

<b>National Adult Literacy Agency</b>	
<b>Draft Minutes of the NALA Board</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	22 November 2023
<b>Time:</b>	2.00pm – 4.30pm
<b>Venue:</b>	Zoom

<b>Chairperson:</b>	Margaret Kelly (MK)
<b>Present (Charity Trustees):</b>	Catherine Devlin (CD), Ciaran Casey (CC), Elma Teahan (ET), Maurice Sammon (MS), Tom O'Mara (TOM)
<b>Quorum:</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<b>In Attendance (Others):</b>	Colleen Dube (CEO), Paul Cahill (PC) (Finance & Corporate Services Manager), Michelle Reade (MR) (Governance & Compliance Officer)
<b>Apologies:</b>	Frances Ward (FW), Eleanor Neff, Maria O'Gorman (MOG), Paula Tiller (PT), Trish Nolan (TN), Pat Ayton (PA)

Please see Glossary of Terms at the end of this document for guidance

<b>1. Welcome</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MK opened the meeting. The apologies were noted and it was clarified that we had a quorum.</li> <li>MK gave an overview of the agenda.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Conflicts of Interest</b>
There were no conflicts of interest identified or declared.
<b>3. Draft Minutes of 26 October 2023 Board meeting</b>
<p><b>NOTED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MK summarised the minutes of the previous Board meeting.</li> <li>CEO gave CD an opportunity to give a brief update from the Student Subcommittee (SSC) as there was no representative from that committee at the last meeting and CD had given a brief update. CD advised that 2 new members were welcomed to the SSC. She also advised that planning is underway for the next Student Days and the success of the Ploughing Championship was noted.</li> </ul>

- CEO noted that a specific survey was issued to students and our learner members as part of the Strategic Planning process. Views about a range of matters including events for next year were sought. This will be taken into account for planning events for next year and findings will hopefully be ready to be presented / discussed at the next SSC on 30 November.

**Matters arising:**

- CEO provided an update on the item in the minutes in relation to Tenders. There will be a retendering from the ALL office and NALA have asked to be notified when they have been released.

**AGREED:**

- The minutes were approved subject to the correction of one typo.

#### **4. CEO's Report**

##### **4.1 Work Plan and Implementation Framework**

**NOTED:**

- There are no significant changes or updates since the last Board meeting. Most items are on track, 2 are completed, and a few are delayed or not started due to external factors, stakeholders or pressure of other work. Any work that NALA self-generated can carry over into 2024 if agreed to continue.
- 3 of the 4 ALL Innovation Projects are progressing well. In relation to the [REDACTED] innovation Project, NALA's concerns regarding the project implementation have not been addressed by the lead partner. NALA has requested the partner to make contact with the ALL office and Regional Literacy Co-ordinator to discuss / agree revised budget / parameters for the project.
- The ALL oversight meeting took place on 21 November. It was confirmed there is a budget of €4m for the ALL strategy for 2024. €3m is committed funding but there will be an additional €1m available but the detailed budget is not available yet. CD recommended the various meetings and bodies associated with the office and the strategy are plotted out. The Program office agreed to do this. MS informed the Board that he attended a Regional Literacy Coalition meeting in New Ross. He noted there was a lot of enthusiasm at that meeting and the next meeting will be in 2024.
- CEO referred to the recent launch of the QQI Blended and Online Learning Guidelines and informed the Board that NALA will meet QQI to discuss impact and implementation of

new guidelines for Blended and Fully online Learning Programmes. These may have significant impact on NALA's Quality assurance procedures and delivery. CEO has already raised it with QQI and SOLAS at another event.

- NALA did not apply for the [REDACTED] as we ran out of time and an extension couldn't be provided. However, they advised us we can apply next year.
- NALA is collaborating with UCC on a Digital Badge in Health Literacy which launched today.
- MK commented that there is outreach work ongoing with the Travelling community and CEO confirmed this was the case and this may be an area of focus for 2024.

## **5. Governance**

### **5.1 Update on Strategic Planning Process**

#### **NOTED:**

MK referred to the update provided in the papers and noted that:

- A survey was sent to over 7000 stakeholders
  - close to 3500 stakeholders through NALA's Mailchimp email system and to tutors on the Learn with NALA platform.
  - to 3658 Learn with NALA learners and 525 Student Members to get their views on our events and relevant questions from the Strategic Plan survey. They have also been asked to attend the 30 November 2023 discussion group
- There were 228 responses to the first survey which was less than 10% of surveys sent but just over 10% of the emails opened.
- 120 responses were received on the Student Survey.
- The responses are currently being analysed.
- CEO added that focus groups are being organised amongst those who told us we they were interested.
  - 2 are being arranged for 30 November for the SSC and other students.
  - Members of the ALL Program office and RLCs are being invited to a focus group on 1 December and
  - Directors of Further Education in the ETBs and ETBI are invited to one on 28

## November

- Consideration is being given to a further focus group with tutors in January depending on the outcome of the analysis.
- A further session with Board and Senior Management is proposed for 1 February.
- 2into3 will present initial insights from the surveys and focus groups to the Board on 13 December before the Board Meeting.
- TOM enquired about the level of engagement and responses and the cohorts these came from and if NALA were happy with that it will give a true reflection. The CEO said that we are broadly satisfied that it will certainly give us some useful insights but will still require us to keep drilling down further to get all insights and make decisions.
- CEO asked MS and CD about their thoughts on the survey they received. MS found it straightforward to complete. CD found it difficult to understand. It was established that CD received both surveys as she is in 2 cohorts of recipients and the second simplified survey was easier to understand. CD was asked to provide specific feedback to CEO. MS added that in any context, providing short videos to explain is very helpful.
- MK enquired if all Board Members are available on 1 February. All in attendance confirmed this is ok. MK pointed to the start time of the next Board meeting to facilitate a 2into3 presentation and asked if 11am was the earliest Board Members could begin to enable time for the rest of the Board meeting. CEO pointed out that the agenda will be shorter than usual and MR confirmed this is the case. CEO confirmed the slides will be sent in advance also to speed up the process.

## 5.2 Update on Constitution and Procedural Rules

### NOTED:

- MK noted that The Constitution Implementation Working and Advisory Group (CWAG) met for the first time on 14 November. At the meeting they agreed the:
  - terms of reference for the group
  - proposed meeting schedule
  - to volunteer for any particular actions where their expertise and/or interests align
  - to have a draft of the Code of Conduct and the Procedural Rules prepared for the next meeting of the CWAG

### 5.3 Review of Board Effectiveness

**NOTED:**

- CEO presented the proposed plan for the Review of Board Effectiveness. She noted that the questionnaire being proposed will be anonymous and the results will form part of the action coming from the Strategic Planning process. The proposed timelines are:

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
CD / MR and MK to develop questionnaire based on CRA model	24 November 2023
CD / MR / MK to update SPAG / share draft for feedback	27 November – 4 December 2023
Questionnaire considered by Board	6 - 13 December 2023
Questionnaire finalised and issued to Board for completion	21 December 2023 – 12 January 2024
Survey responses summarised for consideration / identification of follow on actions by MK / CD / MR / 2into3	19 January 2024
Survey responses / follow on actions considered by SPAG	25 January 2024
Recommendations to be considered by Board at Strategic Planning Session and Draft Strategic Plan	1 February 2024 - onwards

- MK asked all members to consider if any of them would be interested in becoming Chairperson of the Board as she will be coming to the end of her term soon.

**AGREED:**

- The Board Agreed the approach and timeline to the review of Board Effectiveness
- Board Members will consider interest in becoming Chairperson of the Board

### 5.4 Schedule of 2024 Meetings

**NOTED:**

- CEO presented the proposed Schedule of Board Meetings for 2024 including the EGM, AGM and key decision items for each Board meeting. She explained that subcommittee meeting are also being plotted out but the Board meetings need to be agreed initially.
- The Board discussed their availability for the various dates. TOM commented that January to March seems quite busy and if this could be spread or amalgamated. CEO and MR outlined that the timelines for January to March are closely aligned to the Strategic Planning process and key decisions at that time so unfortunately they cannot be moved significantly. TOM acknowledged this. CEO clarified that while we want to accommodate

everyone, and acknowledge that Board Members want to attend all meetings and events scheduled. We also understand that it may not be possible. In those instances we need to ensure we have a quorum. MK added that views can be taken through Subcommittees and by email in advance if a Board Member cannot attend a particular meeting or event. MK will not be available for the June meeting so it was noted that the Vice-Chairperson would need to chair if the meeting or the meeting rescheduled.

**AGREED:**

- The Board agreed the provisional schedule of Board meeting and events.

**6. Education, Training and Assessment Subcommittee - Draft Minutes of 2 November 2023 Meeting**

**NOTED:**

- CEO and TOM gave a brief summary of the minutes from the last ETA minutes.

**7. AOB**

- MR to establish final availability for the next in person Board Meeting

**Next Meeting**

<b>Date:</b>	13 December 2023
<b>Time:</b>	11am
<b>Venue:</b>	NALA Offices and Zoom

**Actions Arising from This Meeting:**

Item	Action	Person Applicable	Timeframe
5.3	Board Members will consider interest in becoming Chairperson of the Board	All Board	13 December
7	MR to establish final availability for the next in person Board Meeting	MR	6 December

Chairperson's Signature and date	Secretary's Signature and date
MARGARET KELLY	PATRICIA AYTON

## Glossary

Acronym	Full Description
ALL	Adult Literacy for Life
ABEDiLi	Adult Basic Education Digital Literacy project
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AEO	Adult Education Officer
AEOA	Adult Education Officers' Association
ALO	Adult Literacy Organiser
ALOA	Adult Literacy Organisers' Association
ARF	Audit, Risk and Finance Subcommittee
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CITO	Check In, Take Off
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CRA	Charities Regulatory Authority
CRO	Companies Registration Office
DLS	Distance Learning Service
DFHERIS	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
ERS	ERS IT solutions
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ETA	Education, Training & Assessment Subcommittee
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland
FBF	Furthest Behind First
FET	Further Education and Training
IBCB	Irish Banking Culture Board
ICT	Information Communications Technology
LAT	Literacy Awareness Training
LSPG	Literacy and Staff Policies and Governance Subcommittee
LWN	Learn with NALA
PMDS	Performance Management Development System
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Q1, 2, 3, 4	Financial Quarter 1 (January – March), 2 (April - June) 3 (July – September) 4 (October – December)
RLC	Regional Literacy Coordinator
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SIPTU	Services Industrial Professional and Technical Union
SOFA	Statement of Financial Affairs
SORP	Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) on Accounting and Reporting for Charities
TUI	Teacher's Union of Ireland