Central Executive Committee (CIO)

Minutes

Minutes from the meeting on 15, February, 2018.

1 Welcome and apologies

Chair: Sheila MacNeill (SMN)
Present:, Nic Whitton (NW), Daniel Clark (DC), Sarah Sherman (SS), Peter Bryant (PB), Lorna Campbell (LC), Elizabeth Charles (EC), Bella Abrams (BA), Neil Morris (NM), Shirley Evans (SE) (Virtual), Maren Deepwell (MD)l (ALT), Tom Palmer (TP) (ALT), Martin Hawksey (MH) (ALT - Virtual)
Apologies received from: Martin Weller (MW), James Clay (JC).

2 AOB

No other business was added to the agenda.

3 Approve the Minute

Trustee reviewed the Minutes from the previous meeting and approved them as an accurate record.
SS - noted a para was repeated, which was corrected.

4 Matters arising from the last meeting

Trustees reviewed the report covering all matters arising from the previous meeting. Nominations for REF panel where updated following review of requirements and recommendation changed. NM highlighted MW now chair of research award working group. 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 Chief Executive's Report and transition update

SMN noted thanks to MD and the ALT team for very smooth transition. MD thanked Trustees for feedback and support. MD then reported as follows with contribution from MH:

Transition
As per the transition process plan ALT has become an employer from 1 February. All transition tasks are on schedule and the office closure, move to home working and virtual organisational set up have been progressed as planned.

Hosting agreement: the official end date for the agreement with the university is 17 February. After that date we will receive our final invoice from the university. The return of the bond will then proceed from May as agreed. The approved partnership agreement has been issued.

TUPE transfer: this was completed and the new HR framework implemented as approved by Trustees at the last meeting. As part of the transfer conditions agreed with staff, an alternative to the existing contributory salary points scheme needs to be put in place. A draft of the proposed new scheme (EXCELLENCE RECOGNITION AWARD SCHEME), drafted by ALT's HR advisor, Jo Cairns, is included for approval in the appendix. Please note that no staff are currently eligible to apply, and the chief executive is the first member of staff who would be eligible to apply.
Action: to approve

New employment contracts and framework: all measures agreed by Trustees at the last meeting and set out in the plan have been implemented. New ALT employment contracts have been issued to Jane Marsh and Emma-Jane Brazier as incoming members of staff and TUPE-ing staff have also been welcomed.

Pension scheme: The new ALT pension scheme has been set up from 1 February and the first contributions will be made on 28 February, the first pay date for all staff. All staff are auto-enrolled from the start of their employment. In addition to general information provided to all staff, TUPE-ing staff have made use of additional pension advice provide by ALT's pension advsisor Jill Turner. Additional information from Jill will be provided once the outgoing pension scheme has processed the departure of employees.

Infrastructure and IT provision: Moving away from Brookes has required a review of IT provision. Previous the hosting agreement with Brookes provided software licences and a desktop provision on the Brookes network. As part of our new setup a guidance has been developed in our Operations Handbook to support remote working. This incorporates a number of policies including security and IT provision. As ALT has already had a number of remote workers in many areas this has only required the extension of existing practices, for example, a continued model which adopts a mixture of Windows PCs and Chromebooks. In other areas this has required the investigation and implementation of new systems including secure paper file storage/access, a virtual phone system, and creation of a VPN to allow remote desktop support.

All members of staff have so far adapted well to the new systems. To support this we are running weekly dropins as an opportunity to ask questions and share feedback. Where appropriate we are capturing some of these procedures and guidance in our Operations Handbook. Both myself and Martin are recording some of these developments with an eye on publishing them as journal/conference papers or blog posts to support other organisations considering similar changes.

Below is an updated overview of the outline plan Trustees approved at the last meeting.

Completed: Q4 2017 (by 31 January 2018)**: During this period the transition of employee information and transfer of contracts took place. New processes for pension and payroll were setup and tested as far as possible. The team completed preparations for the transition and closure of the office space. Communication to Members were updated, including the main ALT website and email templates and invoices. We completed the transition plan.

On track: Q1 2018 (1 Feb - 30 April 2018):** Transition have moved to the general ops plan, risk register and budget and will be reflected in our plans for the coming year. ALT now operates as a fully distributed organisation and support for staff has been developed and will be reviewed on a regular basis. We now have weekly team meetings, weekly drop-in sessions for virtual working support, review at annual appraisals and opportunities for formal/informal feedback.
We have furthermore set up a new operations handbook to which we are adding new procedures as they are being developed and documenting new processes.
Following a suggestion from Martin Hawksey we are also preparing to share lessons learnt from setting up virtual working and operations. This is work in progress.
I will write a further update to Members as part of my forthcoming CEO Report.

Planned: **Q2 2018 onwards (1 May 2018 onwards)**: The main part of the transition will have been completed. Trustee/staff joint away day, planned for 13/14 June in Manchester. Operations should be running smoothly for the run up to the Annual Conference. Update to Members at AGM.

Strategic relationships with Member organisations: we are now also considering how to best establish new strategic relationships with a small number of Member organisations across the UK. Our aim is also to for example host ALT Member Group events or staff meet ups within Member organisations. The first institution we are exploring this with is the University of Edinburgh as we already have a good existing relationship.

Operations

MD noted that we delivered strong progress in 2017. To achieve similar in 2018 noted that resourcing balance needs to be addressed. A number of activities aligned to our strategic aims were highlighted:

Aim: Increase the impact of Learning Technology for public benefit
- We are joining forces with TLC webinars for example to expand our range of open events;
- This year's survey will be expanded by the additional data from the CMALT survey;
- We're expanding our partnerships with EDEN and EA-TEL
- The new Journal Working Group will shape best practice Open Access publication of research in Learning Technology

Aim: Provide stronger recognition of and representation for Learning Technology professionals on a national level
- Research Award will celebrate excellence in research in Learning Technology
- Pilot and implement new pathways to CMALT accreditation for a broader range of Learning Technology professionals
- Increase awareness of mappings of the CMALT framework including to the UKPSF

Aim: Lead the professionalisation of research and practice in Learning Technology
- Establish the final ALT Member Group in the East of England
- Explore further ways to support professionalisation and professional recognition through Member Groups (e.g. CMALT champions, mentoring network)
- Review ALT communication channels and collaboratively develop guidance for discussion and collaborative platforms that support professional development in learning technology.

Trustees then reviewed the risk register which has been updated for the new year. There are a number of risks that have decreased over the reporting period:

1. **Senior staffing:** in view of Martin Hawksey's increase in hours from January and Maren's increased hours, senior staffing is now more robust than it has been over the past year.
2. **Staffing**: with the timely appointment of Emma-Jane Brazier, the risk of staffing shortages due to Jane Marsh's maternity leave has decreased.
3. **Transition**: as many parts of the transition have been completed, the risks associated with them have decreased.

The following risks have remained the same or increased:

1. **Employment:** we are taking an active approach to mitigating the risks of running the first payroll at the end of February, including taking expert advice, allocating additional resources, frequent communication with staff;
2. **GDPR compliance**: as the date of implementation comes closer we working to mitigate the risks associated with the new regulations as outlined below;
3. **Overall financial risk**: as is usual at the start of each financial year, risks associated with the uncertainty of the current economic and political climate are higher than at the end of the financial year. However, the good financial outturn of last year and increasing the restricted reserved help mitigate this risk.

Trustees formally noted the updated risk register and the actions taken to mitigate the risks identified.

Trustees formally noted that no formal complaints were received by ALT in the past year. MD has reviewed ALT's Complaints Policy, https://www.alt.ac.uk/complaints-policy, and it is up to date. The feedback and evaluation channels ALT has in place for membership, events and CMALT ensure that we receive regular feedback, enabling ALT improve our services and procedures.

MH gave an over GDPR actions and areas to date. Main areas of focus are our membership/events database (CiviCRM) and the journal. MH noted that good support for CiviCRM from our support contractor. In continued discussions with the Journal hosting as this is currently hosted in Canada. This is mitigated by the journal system being open source and can be moved to UK. There are a number EU journals using the same system and we are trying to connect with other users. NM suggested using Orcid IDs as an option to resolve GDPR issues. SS suggested developing resources to support learning technologists needing to address GDPR compliance. MD suggested this should be member led and a discussion might be started on the Members list.

MD gave an update on collaboration and support for staff. Noted that the team has been joined by Emma-Jane Brazier who is taking on events management (maternity cover). Noted that growth in CMALT is requiring additional staffing to be sustainable. An 'Operation Manager' post has been fully costed and this role can support delivery across key areas. Trustees discussed staffing and agreed this was a positive way forward.

Action: MD to implement new approved staffing structure.

MD provided an overview of projects. As well as involvement in BLE noted progress in the pathways to CMALT which has had over 100 volunteers come forward.

MD thanked PB and SS for their input on guide for start-ups as well as SM for joint report. MD reported she will be speaking at DCMS in March as well as other recent developments.

Action: Trustees approved excellence recognition award scheme
Action: Trustees noted changes to the risk register and approved mitigating actions
Action: Trustees approve staffing structure for 2018.
Action: Trustees approved the appointment of Co-Chairs of OER19

6 Financial Report and year end audit planning
DC reported that ALT is in a strong financial position as we close the year and currently projecting a surplus instead of a deficit. This is an excellent outcome for the year and enables ALT to continue to invest resource in completing the transition, innovation projects like Pathways to CMALT and increase staffing for CMALT and operations as planned.

The auditor will advise on the deferred income, but any surplus generated above £5000 will be transferred into the restricted reserves in line with the financial strategy to make a small increase to the restricted reserves overall. We aim to increase the restricted reserves to £150,000 in the current strategy period.

DC then moved on to discuss that the current financial strategy continues to produce strong results, but growth in the scale of ALT's operations requires us to increase expenditure to ensure that we can sustain the growth and development we are generating. In addition, we have started to receive ALT's first GiftAid donations and we will develop our use of this options for Members as widely as possible to ensure donating to ALT is tax efficient.

As ALT's position is currently stable and largely independent from project income, we recommend the following key aims for this financial year:

1. Increase the restricted reserves to £150,000 by the end of the current strategy period as ALT is now an independent employer;

2. Increase the staffing resource for CMALT and operations to meet the growing needs of ALT's activities in these areas and support senior staff;
3. Ensure project participation continues to be limited to those activities that are strongly aligned with strategic/operational aims;
4. Manage designated reserves, e.g. OER conference fund and the remaining OLP bequest in line with strategic aims;
5. Allocate appropriate funding for Member Groups and Special Interest Groups as their activities increase and in line with their existing policies.

Recommendation: Trustees formally noted the outturn and audit plans for 2017/18
Recommendation: Trustees approved the budget and financial aims for the 2018/19 financial year.

7 Reporting from the Annual Survey

MH presented the report from the Annual Survey and began by reflecting how its usefulness and insightfulness increases in its now 4th year. MH highlighted current priorities from the Membership, including content management systems and VLEs and a move away from paper-based exams. Blended Learning was a new addition to the survey topics and scored highly.

MH expanded on the analysis of the data collected, examining how priorities have shifted for Members over the past year. Trustees discussed how some things have become embedded in practice, becoming less of a 'visible' priorities for example in relation to open education and marketisation of open practices. Trustees continued to discuss changes in online assessment and marking.

We had a brief discussion on the changing profile of who responds to the survey, i.e. increasingly senior staff completing it, and how that shapes the responses and priorities communicated. As the survey data is published openly, SS noted that there is scope to work together with other organisations to undertake comparative analysis.

The discussion concluded with reviewing the enables/barriers for use of Learning Technology and these have changed over the past 4 years and noted ow staff development has risen in importance, reflecting Members strong interest in for example the new pathways to CMALT.

Trustees noted thanks to MH to the very quick work on analysis and reporting on the Annual Survey.

Action: MH to liaise with SNM & MD before publication.

8 Communications and Publications

Trustees noted that EC is now the interim Chair of the Committee.

EC provided an overview of committee developments including the recruitment of new #ALTC Blog editors and there has a steady stream of posts. EC reported that AJ shared a verbal update on progress with the journal. We discussed that submissions have increased and readership also had. AJ reflected on the difficult year we have had and noted that it is good to see progress overall. The Committee noted that the process of refreshing the Editorial Board was completed alongside a refresh of the reviewer pool. EC further reported on AH shared an update on progress with the #altc blog. New Editors are settling in well with 2 new Editors already have published articles and the other two have work in the pipeline. The team has moved to a Trello board to manage submissions and collaborate on the editorial work. There are many new submissions coming through including event reports. The Committee also looked back at the successful #altc blog showcase that took place during the winter conference in December and thanked everyone involved.

Action: NM to work with journal steering group to progress journal strategy.

9 Membership

SS reported from the recent meeting and was joined by TP who presented his membership report.

TP reported on membership. Highlighted improved recruitment of organisational members and how this has also had a positive impact on Associate Members recruitment leading to reaching 3,000+ members for the first time. Membership has benefited from good retention. Recruitment of organisational members was discussed. Trustees requested circulation of a list of key recruitment targets to see if there were any leads they could suggest. CMALT and Members Groups were discussed and 400th CMALT and final Members Group highlighted. Noted register of portfolios continues to grow. Trustees noted thanks to TJP for all his progress on membership.

SS reported on MDC business. Organisational membership growth was highlighted. Members are currently working on ideas in three areas: support for CMALT assessors; flexibility for CMALT candidates who have not submitted during a 2 year period; and institutional reps. SS reported on discussions around industrial members of ALT and benefits of joining ALT. SS reported that John Traxler will be providing input on ethics as part of the CMALT pilots. Trustees discussed reporting and funding available to SIGs and Members Groups. SS keen to see more transparency and better reporting from groups.

Action: circulate list of recruitment details to Trustees before the next meeting.
Action: governance of Member Groups and Special Interest Groups to be included in the wider work suggested under item 12.

10 Further Education and cross-sector engagement

BA reported from the recent meeting of the Committee, which was chaired by Rachel Challen. The key points that the Committee discussed were:

Setting up the Terms of Reference for the inaugural ALT Research
Award, Thanks to Sarah Williams and Paul Hollins, who have joined the working group to set up the Terms of Reference for the inaugural ALT Research Award.

dev.ac.uk – bringing the developer tribes together
Whilst work on the guide for Learning Technology to work with startups continues, this is another initiative ALT is supporting, a two day event for software developers working in further and higher education. As part of this Martin Hamilton, Futurologist at Jisc, highlighted why the dev.ac.uk event is important and how to get involved, read more

Open Education and OER - A guide and call to action for policy makers
ALT has produced this call to action to highlight to education policy makers and professionals how Open Education and OER can expand inclusive and equitable access to education and lifelong learning, widen participation, and create new opportunities for the next generation of teachers and learners, preparing them to become fully engaged digital Citizens.

Doug Gowan memorial fund for CMALT candidates
The Doug Gowan memorial fund for skills and learning CPD supports individuals from the FE, learning and skills sector to achieve CMALT accreditation. Seven individuals have been awarded CMALT places through the fund, with three having submitted portfolios for assessment, and two been awarded CMALT to date. There are 13 funded places still Available.

Blended Learning Essentials and CMALT accreditation
ALT continues to promote CMALT as a pathway to accreditation for Blended Learning Essentials course participants, with a discounted registration rate of £119. A course mapping to the CMALT portfolio is available, as are example portfolios from three of the successful

candidates from the 2016 Blended Learning Essentials CMALT pilot group. 8 BLE course participants have gone on to achieve CMALT accreditation to date.

MD noted great participation from committee members in other ALT activities including the ALT Online Winter Conference.

11 Events Report and Annual Conference 2018

MD presented the events report prepared by Jane Marsh. Noted that the ALT Online Winter Conference was a success beside initial technical problems beyond our control. Session chairs were a welcome addition thanks to support from operational committees. Financial income is hard to report as it is a secondary stream for member recruitment. MD reported on progress on OER18 highlighting that the event already has a very international audience. Guidelines for conference co-chairs was discussed. SS suggested sharing experiences from LC and NW who have also co-chaired previous ALT events.

MD noted CfP for the 2018 annual conference has recently been published. The committee has 90+ members. Committee members have indicated areas they are prepared to support and this will be used to inform subgroup members. SM noted that there was an opportunity to celebrate our members. MD highlighted we had to be practical and if Trustees had contacts to high profile speakers these would be welcome. Trustees noted thanks to Jane Marsh for all her work in generating very successful events.

Action: MD to follow up planning ideas for 2018 Annual Conference
Action: Trustees to consider support/guidance for conference co-chairs by the next meeting

12 Governance

Trustees then worked on a discussion paper on governance. ALT Constitution sets out the current process for the appointment and terms served by the President, Chair and Vice-Chair of ALT, resulting in an annual rotation of these roles. Trustees identified that this approach causes a lack of continuity and leadership as well as support for senior staff, as the time period for each serving Chair is so short. Common practice in other charities is to appoint a Chair for a longer period, i.e. 3 years.

The current system is also out of sync with Trustees terms of service generally, as Trustees are normally elected for a 3 year term, with the option to renew to a max. 6 years.

In addition, it seems timely to consider representation of Member Groups (i.e. a representative from each group) within ALT's governance structure. There is currently no direct representation and the current procedures mirror the approach ALT takes with Special Interest Groups. As Member Groups are established permanently and as ALT aims for them to take on roles like hosting CMALT Champions or providing mentoring locally, it is necessary to ensure that Members have direct representation within the governance structure.

Trustees agreed that a proposal should be developed for the next AGM in September. Suggested to invite an external person to provide input. Trustees agreed this would provide a useful perspective.

The code of practice provides guidance for trustees of the Association for Learning Technology (ALT) who constitute the Central Executive Committee. It is based on requirements and advice from the Charity Commission, ALT's constitution, and good practice for organisational behaviour. Trustees are required to abide by the code and the source documents. The document was last reviewed in 2016 and is now overdue for review.

Action: MD to circulate to Trustees and to invite Margaret Bennett to be external advisor.
Action: review and update the Trustee Code of Practice and delegate approval of the updated version to GPC.

2018 meetings

Trustees agreed to change the date of the next meeting to 14 June (Manchester), 12 Sept (Convening Meeting) and 15 November 2018. Hosting org for Nov to be confirmed.

Minutes written by: MH/MD, 22 Feb 2018
Reviewed by: Sheila MacNeill 1 March 2018