy, tenders will be sought from 3 auditors to take over from the end of the financial year ending on 31 January.

Action: MD to work with DG and HB to review the audit tenders and for DG and HB to form a recommendation about which auditors to appoint.

Action: Trustees delegated the appointment of auditors to GPC.

9 ALT Survey

The report presented the work on the new annual survey for ALT, led in large part by SS and SE with input from Committee Members at the recent face to face meeting.

Trustees discussed the importance of conducting an annual survey for ALT, approved the survey and recommended it include information about joining ALT and easy ways to share the survey. Thanks to all involved were noted.

Action: MD to ensure the survey is finalised and launched in early December.

Action: Trustees to send quotes for the related press release to MD.

10 Communications and website report

The Trustees welcomed the new report on communications and website from Martin Hawksey. Trustees discussed the significant progress made in relation to the new strategic aim to communicate better with members and the general public. Trustees also noted the work done by Martin Hawksey in this area in a short time since his appointment as ALT's Innovation, Technology and Community Officer, in particular in ensuring that ALT engages in two-way communication and facilitates members' engagement.

11 Operational Committee business

Committee for Communication and Publications:

Matt Lingard reported. Trustees noted that ML is stepping down as Chair this year and also as Chair of Editorial Board. ML outlined the following key points:

Events are the responsibility of all committees. Trustees agreed that the Events Reports should now be circulated to everyone. Suggestions for events could be made at any time to MD.

Newsletter editor recruitment has been completed with a new Editor in Chief, Anne Hole, and four Deputy Editors, have been appointed. There was discussion of further work planned for next year in updating the digest format, promoting the newsletter further and rationalising the number of news formats.

Action: ML and MD to discuss strategy for succession.

Committee for Further Education and cross-sector engagement:

James Clay reported. Important agenda items for the committee at this time are how ALT can engage better with practitioners from informal learning contexts and also FELTAG and funding implications. James highlighted the positive impact ocTEL has had on engagement. Trustees discussed the importance of considering how to find additional resources for ocTEL in 2015.

Action: Staff and Trustees to ensure that funding for ocTEL is a priority.

Committee for Membership Development:

Sarah Sherman reported. The Committee is looking at the different types of groups that are bounded by special interest, regional or national interest. The Committee also discussed the role of the representatives of organisational members.

Action: MD to work with Julie Voce and Kerr Gardner to report to MDC and then to go on to Trustees for strategic discussion and planning for national representation;

Action: Renewal process to include options for organisational members representative to be included in public list of member organisation representatives and to receive more information about being a representative.

12 International partnerships

Trustees received a brief report providing an overview following discussion at a recent GPC meeting. Trustees discussed the report and decided further work was needed.

Action: MD to ensure a group exercise of stakeholder analysis is added to the agenda for the February Trustee meeting.

13 Honorary Treasurer

ALT trustees decided to start the process of seeking an Honorary Treasurer to succeed Haydn Blackey from September 2015. The first step is to ask current trustees if they wish to be considered as successor Honorary Treasurer, with a deadline for responses of 18 December. If there are no internal expressions of interest then a call will be made to the ALT membership to seek expressions of interest to become a co-opted trustee and subsequently Honorary Treasurer.

Action: Any Trustee wishing to express an interest to do so by 18 December

14 AOB

Jisc-Co-Design

SS provided a brief update on the Jisc Co-Design Programme. There are a number of projects that are currently ongoing and including resource/tool development, learner led initiatives and other areas including online courses. Jisc's new approach has now identified scope and funding for each area. Thanks noted in particular to SS and SE who have been heavily involved representing ALT at the Co-Design programme.

15 Future meetings

Trustee will be meeting in February in Oxford, likely hosted by JC.

Trustees will seek to confirm a venue for June in early 2015.

MD, 26 Nov 2014, DG 27 Nov 2014