



Minutes - Board of Trustees

(The Central Executive Committee of the CIO)

Thursday, 16th February 2023. The meeting was held in a hybrid format.

Welcome, attendance and apologies

Chair: Dave White

Present: Shonagh Douglas*, Maren Deepwell, Sharon Flynn, Natalie Lafferty*, Kerry Pinny, Elizabeth Charles, Peter Bryant*, Puiyin Wong, David White, David Hopkins, Fiona Jones, Emma Procter-Legg. (*joining online)

Apologies: Helen O'Sullivan, Keith Smyth, Jane Frankel

Welcome, attendance, apologies and introductions

First partial in person meeting since November 2019, introductions and apologies.

1. Strategic Review

Staff and Trustees shared updates and reviewed progress over the past year. This item was not minuted. *Following this item Fiona and Emma departed the meeting.*

2. Minutes of the last meeting

Reviewed the Minutes of the last meeting held on 17th November 2022.

Trustees approved the minutes from the last meeting as an accurate record and noted minutes from the AGM. *Noted addition to minutes: information from the GPC around the pay structure.*

3. Matters arising from the last meeting

The Board reviewed the report on matters arising from the last meeting and noted that all actions had been completed, awaiting external response or are to be covered elsewhere on

the agenda.

4. Chief Executives Report

Maren Deepwell presents her CEO report covering the period November 2022 - February 2023, the board noted this overall. Maren opens with a personal thank you to the trustees and staff during this period of transition.

<p>Strategic progress and Roadmap 2023</p>	<p>The last quarter, Nov '22 - Jan '23, saw a host of activities completed, including the launch of the new events programme, and the launch of the in-house CMALT pilot as well as the updated membership fees and benefits.</p> <p>Looking ahead to the Roadmap for 2023, Maren outlined specific progress made against the new strategic priorities set a year ago including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Aim: Increase access to Learning Technology expertise and professional development.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The ITN Business collaboration was successfully launched at the Annual Conference, and our work has won a Bronze Award in the UK Association Awards this year.○ The new hybrid events programme was launched in January 2022.● Aim: Strengthen professional recognition for and representation of all Learning Technology roles across the communities we support.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The refreshed awards were launched in 2022 and attracted a good number of entries overall, with winners in all categories.○ The CMALT pilot was launched in January 2022.● Aim: Provide pathways to accreditation for general practitioners, advanced professionals and leaders through our professional and ethical competencies framework.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Open call for ALT-led consortium to develop & run a CMALT course. ○ Develop ethical framework resources and tools - delayed as requires more of ALT's strategic input instead of curation of existing resources, which requires further thought before we can proceed
<p>Governance</p>	<p>Charity Governance News</p> <p>Important recent updates for Trustees (see separate document), include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Annual Return for 2023: The Charity Commission has published an updated set of questions that many charities will need to complete as part of their 2023 Annual Return. We are doing this by asking charities more questions to build a more detailed picture of the risks to individual charities and the overall sector. A number of changes and improvements have been made as a result of feedback received from charities and interested parties during a consultation which ended in September 2022. This will not change the questions asked for the 2022 Annual Return. ● Support for Trustees: Whether you're a new or experienced trustee, our suite of 5-minute guides will help you be sure of your responsibilities and confident you're doing the right thing for your charity. <p>Outcome: The board notes these updates</p> <p>Charity Governance Review</p> <p>This is the final update on progress as there is only one action resulting from the governance review ongoing:</p> <p><i>The following actions are ongoing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Action 4.5.5: Collate a list of all of ALT's policies and the date of last review as well as the date of the next review. <i>Due to be completed at the end of this month.</i> <p><i>The following actions were completed recently:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Action 1.5.2: Review current MOUs and consider alignment between ALT and other associations, specifically risks and

benefits of MOUs.

Completed.

- Action 2.4.4: The charity is in the process of issuing micro-credentials to recognise the contribution of volunteers and we should expand this to all roles. *Completed. All badges were issued for 2022.*

EDI Implementation Plan

[ALT's EDI Plan](#) was implemented as a direct result of the governance review and we set out specific targets to achieve. The plan has now been updated to reflect what actions have been completed. Below is a summary of progress made:

1. We have completed or progressed all actions set out in the plan for 2022, including establishing a way to collect monitoring data for Members, Trustees, Staff and via the Annual Survey. In 2023 we are implementing monitoring for all Members joining or renewing their membership;
2. We have reported to Members at the AGM and updated the website with information outlining progress and actions taken from the governance review;
3. We have reviewed and updated ALT's Policy for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Trustee Code of Practice, Trustee induction pack and materials and the Staff Operations Handbook.

Outcome: The board notes very good progress on this over the last year.

Now that we have progressed these fundamental steps, the Board has further recommendations from our EDI consultant to consider which sets out possible aims and objectives for ALT to progress on this journey:

- To create a more thorough action plan and reflect on what feels achievable for ALT.
- To share this plan with the wider membership so that our new aims and intentions are transparent.
- CEO and Board to decide on where the priorities lie and work on a timeline.

	<p>Maren also suggests nominating a specific trustee to take some of these forward.</p> <p>The board had the following suggestions and thoughts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Linking to the policies in more places like news articles or blog ● Sharing questions that members give within GPC so there can be an identification of any patterns ● Standing item in weekly newsletter with a link to the policies to increase visibility. <i>This is a suggestion that is received well by the board.</i> ● Might be useful to have an institutional response to EDI queries <p>Action: Trustees to let Maren know what might help them to learn to better share information with the members.</p> <p>Annual Survey The Annual Survey closed on 5 February 2022. We will report progress from March once the results have been analysed.</p> <p>Note: ALT will publish some CMALT data alongside the report which is a data set not released since 2019, this will give new insights.</p> <p>Annual Reporting on Complaints It is our policy to report at least annually to the Board all formal complaints received. There were no formal complaints received in the past year.</p>
Strategic membership developments	<p>Pilot for CMALT in-house accreditation We have had 15 responses to our call for volunteers to join a Working Group to lead a pilot of in-house accreditation of ALT’s CMALT scheme.</p> <p>Our overall aim is to enable Member Organisations to accredit CMALT internally and help meet the increasing demand across the sector for professional recognition via Associate CMALT and CMALT pathways.</p> <p>In order to take part, we asked that volunteers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Represent an ALT Member Organisation that provides Higher Education in the UK; ● Have at least 3 existing CMALT Holders within your

	<p>organisation;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have demand for min. 5-10 new CMALT Holders in 2023; • Attend a monthly online meeting for a 9 month period, starting in February 2023, and provide input to the pilot scheme. <p>Priority will be given to institutions who have existing CMALT cohorts already in place.</p> <p><u>Next steps:</u> We are now reviewing the applications and will update institutions by the end of the month.</p> <p>Outcome: The board notes the progress</p> <p>Action: Shonagh to share info on being an internal accessor for Senior teaching fellow.</p> <p>Confidential: Trailblazer Group for Apprenticeship standard for Learning Technology</p> <p>THE Digital Universities Week</p> <p>ALT is an event partner of this year's THE Digital Universities UK at the University of Leeds. ALT Members are eligible to register for the event at a discounted rate.</p>
<p>Research and Policy</p>	<p>Development of a digital transformation framework for higher education</p> <p>Jisc are seeking input on a framework which aims to provide a structure for digital transformation activities in UK HE organisations. The framework builds on a range of previous initiatives, including recent work and surveys with universities, digital capability and digital experience insights work, and recent reports around digital transformation and reimagining learning and teaching.</p> <p>Research in Learning Technology</p> <p>After consultation with the RLT Editorial Team and Editorial Board, we are now reporting the following appointments to the Editorial Board: Debbie Baff, Javiera Atenas, Rosemarie McIlwhan, Bernado Tabuenco and Aideen Gibson.</p>

	<p>Outcome: Board formally notes new editors</p> <p>AmplifyFE Research Reports</p> <p>Supporting Researchers in VocTech and FE, a new report from the AmplifyFE project was published late in 2022. See https://amplifyfe.alt.ac.uk/audit/</p>
<p>Confidential Item:</p> <p>Updated staffing structure for 2023/24</p>	<p>Outcome: the board approves the staffing re-arrangement .</p>

5. Financial Report and Audit 2022/23

Shonagh Douglas and Maren presented this report covering 01 Feb 2022 to 31 Jan 2023. This Report included the following recommendations:

- Discuss the overall financial position
- Note the restricted reserves
- Discuss the annual return
- To review and formally note the current financial position.
- To review and agree financial strategy for the year ahead.

At the setting of the annual budget in Feb 2022, a loss of £15K was projected in order to account for the increased costs involved in returning to in person events post covid. Whilst event income overall is still recovering, an increase in attendance at the 2022 Annual Conference enabled our current position to remain strong with no overall budget losses this financial year.

Expenditure overall is below projections and we are carefully monitoring the impact of the cost of living crisis and the high rate of inflation. Having previously revised our projection for the year end from a loss of £15k to a much smaller loss of £3k, we will now be closing the year with a balanced budget and spending in line with pre-pandemic levels.

Shonagh notes that getting back to pre-covid sales levels is a huge achievement, also getting towards break even point is also amazing considering the rising costs. It will be about careful cost management to be sustainable going forward, which will be a challenge but do-able. ALT have a full financial audit this year, no major issues are not fore-seen but

having not had one in 3 years this will be a good check. There has been no change in the restricted reserves.

Outcome: The board noted the current financial position and noted the restricted reserves.

Audit 2023/23 Plan

Below is an outline plan of the upcoming audit for information:

- 31 Jan 2023: financial year end
- Trustee meeting Feb 2023: preliminary year end report and review strategy
- Trustee GPC March: Approve budget for 2023/24 in line with updated strategy
- Trustee meeting 15 June 2023: approval of draft accounts and presentation at
- AGM September 2023: approval of final accounts by Members at the AGM

In addition to the audit process, we are also going to:

- Review and update the Financial Policy (this is done annually), including the management of restricted reserves;
- Review outcomes of quarterly external reviews of ALT's Payroll;

Note: Approval of draft accounts will be 15th June so will be meeting the auditor then for approval.

Outcome: Board approves the plan for the audit

Financial Strategy 2023/24

Reflecting on the current financial position, the Board now needs to set out ALT's overall Financial Strategy for 2023 as follows:

- Increase events turnover by 10% in the coming year.
- Focus on membership retention and keeping income steady.
- We aim to increase CMALT income by 10% with the CMALT pilot for in-house accreditation and the new apprentice pathway.
- In 2023 we will seek to extend current project funding into 2024-25.
- Set targets to increase the reserves again once a surplus has been achieved.

- Review resourcing and funds set aside for Members Groups and Special Interest Groups with a view to finding a sustainable model for 2023/24.
- Our overall aim is to produce a surplus of £10k this financial year.

Outcome: Board agrees financial strategy for next year.

6. Operations Report including Events Reporting

Kerry Pinny presented the operations report covering the period November 2022 - January 2023. The report contained the following recommendations:

- Formally note operational progress at the end of the financial year.
- Review and comment on the website upgrade plan
- Formally review and note the updated Risk Register at the end of the Financial Year

The board noted this overall.

Operations	<p>Q4 review</p> <p>ALT has delivered much in the last quarter of this financial year. Staff shortages continue to impact the team and its ability to complete some of the planned operational objectives. Overall, however, our efforts are ensuring that the majority of objectives for this quarter are 'On Track' or 'Complete'.</p> <p>CMALT remains a challenging department with the CEO continuing to manage the assessment system. Assessor availability remains a challenge that impacts on the turnaround of assessment results. The CMALT Course and CMALT committee have not progressed as planned. Work to assess models for in-house CMALT accreditation is underway.</p> <p>Outstanding tasks related to the website have been grouped into a single piece of work for completion in 2023.</p> <p>Outcome: The board noted the Q4 review</p> <p>2023 Operational Plan</p> <p>This is under development in the new system - Asana. Maren recognises Kerry's achievement in producing the plan in a new system and format.</p> <p>Website Update</p>
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ALT's website is core to its operations. ALT's website server, Drupal and CiviCRM all need to be updated to keep up with latest versions of software and security updates. This is a long expected upgrade, which is due to happen this year.

The compatibility of versions across all of these platforms is preventing us from upgrading as required. For example, the theme is not compatible beyond Drupal 8 which prevents upgrading Drupal. We cannot update the server until Drupal is updated to Drupal 9 and so on.

Our current supplier is working with us to produce a cost estimate. Overall, we anticipate this work to cost in the region of £18k - £22k.

In line with our procurement policy we are also asking at least one other supplier to quote for the work.

Action: Kerry to report regularly on progress at GPC and the next Board Meeting.

Aim for the updated website to be live by the end of May 2023.

Initial work is required from the COO to map the website and from Circle Interactive to complete a detailed assessment and audit. Once the project scope has been defined, there will be a 4-6 week lead time before 'go live'. Downtime will be minimal.

This upgrade to the website is the first major upgrade in five years and is mission critical.

Outcome: The board approves the current plan based on the information supplied by Kerry.

Risk Management

No new risks.

ALT will continue to monitor cost of living risk

Outcome: The board notes this

GDPR

No new GDPR incidents

Confidential: staffing update

<p>Events</p>	<p>A separate Events report was not provided as reporting on 2022 events was noted by the Board at the November 2022 meeting and in anticipation of the appointment of a new Events Manager.</p> <p>All events have been delivered in Q4. Member and Special Interest Groups continue to deliver events with an increasing number of in-person events.</p> <p>OER23</p> <p>ALT will hold the 14th annual conference for Open Education research, practice and policy organised by ALT, in partnership with UHI. The conference will be co-chaired in partnership with the GO-GN Global OER Graduate Network, connecting emerging researchers and a global perspective with local and national knowledge.</p> <p>Kerry notes that only 5 of the proposals were online, so not sure how this is going to be able to play out.</p> <p>Member and Special Interest Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MG/SIGs held 15 events in Q4 with 254 registrations. ● Active Learning SIGs ‘e-pedagogy frameworks that support student-centeredness’ was most popular with 54 registrations. <p>Annual Conference 2023</p> <p>This year, the conference will take place from 5th - 7th September 2023, at The Oculus, University of Warwick, UK.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Venue selected and contract negotiations are underway. ● Call for Conference Chairs is open. ● Preparing to handover to the incoming Events Manager from March/April. <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In partnership with Reclaim EdTech, a Mission Mastodon series has begun, enabling members to explore Mastodon in a safe space.
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	<p>The board queries ALT 2023 applications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There have been 2 extension requests due to strike action which is why it is not on the agenda for this meeting. - 3 groups of co chairs shown interest <p>Action: Maren to send EOI's to trustees to make a decision in the next week.</p>
<p>Membership</p>	<p><i>Addressed in item 7</i></p>
<p>CMALT</p>	<p>CMALT remains popular with registrations and assessments remaining steady.</p> <p>The number of submissions remain on par with 2022 figures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The availability of assessors and size of the pool remain a challenge. ● CMALT registrations remain steady. ● Assessments are back on track following pandemic delays and staff shortages. <p>Honorarium pilot</p> <p>The CMALT Honorarium Pilot began with the September window, however, portfolios were assigned later than originally planned.</p> <p>Unfortunately, we have not seen a quicker turnaround of assessment from the pilot participants during this round. However, this may be due to the delay in assigning the portfolios.</p> <p>We plan to continue the pilot following the January window to assess whether honorariums improve assessment turnaround times and are a sufficient incentive to become an assessor.</p>
<p>Publications</p>	<p>Blog</p> <p>Receiving new content remains a challenge with the majority of this quarter's posts coming from MG/SIGs. Blogs from 2012, 2014 and 2015 are among the most viewed pages this quarter.</p> <p>Research in Learning Technology</p> <p>Manuscript submissions remain high ~20/month, however, the reject rate is high.</p> <p>Note: Board acknowledges that the blog and journal is a huge amount of work so extends a thanks for the work on this.</p>

<p>Projects</p>	<p>AmplifyFE</p> <p>The Amplify project is ahead of target for the year and both strands of the project are on track.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Launched the latest Sector Audit in November at the Week of VocTech. ● Presentation at OEB. ● SET conference in mid January which has increased the number of practitioners engaging.
<p>Operations Strategic Updates</p>	<p>Event platform partnership</p> <p>Expressions of interest in providing an events platform for ALT was published in January. No expressions have been received.</p> <p>The partnership proposal has been shared with Kaltura for their consideration.</p> <p>ALT aims to trial the platform at OER23.</p>

7. Membership and CMALT Report

The membership report covered the period 01/02/2022 - 31/01/2023, the board noted this overall, it contained no specific recommendations for the board.

Last year saw a record number of new organisational memberships. This year, recruitment levels have returned to previous years' levels, with 10 new organisations joining ALT to date.

ALT reviews its membership fees annually. The Board agreed to increase membership fees across all membership types by approximately 5%, to bring ALT's fee structure in line with inflation rates. We are mindful that we need to balance covering rising costs with affordability and support for unemployed Members. As part of our offer to Members, we continue to offer a discounted membership fee and funded scholarships to attend ALT events as well as registration for CMALT. Members have been offered the option to renew their 2023 membership in January, before the fee increase takes effect. An email advising members of the fee increases was sent out on 23/01/2023. The new fee structure, in effect

from Feb 1 2023, will boost revenue by £12k-£15k and will help balance the rising costs of delivering services to members.

Feedback from members that have not renewed is that it is for very practical reasons. ALT has the numbers to show people are continuing to engage. You can also engage quite considerably without being a member.

The board noted the report and made the following suggestions:

- A blog post explaining membership types
- Add CMALT information into general comms as a reference point (easy to find)
- Create some comms around what you get in terms of memberships based on how you are engaging to reduce risk of being misunderstood and to highlight ALT's generous offering

8. Roadmap 2023

This was not a minuted item.

9. AOB

No other business.

Close of meeting

Next meeting: 15th June 2023