

## **Minutes of 35<sup>th</sup> NALA AGM**

**Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2016 – Kilkenny Ormond Hotel, Kilkenny**

**Attendance: 35**

### **Opening Address:**

Trevor Moore, Chairperson of NALA's Executive Committee welcomed everybody. He reflected on:

- The strength of the organisation as reflected in the dramatic increase in membership
- The contribution of the Executive to the Governance of the organisation
- The opportunities available for members to contribute to the upcoming Strategic Planning process
- The importance of members putting themselves forward as Executive members. Options for co-opting were outlined and a call to members to consider putting themselves forward
- He then introduced the standing orders committee for the day

### **Standing Orders Committee:**

The Standing Orders Committee was introduced:

- Greta Vaughan
- Pat Ayton
- Marian O'Reilly

The committee was proposed by Patrick Hallinan and seconded by Denis Foley.

### **Minutes AGM 2015:**

Sonia Weafer, Secretary, presented the minutes of the 2015 AGM to the meeting. The minutes were proposed by Patrick Hallinan and seconded by Olive Phelan.

### **Financial Report 2015:**

Thomas McManus, Treasurer, presented the audited accounts for 2015.

Thomas detailed how the Annual Report is again presented voluntarily in compliance with the Charities SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice).

He affirmed on behalf of the directors that the results presented were considered satisfactory, with a marginal loss of €14,361 euro on Revenue of circa €2 million Euro.

He made a statement regarding the Director's Responsibilities in preparing the Financial Statements and maintaining accurate accounting records.

Tomas, on behalf of directors, acknowledged work and contribution of Inez, Fawzia and the team at NALA and thanked them for their support. This was reinforced by an independent Internal Audit indicating robust systems of financial procedures are in place.

Tomas covered the Risk Register and the mitigation of risks, the largest risk being the reliance on one major funder (SOLAS). How Plain English and Health Literacy represent new income streams and are to be developed. Tomas also covered the Reserves Level Policy which is a prudent approach to providing an internal source of funds to cope with 'shocks' should they arise.

Tomas then introduced Jon Byrne from Brown, Murphy & Hughes our Auditors and he went through the Auditor's Report and accounts.

Patrick Hallinan proposed and Marian O'Reilly seconded the following:

- the adoption of the Audited accounts
- authorisation for the directors to approve the remuneration of the auditors

### **Changes to the NALA Executive Committee:**

The following have been co-opted to the vacant positions on the Executive Committee of NALA.

- **Ordinary Member:** Ms Mary Bambrick (proposed by Marian O'Reilly and seconded by Pat Ayton)
- **Ordinary Member:** Cllr. Denis Foley (proposed by the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) and seconded by Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) )
- **Vice Chairperson:** No Nominations were received for this position

As the number of candidates did not exceed the number of positions vacant there was no election on this occasion.

### **Voting on the Amendment of the NALA Constitution:**

Claire Lord of Mason, Hayes and Curran presented and explained the proposed changes to the NALA Constitution. A vote was then taken to agree the amendments. The Vote passed with 34 votes in favour and zero against.

### **Overview of the work of NALA in 2015 and key priorities for 2016:**

Inez Bailey, CEO of NALA, gave a review of the activities and highlights of the year. To follow is a summary of the presentation:

**Policy makers:** We worked with key stakeholders to implement national policies that support adults to improve their literacy and numeracy. The national policies and strategies include:

1. Further Education and Training Strategy and National Adult Literacy and Numeracy Strategy:
2. National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy for Children and Young People
3. Pathways to Work
4. Healthy Ireland
5. Putting People First European Policy

**Individuals:** We raised awareness of services and helped people improve their literacy. This included:

- 1,500 referrals to adult literacy services
- 1,000 people got QQI accreditation through Distance Learning Service
- 5,000 leaflets and 1,500 posters distributed through ETBs, Citizen Information Centres, Intreo and at events.
- High profile media coverage on RTE and in national papers
- TV advertising campaign
- 52,000 clicks to our website from Facebook campaign

**Students:** We represented the views of adult literacy students and supported their learning. This included:

- 1,600 students took part in learning activities funded by our Student Development Fund
- 160 students attended our student days in Dublin and Cork
- 58 organisations received grants from our Students Development Fund
- Student subcommittee met 7 times and informed our work

**Further Education and Training tutors:** We helped to improve the quality of teaching. This included:

- We developed new resources for tutors
- A new workbook for maths
- 10 tutor worksheets shared through e-zine
- 200 FET professionals took part in integrating literacy workshops
- 460 tutors attended our professional developments events
- 98% of tutors at our events said they learned something new
- 80 centres used our eLearning website writeon.ie to get learners QQI accreditation
- 160 tutors received training on how to use writeon.ie
- We researched and shared 6 new reports to support teaching and learning including: 2 reports with best practice case studies on teaching literacy and

numeracy; 1 new framework for CPD needs of numeracy tutors; and 3 new research reports on PIAAC data.

**Parents:** We helped parents support their children's literacy and numeracy development. This included:

- 130,000 people used our website helpmykidlearn.ie
- 1,500 parents signed up to get our e-zine
- 160,000 z-cards were sent to parents through primary schools
- 19,000 people 'liked' our helpmykidlearn Facebook page

**Healthcare providers:** We worked with people in the health sector to help make their services more accessible to people with literacy needs. This included:

- New CDP programme developed with Irish College of General Practitioners
- 5 pharmacies and 1 general practice were awarded the Crystal Awards Mark
- Spoke at 4 conferences about health literacy
- Secured 50 articles about health literacy in medical and national press
- Developed 2 information guides and videos with HIQA to help healthcare workers communicate effectively with the general public
- Designed a health and wellbeing programme for older people

**Information providers:** We helped remove barriers for people with literacy difficulties through our plain English campaigns and services. This included:

- 250 delegates attended PLAIN 2015 – our international plain language conference
- 600 participants did plain English training
- 70 organisations entered our plain English awards
- 100 organisations used editing service
- 5,000 people signed our petitions for plain English
- Research shows that 8 out of 10 Irish adult are aware of 'Plain English'. This is a 30% increase on 2014

**Gathering your Thoughts – Consultation on the next NALA strategic Plan (2017-2019)**

Ann Eustace presented the proposed approach to the designing and implementation of NALA's next strategic plan to cover 2017-2019. The members were divided into groups to discuss, and later present, what they felt were NALAs strengths and weaknesses and what areas NALA should focus on in the coming years.

**Closing Comments**

Trevor Moore, Chairperson, paid tribute to the outgoing members of the Executive, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Frank Locke, Mairin Kenny, Bernadette Hurley and Theresa Byrne.