



# Minutes - Board of Trustees

(The Central Executive Committee of the CIO)

*Thursday, 17 November 2020. The meeting was held online.*

## Welcome, attendance and apologies

**Chair: Helen O'Sullivan**

Present: Peter Bryant, David White, Bella Abrams, Elizabeth Charles, Keith Smyth, Sharon Flynn, Lorna Campbell, Natalie Lafferty, Martin Hawksey, Maren Deepwell

Apologies: Daniel Clark

### 1. Welcome, attendance and apologies

The Chair and Board passed on thanks for the team in preparing the papers for the Board. It was noted that there were apologies from Daniel Clark for this meeting.

### 2. Minutes of the last meeting

Reviewed the Minutes of the last meeting held on 16 May 2020.

Trustees approved the minutes from the last meeting as an accurate record of the last meeting.

### 3. Matters arising from the last meeting

The Board reviewed the report on matters arising from the last meeting.

### 4. Strategy update

MD recapped progress to date for the year noting that all membership services were continued without interruption. The Board was asked to review and provide input on strategic objectives in Q4.

Recommendation: The Board reviewed and confirmed Strategic Objectives for Q4.

MD noted given the success of the online AGM in June this year and the production of the Annual Report and Accounts at this time, we recommend that the Board adopt a new timeline for reporting on ALT's Impact, to coincide with the AGM.

Recommendation: The Board agreed to publish reporting on our impact around the AGM from 2021 onwards, meaning that the report for 2021 will be published in May/June 2021.

## 5. Financial reports (M Deepwell)

MD reported on behalf of Daniel Clark. Noted that CMALT and Membership departments continue to generate revenue in line with projected figures and are achieving close to the same level of income as last year. Events have started to generate revenue again, although at a much lower level than in previous years. The Finance Action plan has been used effectively to strategize. Reported that by the end of Q3 finances have stabilized.

To support staff a new Finance Action Plan has been used and reviewed monthly to show progress made.

Recommendation: Board discussed and formally noted Q3 departmental Finance Report.

MD highlighted that the overall financial position for ALT and the profile for income has changed substantially with events income reducing while other departments, primarily Membership and CMALT, continue to generate revenue in line with projected figures and are achieving close to the same level of income as last year.

Recommendation: The Board discussed and formally noted ALT's overall financial position at the end of Q3, 2020.

Recommendation: The Board approved the use of £25,000 of restricted reserves if needed between now and 31 January 2020 and report to GPC in December and January.

Recommendation: After due consideration and on the recommendation of the Honorary Treasurer, the Board agreed to have an Independent Examination for the year 2020/21 instead of a full audit and that this is the best use of the charity's resources.

## 6. Senior Staff Report (M Deepwell, M Hawksey)

This report covers the period from late May to the end of October. We have had an excellent response from Members to get actively involved in ALT and we are in the process of following up regarding individual involvement in events, publications such as the journal and blog, act as a peer assessor and peer reviewer and join Members and Special Interest Groups. The Board welcomed the report overall, specifically discussing the following recommendations:

Report item	Recommendation
Partnerships and policy	The Board welcomed a summary of recent developments in relation to ALT's policy and partnership work. Trustees nominated Bella Abrams to provide input to the Trailblazer Group to establish an Apprenticeship Standard alongside the Chief Executive and to report back at the next meeting.
Reporting from the ALT Assembly	The ALT Assembly recommends the approval of a new Special Interest Group for Copyright and Online Learning (CoOL), building on the successful weekly series of

	<p>webinars running since March, which has so far attracted thousands of participants. The full proposal is available here . The group is proposed to 'focus on copyright issues associated with online learning, digital education, and learning technology. It will also consider broader copyright issues associated with access to information.'</p> <p>Trustees approved the new Copyright and Online Learning (CoOL) Special Interest Group.</p>
	<p>Trustees also approved the appointment of the new Journal Editors, James Brunton from Dublin City University, Louise Drumm from Edinburgh Napier University and Tunde Varga-Atkins from University of Liverpool.</p>
	<p>Members have approached us to consider making a posthumous award to Emeritus Professor Mark Stiles, who sadly passed away in August. ALT published an obituary for Mark and many Members shared their memories of him and his involvement in ALT on social media. See <a href="https://www.alt.ac.uk/news/all_news/mark-stiles-obituary">https://www.alt.ac.uk/news/all_news/mark-stiles-obituary</a></p> <p>Trustees decided to make a Posthumous Award of Honorary Life Membership for Emeritus Professor Mark Stiles.</p>
Risk management and operations	<p>Trustees reviewed the Operations update and Risk Register. The Operations Plan has been brought up to date at the end of Q3. As before, all parts of the plan now show a tick box that confirms that this activity has been reviewed in response to COVID-19. We are currently making very good progress, and there are no items to report that are late or require action by the Board at this time. MD noted core risks to the organisation have not changed since May, although we are now in a more stable position. Whilst the majority of risks are still medium, and are actively being managed by individual managers and the Chief Executive, the highest risks that have required direct action by the Board are: Financial strategy does not meet operational requirements; Income drops significantly and Transition of a Senior Staff role.</p>
Reporting from Projects	<p>Trustees noted the update on projects. MD noted particular thanks to LC for contribution to the <a href="#">Digital guide: getting started with online learning</a>.</p>

## 7. Staffing and Restructure Report

The Board formally noted that ALT is undertaking a restructure of ALT's staff team. Our aims are to:

1. Bring staffing costs, particularly for events, in line with our reduced income in that department;
2. Adjust the staffing structure following the resignation of our Chief Innovation, Technology and Community Officer effective from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 and decide on an effective strategy for the role going forward;
3. Ensure the staff team overall and individual roles reflect the changing business model of the Association for 2021.

## Timeline

The Board approved the timeline at GPC in October and this has been communicated to staff as planned.

September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Initial communication to the Board of Trustees.</li><li>● Initial communication to all staff.</li></ul>
October 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Timeline is set out.</li><li>● Board approves Timeline at GPC (15 October)</li><li>● Timeline communicated to all staff</li><li>● Dates set for individual/group consultations</li></ul>
November 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Restructure plan and budget are set out for</li><li>● Board of Trustees meeting, 19 November 2020 to discuss and decide.</li><li>● Consultation with staff.</li></ul>
December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Formally report to the Board at GPC (17 December) from consultation and confirm implementation plan.</li></ul>

## 8. Survey 2020 (Martin Hawksey)

Trustees welcomed this report from Martin Hawksey. For the last 6 years ALT has used its Annual Survey to engage with ALT Members and the wider community. The aims of the survey are to:

- help map the ALT strategy to professional practice to better meet the needs of and represent our members;
- show how Learning Technology is used across sectors; and
- understand current and future practice.

A number of core questions within the survey have remained unchanged providing an opportunity to record changes in the sector. The survey also has a number of questions that change from year to year which are specifically designed for ALT to strategically plan for the following year. We propose that for this year's Annual Survey is an opportunity to record the sector's response to COVID-19, which can also be used to inform ALT's priorities to support our community in 2021/22.

Trustees agreed the the proposed timeline for the ALT Annual Survey below:

- **30 November 2020** - Survey question consultation closes
- **01 December 2020** - Survey opens
- **18 December 2020** - Published deadline for responses
- **11 January 2021** - Analysis of survey result begins
- **21 January 2021** - Draft report shared at GPC
- **26 January 2021** - Target publication date

Action: MH to share draft doc to CPX for input.

## 9. Membership and CMALT Report (from D Baff)

Trustees noted the positive report from Debbie Baff, much of which was already discussed earlier in the meeting. The Board specifically noted the positive to membership recruitment and retention numbers for the period Feb - October 2020; new upcoming CMALT Accelerator Workshops and the establishment of the new Immersive Technologies and Active Learning Special Interest Groups.

The Board was particularly pleased to see ten organizations join ALT: GMIT, VerifyEd, Microsoft, St Georges, University of Bolton, Better Examinations, Brickfield Education Labs, The University of Law and Lexedio Ltd.

## 10. Events Report (from Emma-Jane Brazier)

The Board welcomed the report and noted in particular the success of the Summer Summit and positive response from participants regarding event fee. LC had heard commenting positively on ALT Staff presence.

Trustees then discussed face to face elements of ALT's events in 2021, specifically the following recommendations:

1. **Members Groups and Special Interest Groups meetings and events:** Trustees agreed that ALT formally continue its policy that all such meetings and events, including the ALT Assembly be held online until new formal guidance regarding holding face to face gatherings and events has been issued by the government. This policy will be reviewed by the Board as and when new guidance has been issued.
2. **Governance and Event-related travel for staff and Trustees/Members:** Trustees also agreed that ALT continues its no-travel policy for events and meetings (including Board Meeting, Staff meetings and site visits) until the end of February 2021 to be reviewed by the Board at its meeting in February. ALT will plan to hold the AGM 2021 online.
3. **OER21, April 2021:** The Board noted that current government guidance does not permit events to be held in person and the planning cycle for OER21 is now underway. Trustees approved the recommendation for OER21 to be held online only, with the option to organise a small related social/community meet up in person should circumstances permit.
4. **Annual Conference 2021:** Trustees welcomed that ALT is going to be holding its

Annual Conference 2021, 7-9 September, including elements from our successful Summer Summit this year and that ALT will plan for the event to be held online.

## 11. Ethical Framework

The Board noted the following progress from the working group:

As part of ALT's strategic aim to strengthen recognition and representation for Learning Technology professionals from all sectors, one of the objectives set out for this year is to develop an ethical framework for Learning Technology. The Board had an initial discussion regarding the framework in October and three Trustees volunteered to lead a working group: Bella Abrams, Sharon Flynn and Natalie Laferty.

We updated Members of this new development in October and then issued a call to sign up to keep informed and get involved. We have now had 20 responses to this initial call and we will continue to leave this sign up opportunity open for Members as the work progresses. Our initial aim is for ALT to establish a practical checklist that can be used as a starting point for informing the ethical use of Learning Technology by professionals, institutions and industry. Building on this, ALT could then develop a full framework with input from its Members in 2021 including working with commercial organisations who are Members to road test the framework with industry.

We have planned the following next steps for the coming months:

- **November:** Continue to promote sign up to working group and set up group infrastructure, send out the first monthly update to new members and prepare the draft checklist to be shared with the working group as a starting point for discussion;
- **December:** First meeting of the working group in early December, followed by plenary discussion at the Winter Conference on 15 December and continuing to promote this new initiative including to the ALT Assembly;
- **January:** Second meeting of the working group and set out schedule for 2021 work, progress checklist and start road-testing process;
- **February:** Report back to the Board of Trustees to agree schedule for 2021 in line with strategic objectives for the year and feedback from the Annual Survey 2021.

## 12. AOB

The Board noted that this was the last meeting that Martin Hawksey would be attending before his departure in January. HO'S thanked Martin, on behalf of the Board, for his dedication and service to ALT and wished him all the best for his future. Board members were invited to take part in the activities that have been arranged to mark Martin's departure and celebrate his time at ALT.

## Close of meeting

Next meeting: online on 25 Feb 2021.

Minutes: 19 November 2020, MH/MD

Reviewed by Chair: 24 November 2020, HOS