

National Adult Literacy Agency	
Final Minutes of the NALA Board	
Date:	1 May 2024
Time:	2.00pm – 4.30pm
Venue:	Zoom

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

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

1. Welcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MK opened the meeting and noted there was a quorum
2. Conflicts of Interest
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MK asked if there were any conflicts of interest. There were none. MK summarised the agenda and the decisions.
3. Minutes of Previous Meetings
3.1 Minutes of 27 March 2024 Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MK noted that since the last meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> there were no other nominations for Chairperson, therefore she is the sole candidate all Board Members going forward for another term have been nominated and seconded there has been no contact with TR for some time therefore she has not been nominated or seconded. AF noted she is on maternity leave from her employment. CEO confirmed she was contacted at her home address and by phone, there was no response. there has been a meeting with SOLAS which will be discussed later on

- NALA had a clean audit
- the Finance Manager position has been filled and the successful candidate will start on 17 June 2024.

AGREED:

- The minutes were approved

4. 2024 Work Plan and Implementation Framework

NOTED:

- CEO noted that there is an update on the meeting with SOLAS in the Workplan. The detail was extracted from a follow up note sent to the Director of the ALL Program Office and therefore reflects the meeting. She noted that:
 - there is not a clear picture from the ETBs on their literacy provision for a number of reasons which is really disappointing and disheartening as NALA has no baseline for literacy provision. This makes it difficult to plan, influence or inform. The ALL Program Office agrees.
 - there is some duplication between NALA and the ALL office's activities; quarterly meetings have been planned and scheduled and will generally occur 2-3 weeks before NALA Board Meetings to allow us to report up to date information.
 - NALA has asked SOLAS to convene regular meetings between NALA and the other funded agencies to ensure visibility on overall work.
 - NALA has sought information on the ETB Board election process.
 - the cost of the Freetext Service is increasing, and use is very low and has been falling so it has been discontinued in agreement with the ALL office.
 - it was flagged that negotiations are ongoing with D2L, so discussions with SOLAS regarding the scope of that service and our budget needs to happen as a matter of urgency.
- MK added that we raised that the Oversight Group is very top down experience with no joint planning. While it is understandable, maybe a sub-group should be arranged. This request was refused. However, she will request SOLAS to meet NALA more frequently.
- The Board then discussed the situation with the ALL Strategy at length.

5. Governance

5.1 Draft Strategic Plan and Implementation

NOTED:

- CEO acknowledged the late circulation of this draft Strategic Plan. She summarised the latest feedback received and noted it had been incorporated. She gave a quick overview of the slight changes since last seen by the Board. CEO is now looking for final comments from the Board so that it can go to final plain English edit and final design for launch on 28 May 2024.

AGREED:

- Board will revert with any comments by lunchtime 7 May 2024.

5.2 Update on AGM and Director nominations

NOTED:

- CEO noted that we have been working on actions arising since the EGM such as Membership communications, website updates and submissions to the CRO.
- In relation to the AGM, CEO noted that there is the exact number of vacancies as there are candidates for our Board. Final membership communications are being finalised and is due to issue by the end of the week. The Board discussed the make up of the Board and options for co-options following the AGM.
- A new Secretary will need to be selected at our Board Meeting in June. EN expressed her interest in the position of Secretary.
- MK formally thanked the outgoing members of the Board; PA, MS, FW and TR.
- CEO invited Board Members to the staff farewell part in NALA offices on 23 May 2024. She will send on the details.
- A trial run for the AGM will take place. CEO will schedule this once the running order for the day has been scheduled. MK enquired if we are definitely not having an online attendance option. CEO will discuss with MR.
- CEO referred to the staff views in relation to membership and that this is an ongoing conversation internally. CEO explained some of the known reasons for reduced membership.

6. Finance and Staffing

6.1 Management Accounts – 1 January to 31 March 2024

NOTED:

- PC gave an overview of the Management accounts.

6.2 Staffing

NOTED:

- CEO apologised for this paper being issued after the pack. She explained that there is a lot of moving parts in relation to recruitment and departures. The Management Team met to discuss on Friday. They decided the most strategic and prudent approach to the changes are to fill the known gaps and establish where that leaves NALA in terms of budget.
- CEO gave an overview of the latest position in terms of departures, vacancies and recruitment. She then outlined the proposal now been put to the Board:

From May 2024

- Recruit Finance Administrator to replace the Finance Administrator
- Hold an internal competition for a Maternity Cover position for the Communications, Advocacy and Outreach Manager
- Outgoing Finance and Corporate Services Manager's hours of work to be reduced from 35 – 21 with a view to his finishing by 31 December 2024 once the new Finance Staff are sufficiently onboarded
- The additional salary cost for these proposals is forecasted at €37,743 for all these anticipated changes. The additional cost will need to be covered by NALA's unrestricted reserves.

June – September 2024:

- Management team to provide updates / additional proposals for staff resourcing / outsourcing pending:
 - outcomes of the above recruitment processes
 - agreement of the strategic plan
 - selection of a new Board / subcommittee members
 - agreement of a new work plan incorporating the strategic plan actions
- CEO also noted that there may be some backfilling required, the details of which are

dependent on the successful candidate for the Maternity Cover Position.

- MK enquired about the period while NALA awaits the start of the new LWN coordinator and how NALA are covering that position in the interim. CEO confirmed the period we are in is traditionally quieter in that role and the Innovation Manager and the CEO are covering it.
- MK then enquired about the backfilling and new tasks under the new Strategic Plan. She enquired if any part-time staff had indicated a desire to move to full time hours. CEO confirmed there has been no indications of this. CEO will come to the Board as it is anticipated that additional hires or contracts may be requested to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan also. PC added that the proposal above is to address the gaps we have at present, but that NALA will be doing a fuller resourcing review. Our reserves are in a strong position to fund this proposal.

AGREED:

- The Board agreed each element of the proposal individually.

7. Student Subcommittees – minutes of 17 April 2024 meeting

NOTED:

- MK noted that the quorum wasn't met for the meeting. She enquired of the quorum should be reviewed. CEO advised the Terms of Reference are being reviewed at the moment.
- MS noted that he is leaving the Board and has recently left the Student subcommittee. He thanked everyone for the experience he had. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] He stated he will be continuing to work with NALA albeit not on the Board or the Student Subcommittee.

8. AOB

- CEO reminded the Board that Members of NALA's Board represent NALA and not any other organisations that may be involved in.
- CEO enquired with PT if there was any update on the situation with tutors' pay and conditions. PT advised that TUI and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Innovation and Science have reached an agreement. She provided a summary of her thoughts on the current agreement. The Board and CEO discussed this and the conditions, requirements and qualifications for being employed as an adult literacy tutor. There was acknowledgement that there are some inconsistencies across ETBs and that NALA has not been able to get a clear picture on the totality of literacy provision across the country. CEO

informed the Board that the ALL Office will be running a campaign later in the summer which will not direct learners towards services but rather make society aware of the issues and encourage them to get involved. MK suggested NALA need to be more strategic in its dealings with local coalitions.

- MK enquired about the upcoming local elections and any advocacy work undertaken by NALA. CEO advised that NALA is drafting election manifestos for local and EU politicians, focusing on the provision of public services in person and in plain language. They also cover advocacy for one to one literacy tuition. MOG expressed her views that campaigning with local candidates may not be very useful given their remit.
- MK wished the candidates for the next Board term luck and brought the meeting to a close.

Next Meeting	
Date:	19 June 2024
Time:	2.00pm
Venue:	In Person

Actions Arising from This Meeting:			
Item	Action	Person Applicable	Timeframe
4	Updated work plan and resourcing proposal to be submitted to the June Board meeting to respond to Strategic Plan	CEO	June 24

<i>Margaret Kelly</i> 27 June 2024	
Chairperson's Signature and date	Secretary's Signature and date
MARGARET KELLY	

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