

Education Scotland Advisory Board (AB)

Minutes of meeting held – 10:00 on 5 July 2018

Present	Gayle Gorman Moi Ali Alan Armstrong Euan Couperwhite Mike Ewart John Fyffe Janie McManus Elizabeth Morrison Linn Phipps Brian Taylor	Chief Executive (Chair) Non-Executive Board Member Strategic Director Interim Assistant Director Non-Executive Board Member Non-Executive Board Member Interim Strategic Director Interim Strategic Director Non-Executive Board Member Interim Strategic Director
In attendance	Roz McCracken Lesley Macaulay	Head of Governance Secretary
Apologies	Maureen Gore Gillian Hamilton Stephen Ross	Assistant Director Strategic Director Non-executive Board Member

1. Welcome and apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies were noted for Gillian Hamilton, Maureen Gore, and Stephen Ross.
- 1.3 The meeting proceeded on the basis that all the papers had been read in advance and verbal updates were necessary only where there had been significant developments since the papers had been written.

2. Minutes of previous meeting and action log: 13 December 2017

Matters arising

2.1 BT referred to para 33 about the need for a finance and resources type board to provide assurance. He advised that the introduction of the Priorities Board, which will meet for first time on 12 July, would address this point.

Action Point AB01: Brian Taylor agreed to provide a substantive paper outlining the TOR for the Priorities Board at the next meeting.

2.2 Para 24 - “the discussion moved to inviting the Non-Executive Board Members into discussions at the earliest opportunity.....” LP highlighted that this should have been recorded as an action point.

Action Point AB02: The Non-Executive Board Members should be invited into discussions at the earliest opportunity.

2.3 Para 34 – one member asked that the schematic diagram be extended to include bullet points showing what each Committee/Board area covers.

Action Point AB03: RM to revise schematic diagram to include bullet points showing what each Committee/Board area covers.

2.4 The Board reviewed the Action Log and noted the following: -

- Framework Document – This is now with the DG for consideration.
- Portfolio Board Dashboard – The Audit and Risk Committee may commission a Deep Dive in this area.
- MB 011 – Now closed

Action Point AB04: Members to complete the Advisory Board self-evaluation form and return it to RM by 31 July 2018

2.5 It was noted that the Internal Communications Plan was in final draft form and would be circulated shortly. The development of an External Communications Strategy was also planned. It was suggested that the two strategies be integrated in some way. Because of competing priorities the target date for the production of a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy would be deferred until the end of the year.

2.6 It was noted that for action point 8, all the non-executives required was a simple list of future events which they might want to attend.

2.7 Action Point 18 – dates had been found for the two Advisory Board meetings. However, it was noted that an invitation to attend the Education and Skills Committee had since been received and so the meeting in September may now need to be rescheduled.

Action Point AB05: A Stakeholder Engagement Strategy should be developed and shared with the Advisory Board by the end of December 2018.

Action Point AB06: Issue non executives with the list of all future known events and meetings which they may have an interest in attending.

3. Declarations of interest

While it was not considered worthy of inclusion in the Register, Mike Ewart asked members to note that his daughter would be presenting at SLF.

4. Chair's update

4.1 Gayle Gorman advised that there had been a lot of internal and external focus on the 5 key areas as a way of organising the work of the agency. A new tag line had also been developed.

Education Committee

4.2 Education Scotland had recently appeared before the Education and Skills Committee to talk about Closing the Attainment Gap for which they received positive feedback from Committee Members. Gayle extended her thanks to all staff involved.

4.3 The Education and Skills Committee will also look at DYW 15-24 Learner Journey Review.

4.4 An update was provided on the joint agreement around the Education Bill. The outcome was a significant achievement and members welcomed the fact that there appears to be growing confidence in Education Scotland (ES).

4.5 Thematic Inspections will provide evidence of what's working and the evaluation framework will be co-constructed to ensure it represents views of children and young people and key stakeholders. Education Scotland would be at the heart of the new education system and it would be important for ES to be able to clearly demonstrate and evidence our impact on the system.

4.6 Members stated that there was a significant improvement from where we were last year. ES has taken a significant step forward.

Inspection

4.7 JMcM updated members on how the inspection side of the business was being improved. A greater emphasis was being placed on gathering evidence post inspection. A new approach to gathering feedback from schools inspected has been trialled across 63 schools. Over 40 of the schools had submitted responses – with many positive comments about how inspection had supported improvement. The Annual Plan for Inspection was published last week. The recent Sketch Note launch had been well received and “Shout Outs” would be developed which would include quotes from inspections, highlighting what schools did well.

4.8 A discussion took place around the need for robust baseline figures for inspection. It was noted that this was being captured as part of the Corporate Plan and KPI work.

Recruitment

4.9 An update was provided on the recruitment process which is almost at the end of phase 1 and interviews would resume in August for the Education Officer posts. There had been some excellent candidates and most of the posts would be filled.

Executive Team (ET)

4.10 The ET had been looking at how best to structure the organisation to deliver the identified 5 key areas of business. An outline of the likely structure was shared at the meeting and it was also confirmed that ES was in the process of tendering for specialist expertise to support staff through the change to a regional model. There would be engagement with staff in August and the intention was that ES would move to the new structure in the autumn term.

4.11 Members asked how staff were feeling. It was reported that the move to one person one role had been well received. There was slight anxiety from centrally based staff and it was recognised that engagement levels might dip for a period when the recruitment results were out. The messages at the staff conference had gone down well however, and staff appeared to appreciate the open and transparent manner in which the new approach was being delivered.

4.12 It was recognised that the Unions had an important role to play in this process and the Partnership Group meetings were now up and running with improved relationships reported.

5. Finance

5.1 BT provided an update to the Budget FY 18/19 paper and reported that the £850k shortfall could be managed internally. The intention was to finalise the budget before the end of July. The next step would be to allocate staff to relevant business areas.

5.2 It was also reported that the Director General had approved the additional spend for the first round of recruitment.

5.3 BT had met with SG finance – there appears to be confidence in the changes being implemented around ES finance monitoring and reporting.

5.4 The Board welcomed that the Annual Accounts had been signed off with an unqualified opinion. The Advisory Board stated its thanks to the Finance Team for ensuring that the tight deadlines had been met.

5.5 One NEBM questioned the figure for accommodation and building overheads. BT agreed to look at this again and update members by correspondence. Members also queried whether the amount allocated to Organisational Development (OD) was sufficient. This would be kept under review, especially as it was likely that other budgets probably included an element of funds for local OD type activity.

5.6 There was a discussion about best to manage the budgetary pressure and it was agreed that a 3.5% cut was a significant reduction that would need to be managed effectively.

5.7 There was a discussion about the need to learn lessons from the bidding process used this year and questions were raised about how best to measure the success of the new budgetary setting and monitoring arrangements. BT confirmed that overspends/underspends would be flagged up earlier meaning that budgets holders and the Board would be much better appraised of financial matters going forward. This was done too late during 2017/18 and without any clarity. It was agreed that budget monitoring needed to be reviewed regularly to ensure the process was working.

Action Point AB07: BT to review figures in Annex, particularly in relation to the overheads and accommodation costs and advise members by correspondence of any amendments.

Action Point AB08: Advisory Board to review the new finance processes in 6 months to assure themselves of quality of intervention.

6. Corporate Plan

6.1 EC advised that producing the draft corporate plan (CP) had been a fairly intensive piece of work and he thanked John Fyffe for his assistance. The next steps were to engage with staff, SLT, and ET before bringing the final draft back to AB.

6.2 It was noted that this corporate plan was much more about the “how” rather than the “what” given our priorities had been set in the Governance Review Next Steps.

6.3 A brief discussion took place around the Vision statement. It was felt that it was too wordy. It needed to be sharper and more focussed. Euan asked that members feed-back any additional views.

6.4 One member commented that the CP was the most important document held by ES and as such it needed to clearly demonstrate the need to improve our approach to leadership of change, improve the culture of the organisation and detail more about how we develop our staff.

6.5 LP commended the report's focus on evidence and welcomed the introduction of KPIs and monitoring.

6.6 There was a discussion about whether the values set out in the draft were the right ones. It was agreed that these needed to be reviewed and considered further. It was important to make sure we had the right values and that they can be used to evaluate behaviour.

6.7 It was also agreed that our work to support "closing the gap" needed to feature in the Plan.

Action Point AB09: members to submit comments to Euan on Vision Statement and Core Values by 31 July.

7. Corporate Risk Register (CRR)

7.1 RMCC advised that the draft CRR had gone to SLT and ARC for comment. The Advisory Board was being asked to confirm that we had captured the right risks. Members suggested that the lack of a stakeholder strategy should be added as should the lack of a BCP.

7.2 It was agreed that in due course there would be a need to ensure with the CRR correlated with the KPIs and Business Continuity Plan.

Action Point AB10: Lack of a BCP AND Stakeholder Engagement Strategy to be added to the CRR

Action Point AB11: Gillian Hamilton to update the controls for Risk 3.

8. Performance Management Strategy

8.1 EC tabled his paper setting out the approach to be taken to develop the performance Management Strategy. He confirmed that the KPIs would be developed over the next few weeks. This would allow us to self-evaluate, report and target improvement.

8.2 The non-executives commended the progress being made in this area which gave them assurance that ES was committed to identifying its impact.

9. Inspection

9.1 An overview of the inspection and monthly reporting information was tabled for discussion. The report currently goes to the Scrutiny Programme Board on a monthly basis and is circulated to Lead Officers. In addition, weekly tracking and monitoring data was now available for the Chief Executive.

9.2 This was the first time this information had been made available to the Board. While it was agreed that the Advisory Board did not need this level of detailed

information, seeing it gave members assurance that the information was being actively managed internally. JMcM indicated that a quarterly summary report would be provided to Advisory Board.

9.3 GG extended her thanks to the inspection team for meeting delivery target dates.

Annual Inspection Programme

9.4 In response to the Next Steps document, ES issued a statement in October 2017, committing to delivering radical new approaches to scrutiny and inspection and detailing a new suite of interventions that will better support parents, teachers and head teachers. The statement also confirmed the publication of a new annual scrutiny plan. The first annual scrutiny plan was published the previous Friday.

10. Audit and Risk Committee update

10.1 LP tabled a paper update of the recent Audit and Risk Committee. There was a need to get smarter at capturing actions. The aim was to send out the Minutes and Action Log within 2 weeks of the meeting. A planning group was being established to look at future agenda items and strategic issues. A deep dive around lone working and cyber security was also being considered. There was an issue around what gets reported to ARC and AB – what is the report trying to say? The planning team would therefore consider devising questions for report writers to help them focus their reports appropriately at ARC.

10.2 LP confirmed that it had been a very positive meeting and Committee members felt assured around the direction of travel.

Action Point AB12: feedback on both the format and the content of the Chair's Update Report to be provided by 31 July.

11. Annual Accounts

11.1 BT confirmed that the Annual Accounts had been signed off on 27 June. There had been several challenges to address, not least the tight timescales. The Advisory Board recorded their thanks to all involved.

12. Any other business

12.1 The Chair advised that she would be unable to attend the next meeting scheduled for 4 September because she needed to appear before the Education and Skills Committee the following day. Secretariat would explore alternative dates and advise members asap.

Action Point AB13: Secretariat to explore options for alternative meeting date.

13. Risk

13.1 Nothing to note

14. Corporate Communications

14.1 Key takeaways for communicating to staff: -

- Reemphasis of the 5 priority areas
- Welcomed the Sketch Notes as a great way to demonstrate the relationship between inspection and improvement
- Assured about work is underway to address the issues that were identified in the People Survey results.
- Welcomed the Corporate Plan, and the intention to consult with staff over the summer.

15. Date of next meeting

15.1 Date of next meeting – now confirmed as 13.30 on 6 September 2018 within SAAS Boardroom, Room G8, Saughton House Edinburgh

Lesley Macaulay
Secretary
17/07/18