

# Education Scotland Management Board

## MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN OPTIMA At 10.30 on 16 December 2016

<b>Present:</b>	Bill Maxwell	Chief Executive (Chair)
	Alan Armstrong	Strategic Director
	Lesley Brown	Strategic Director
	Alastair Delaney	Chief Operating Officer
	Graeme Logan	Strategic Director
	Moi Ali	Non Executive Board Member
	Kate Dunlop	Non Executive Board Member
	Mike Ewart	Non Executive Board Member
	Linn Phipps	Non Executive Board Member
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Roz McCracken	Acting Secretary
	Mary Bovaird	Head of HR
	Maureen Gore	Assistant Director
	Mary Hoey	Assistant Director (for part of meeting)

### Welcome and Apologies

1. The Chair welcomed all members and attendees to the meeting. There were no apologies.

### Minutes of previous meeting and action log: 27 September 2016

2. The minutes of the meeting held on 27 September were approved subject to the following amendments:

- Page 3, para 7: wording to be strengthened
- Item 12, note that Mike Ewart had tendered his apologies for the September ARC meeting.

3. It was agreed to revise how action points should be presented going forward. In particular, the action points relevant to the particular meeting should be pulled from the tracker and presented either on the agenda or in a separate paper rather than presenting the full tracker. The action points completed since the previous meeting should also be listed separately to ensure a focus on outstanding actions.

**ACTION POINT: By next meeting, secretary to consider how best to present action points at future meetings.**

4. In reviewing the action points, a number of small spelling or formatting mistakes were identified for amendment. It was also agreed to split action point 6 into two - the first part being about scheduling future meeting dates and the second being about the provision of a wider calendar of events for non executives which should include not just ARC and Management Board but also other committees such as Portfolio Board and other key events such as SLF and staff conferences.

**ACTION POINT: Secretary to split action point 6 into two separate actions – scheduling of meetings and creation of a calendar of events**

### Declaration or Conflict of Interest

5. No conflicts were declared although it was noted that the Mike Ewart on Twitter was not Education Scotland's Mike Ewart.

**ACTION POINT: Secretary to arrange for SG communications colleagues to be advised that Mike was incorrectly being identified on Twitter as the author of some trolling type tweets.**

### Equalities Strategy and Policy

6. In discussion the following points were made:

- The Agency currently contributed to the SG's equality report. However, the Agency was keen to develop its own response to the equality agenda. This would require both internal and external consultation.
- Graeme Logan had assumed the role of Equalities champion within ES and an internal working group had been established to develop the Agency's Strategy. An early draft was tabled for comment.
- It was noted that the current draft was very wide-ranging and it was therefore suggested that this should be developed further to include a section with a more specific focus on what specific actions the Agency would undertake as priorities for improvement in the shorter-term.
- The Inward, Outward and Forward Looking approach was welcomed with agreement that an inward focus should be the priority given recent People Survey results.
- The intention was to hold an all staff event in February to develop an accompanying action plan and a range of meaningful personal objectives around equality for staff.
- The need to better embed equality across the Agency was reflected in the move to change the Embedding Inclusion, Equity and Empowerment Programme into core business.

- It was noted that CEMVO Scotland, a national intermediary organisation funded by the SG, provided support around implementation and mainstreaming of equality issues. It was agreed that this would be useful to pursue.
- There was a discussion about the need to both capture the scale of change required and the devise effective and measurable outcomes. In particular, it was noted that measuring impact would be difficult.
- Members also considered whether now was the right time to be undertaking this significant piece of work. It was noted however, that much of the work was not actually new, rather the strategy was more an acknowledgement of the work already being done and was designed to bring a better sense of coherence.

7. On that basis, it was agreed to proceed.

**ACTION POINT: Moi Ali to facilitate an introduction to CEMVO for Education Scotland.**

**ACTION POINT: Graeme Logan to bring back revised strategy with action plan to a future meeting by June Management Board.**

## The Strategic Environment

8. There was an in-depth discussion about the environment in which the Agency was currently operating. Each Strategic Director gave a brief overview of the main priorities and pressures impacting on their respective areas. Key points of note included:

- **Inspection** work was currently high profile with differing viewpoints across the political environment about the role and frequency of inspection, particularly around accountability vs. improvement. The expected numbers of inspection for the year was also highlighted (committed to at least 120 for NIH purposes). A Standards and Evaluation framework would be published in June. ES (Alastair) will be leading on developing this. Streamlining inspection processes was a priority. The Agency was currently piloting electronic questionnaires and so far the results were positive.
- Work ongoing to develop the agency's response to the **Governance Review** following both the session with the non executives board members and the Leadership Forum workshop. The response would concentrate on key principles and would highlight what we see as our key interventions at school, local authority and national level. The response would be submitted by the deadline of 6 January.
- An update was provided on the **spending review** and the impact on the Agency's core budget. The key risks arising from that were identified and the likely impact on agency resilience highlighted. The Agency would need to

clearly prioritise its work, pulling back from some current areas of work. The future focus was likely to be more heavily weighted towards delivering the agreed national priorities, inspection and the support function for local authorities as opposed to curriculum development, although a more focused programme of curriculum development and support would continue. It was also noted that the Agency's response to the Governance Review would need to make it very clear that any new responsibilities or functions would need to be resourced. There would also be a need to develop a plan in anticipation of additional future cuts.

- There was currently much political interest in both **CfE and the Benchmarks**. Consideration was on-going with DFM about whether to phase the launch of the benchmarks for primary and secondary levels or to put them all out at once. It was also noted that Learning Directorate colleagues were currently leading on the preparation of a paper explaining the governance structure around CfE for the Education and Skills Committee in January.
- The Government had announced additional funds for the **Attainment Challenge** as part of the budget settlement. As a result, 98% of all schools in Scotland would be brought within the programme from April 2017. There was a discussion about how to ensure the funds were used to the best effect and not simply used to offset cuts elsewhere. Discussion was ongoing about the role of Local authorities in monitoring how their schools spent the money while national assessment data would provide reliable, national data about whether the gap was closing. Work was also underway to develop a measurement framework and it was also noted that the Agency had, that week, issued a guide to schools on improvement planning. There was also the possibility that the Agency might undertake an aspect review at some stage while Audit Scotland was likely to also undertake a review in 2019 about how the funds had been used.

**ACTION POINT: Graeme Logan to provide Non executives with a copy of the improvement planning guide.**

## People Survey

9. Members expressed concern and disappointment at the results and the significant overall drop in staff engagement. The Board discussed how to address the results including the low levels of confidence that staff clearly have about the extent to which the underlying issues would be addressed effectively. It would therefore be crucially important that everyone within the leadership team was committed to change. There had been a useful discussion at the recent Leadership Forum where it was acknowledged that everyone in the Leadership Team had a role, both individually and collectively, to improve things and to model the required behaviours. The People and Resources Board was also currently considering what needed to be done. It would be important to identify some quick wins, so demonstrating a willingness to tackle the issues.

10. It was also noted the lack of secondees this year and the experience of having to lose many such posts early in the year may have exacerbated the results.

While there were significant drops across the full range of survey themes, the individual comments did, however, also demonstrate a genuine level of enjoyment and satisfaction among staff around having jobs where they felt they could make a difference. In addition the flexibility that their current roles offered was welcomed. It would be important to build on these positives

11. Members acknowledged that the results could not be turned around overnight, it would require a sustained and long-term approach with a need for greater transparency and visibility of decision making. The outcome of the Governance Review might also offer an opportunity – delivering validation and a renewed mandate for the Agency and the staff.

### **Leadership Strategy**

12. The discussion naturally moved from the People Survey results to the Agency's Leadership Strategy which had been adapted to take account of the survey results. The Strategy was concentrated on individual behaviours whereas previous work had focussed on team working. It would be important to be clear about what we value and what we want to be different going forward. A 360 degree feedback framework was being developed with the immediate focus being at AD level. It would also be important to empower people to access coaching and support offers.

### **Improving our Organisation**

13. An update on the IOO Programme was provided. The natural read across to the People Survey results and Leadership Strategy was recognised.

14. The 82% completion rate for the skills review was welcomed, indicating that people were bought into the process and were actively considering their own strengths and areas for development. It would be vitally important to publicly do something with the skills review results, otherwise it would feed the overall cynicism identified in the People Survey.

### **Audit and Risk Committee – verbal update**

15. A brief update on the items discussed at ARC was provided.

### **Any other business**

16. There was no other business raised.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

Next meeting to be rescheduled to accommodate non-executive attendance.

**Roz McCracken**

Acting Management Board Secretary

December 2016