Meeting	Advisory Board Strategic
Date	06/07/2020
Time	10.30 – 13.30
Venue (Chair)	Webex video conference

Minute

Gayle Gorman (Chair)	Aileen Ponton
Alan Armstrong	Maureen Hamilton (Item 5)
Gillian Hamilton	Laura-Ann Currie (Item 6)
Janie McManus	Tom Gregory (Item 7)
Maria Walker	Gillian Howells (Item 8)
Roz McCracken	
John Fyffe	Kerry Brunton (Secretary)
David Gemmell	

1. Welcome and apologies

1.1. Apologies were received from Lindsay McRoberts and Kevin Kelman due to annual leave. Apologies were also received from Ray McCowan owing to urgent matters arising. Gayle welcomed Kerry Brunton who attended to provide secretariat support.

2. Minute and action log

2.1. Minutes of the strategic meeting held on 6 May 2020 were accepted as accurate by the Board.

2.2. Action Log
AB 09 19-20   – Delayed due to Covid. Reforecast date - 07/10/20.
AB 17 19-20   – Overtaken by events - CLOSED
AB 19 19-20   – Cost is more expensive than face to face. Reforecast date - 07/10/20.
AB 22 19-20   – Discussions have taken place – Reforecast date - 07/10/20
AB 25 19-20   – Paused due to Covid. Reforecast date - 31/12/20
AB 1 20-21   – Work continuing to review plan & workplan. Issue to members asap.
AB 2 20-21   – Both members had been duly involved - CLOSED
AB 3 20-21   – LA now has potential for Glow with video for all learners - CLOSED

3. Declarations or conflicts of interest

3.1. None

4. Chairs update

4.1. The Chair provided an update on the ES recovery plan progress, acknowledging the exceptional support which had been received from the SD's. It was reported that a number of ES workstreams had merged with CERG workstreams to reduce duplication. Discussions on the role of ES in the Covid-19 recovery group, implications for the sector, and ES plans following the DFM's announcement on schools re-opening in August, took place. It was noted that Gayle Gorman was now sitting on the scientific sub group of CERG.

4.2. Members discussed the need to ensure effective health and well-being support for staff at this time. A wide range of support activity was highlighted, including ES staff "Blether" sessions, HR health and well-being calls to staff, top tips for working at home, well-being sessions etc. The Pulse Survey results would also help inform future activity.

4.3. It was noted that the Corporate Plan had been reviewed and would be aligned with current key priorities.

4.4. There was a discussion around blended learning plans as a contingency, should localised lockdowns occur. The local authority plans had been reviewed by Senior Regional Assessors prior to submission to ES, prior to being formally moderated by Scrutiny colleagues to ensure the necessary criteria was being met. ES had subsequently forwarded each LA a tailored response providing areas to note. The findings would be collated from individual LA plans into a National Summary Report for the DFM's awareness.

5. Education Scotland Recovery Plan

5.1. The ES Recovery Plan was discussed, in particular the plan for staff to return to ES offices. It was noted that while no target date for a return had been set, the aim was to have finalised plans by mid-August. However, it was acknowledged that working from home would likely continue for the foreseeable future.

5.2. A working group from across the organisation had been formed, with representation across all directorates, locations and grades, looking at all aspects of a return to offices. Three key workstreams were underpinning this work:

- Office plans
- Support for travelling officers
- The health and well-being of staff

5.3. It was agreed that there would be a need to be considerate of individual's circumstances. A staff "Big Blether" on returning to the office had been very well attended, and had provided much needed staff engagement. As a result, a further session would be arranged.

5.4. It was agreed that the ES Estates Strategy should take into account the need about what the expectation would be for the "new normal", once things were fully back to normal.

6. Equalities

6.1. There was a discussion on the Equality and Corporate Parenting Report tabled. The Report provides the organisation's contribution to the wider SG report, which is due to be published in 2021, providing contributions from across Education Scotland.

6.2. The Report noted the wide range of equality related activity undertaken by ES, and provided an opportunity to discuss next steps . A new Equalities Strategy would be developed and would include an action plan which would guide future activity. Corporate parenting would be fully incorporated into both.

6.3. Members agreed the importance of including gender balance and mental health issues, including suicide, in the new plans. It was noted that the inclusion of KPIs or stats against protected characteristics would be helpful.

6.4. It was agreed there was a need to break the report into bite size chunks/case studies to advertise the really good work being done by ES in this area.

ACTION 4 / 20-21– Include a session on Improving Gender Representation to the next AB strategic meeting. Secretary – 20/01/21

7. **Digital Transformation**

7.1. Discussions took place on Education Scotland's Transformation Programme, to update the business processes and supporting technical platforms in use across the organisation. LT had approved the business case, further to funding from SG. It was reported that the programme delivery had started with projects covering Scrutiny, Professional Learning, and Tracking and Reporting. The Justification Gateway Review had been completed and an action plan produced to address findings.

7.2. It was noted there was confidence from the Transformation Board members in its programme governance, acknowledging the benefit of having a business lead rather than a digital lead. It was noted how important it would be to focus on business outcomes.

7.3. The Chair thanked Tom Gregory for his hard work in this area.

8. **Finance Report to 31 March 2020**

8.1. The finance report was reviewed and the Board were in agreement with the information provided. It was noted that Finance would be moving forward with 2020-21 budgeting, and the first monitoring report would be produced shortly.

9. **Audit and Risk Committee**

9.1. There were no comments to add to the report tabled by the Chair of ARC.

9.2. The Chair led discussions on communications, and how to improve ES good news stories in the media. Members acknowledged the work being done across ES, but one challenge identified was the diverse range of roles held within the organisation. It was agreed it would be important to have clarity around ES core purpose in the next phase of supporting the sector.

9.3. The user research work recently carried out on the ES "brand" was flagged, and it was noted that a small promotional budget was in place to support ES branding in the next phase of recovery.

9.4. It was agreed that a workshop session with the ES Comms Team would be useful in the use of social media to promote good news stories, stats, how they fit with our core objectives, and how best to involve the Agency's Non Executives in this work.

ACTION 05 / 20-21 – Share the OD and Comms paper with AB members. John Fyffe – 07/10/20

ACTION 06 / 20-21 – Arrange a session with the ES Comms Team and Non Executives to discuss how they might support the organisation's communication efforts. Gillian Hamilton – 07/10/20

10. Annual Report and Accounts

10.1. It was agreed that the report presented a fair and accurate record of the work for the past year. The Committee was satisfied that the range of assurances and evidence on the effectiveness of internal controls supplied to the Committee, were sufficiently reliable to provide overall assurance and support to the Accountable Officer and to the Advisory Board .

11. ES Risk Register

11.1. No further amendments to the Risk Register were noted.

12. Advisory Board Terms of Reference cover paper and Work Planner

12.1. There was a discussion around the quorum for Advisory Board membership. The Board agreed to increase the quorum to three Non Executive Board Members. The Terms of Reference were approved, subject to this amendment.

ACTION 07 / 20-21 – Update the Advisory Board Terms of Reference with revised quorum, and add the work planner, followed by publishing on the internet and intranet. Secretary – 07/09/20

13. AOB

13.1. Timing of the Board meetings were discussed, in particular the Q1 and Q2 meetings which usually fall around school holidays, resulting in complications around full Board attendance. It was noted, that the July date would be determined by Audit Scotland's audit timetable, and therefore could not be moved to an earlier date. However, it was agreed that future Q2 Boards would take the October half term dates into account when future planning.

ACTION 08 / 20-21 – Seek to schedule Q2 meetings outside of October half term dates to avoid school holidays. Secretary – 07/10/20

Date of next meeting:

Planned for 7 October 2020 - 10.30.

Name Kerry Brunton
Role Secretary