

<b>National Adult Literacy Agency</b>	
<b>Minutes of the NALA Board</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	23 June 2021
<b>Time:</b>	5pm-7pm
<b>Venue:</b>	Virtual (Zoom)

<b>Chairperson:</b>	Margaret Kelly (MK)
<b>Present (Charity Trustees):</b>	Hazel Cryan (HC), Elma Teahan (EC), Ciaran Casey (CC), Pat Ayton (PA), Lynne Keery (LK), Mary Maher (MM), Celia Rafferty (CR), Catherine Devlin (CAD), Kevin Kelly (KK) Frances Ward (FW), Gwen Redmond (GR)
<b>Quorum:</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<b>In Attendance (Others):</b>	Colleen Dube (CD) Niamh O'Connor (NOC) (Corporate Services Officer) Paul Cahill (PC) (Finance Manager)
<b>Apologies:</b>	Anna Touhy Halligan (ATH) Maria O'Gorman (MO'G)

<b>Approval of the minutes of the meeting on 21 April 2021</b>
The minutes for the meetings held on 21 April 2021 were approved.
<b>Matters arising:</b>
None
<b>Declarations of conflicts of interest:</b>
None

<b>Minutes and Reports from the Sub-Committee's</b>
Prior to the subcommittee reports, the Board discussed the GDPR Assistance Proposals received from the various providers. It was noted that this was a last-minute agenda item. It was further noted by CD that although Sytorus provided the cheapest quote for the work, both she and the Corporate Services Officer felt that they did not meet the brief in their proposal. In spite of repeated prompts, their

proposed response was generic rather than being tailored to NALA's specific needs. Their quote did not include the development of the policy documents sought. The Board agreed with the proposal for Mazars to assist NALA with this work.

### **Student Sub-committee**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Catherine Devlin provided an update from the Student Subcommittee. It was noted that there needed to be a number of membership changes within the subcommittee however it was difficult to recruit students at the moment as the ETB's are not in session. It was agreed that the membership changes can wait until September. It was further agreed that Michael Duffy would be invited to attend the board meetings as a non-member to assist Catherine. CD agreed to revert back to Margaret Murray in relation to Maurice Sammons request for funding for posters.

### **Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved. It was noted that Frances Ward was leaving the Literacy and Staff Policies and Governance Sub-committee and was joining the Education, Training and Assessment Sub-committee.

The support for learners policy and procedure documents were approved.

### **Literacy and Staff Policies and Governance Sub-committee**

MK informed the board of the proposed plan for the mid-term review of NALA's Strategic Plan which was discussed at the last Sub-committee meeting. The board agreed to proceed with the two-phase review process proposed. The first phase would examine NALA's implementation of the Strategic Plan to date, and could begin now. The second phase to examine the next steps, can only begin when we have a clearer view of the 10 year strategy, what funds will be available and what the expected role of different actors within the system will be. This would not take place until later in the year when there is more clarity.

The board discussed the job description for the Finance and Corporate Services Administrator role. PC outlined the proposed advertising for this role. KK noted that public jobs is not suitable for fixed term roles. The board approved the job description and proposed recruitment process.

The new NALA Organogram was welcomed by the Board.

The Conflict of Interest policy and updated Board Manual were approved by the board.

Mk provided background on the EAPN document and informed the board that the sub-committee proposed that NALA support in principle the concept of a living wage which would enable people to live with dignity, but indicate that the organisation is not in the position to endorse or engage in the campaign at this stage. Board members agreed with this approach. MM noted that it is also important to empower learner to speak up about their rights.

### **Audit, Risk and Finance Sub-committee**

The minutes from the last Sub-committee were approved.

KK provided the board with an update from the Sub-committee. He confirmed that the Solas funding has been awarded. He noted that the Sub-committee proposed that there would be a couple of elements removed from the management accounts the board receive to give them the essential data only. These details would still be reviewed by the Treasurer and the Sub-committee. It was proposed that the detailed SOFA statement, cash flow movement summary and the Debtors report would not be included in the Board papers. MK noted that she still found that the detailed SOFA statement was useful in order to understand the summary position and see where changes were occurring. The board welcomed the revised format of the accounts and agreed that all except the Debtors' report and cash flow movement summary would be included in future board packs.

PC gave an overview on the accounts. He noted that the income was up by €41,000, and this was primarily due to the Plain English service. He further noted that debtors are at a very low level.

CD noted that one of the roles at was subject to Solas funding, the Elearning Developer role, had slightly changed in relation to the job title and spec. She noted that the new job title is Elearning Engagement Officer.

KK noted that backpay is being paid in the June salaries. He updated the board on pensions, and noted that there will be a change to the staff pension scheme to allow them to remain in the pension scheme until the age of 66. PC confirmed that staff can take the benefit anytime between 60 and 70. The Board agreed to signing of the draft letter to the pension trustees, and the information note for staff.

### **CEO's Report**

CD confirmed that NALA had sent in their response to the Solas Draft Strategy. She noted that she and the communications manager had attended a meeting with Solas in relation to the national promotion campaign and the right course website. Solas proposes that MyGov.ie would be the central point for information on the strategy, and this would include information on courses and Solas asked for hyperlinks to the NALA website. CD noted that there are concerns in relation to how accessible MyGov.ie will be and who will be responsible in terms of maintaining this, and highlighted to Solas the importance of 40 years of the NALA brand experience with the public. She expected that the strategy will be launched in the next two weeks. The NALA budget from Solas still includes funds for NALA's own publicity, but the national campaign elements have been held back by Solas.

CD informed the board of a number of issues that have arisen with the tutoring service. She noted that the review of the service was ongoing and that as part of this review legal advice was sought in relation to tutor/LSW terms and conditions. Based on the advice around zero-hour contracts, pensions, and the rolling up of holiday pay, she noted that the intention was to regularise the situation. Updated contracts including new terms and conditions were issued to individuals who were

out of contract and notifications were sent to all other tutors/LSW's. The changes included:

- Decoupling the holiday pay element (8%) from the tutor hourly rate. Under legislation, a person can only be paid in lieu of holiday pay when they are leaving a job. Staff would be paid in future for their holidays as and when they took their leave, so there would be no overall loss of income involved.
- An improvement from zero hours contracts to a minimum of 5 hours per week
- Rights to join the pension scheme for those who were eligible

The new regime was put into effect in June and caused considerable upset to staff. The tutors/LSW's also requested a 2% pay increase in line with government circulars.

CD informed the board that they had convened a meeting with the tutoring service staff for Friday to discuss these issues with them. In the meantime, the decoupling of holiday pay will not proceed for the present, as there is a need to calm the situation and have further discussions. Some issues in regard to the pension age for some staff were also mentioned.

The board discussed the issues surrounding terms and conditions for tutors. It was agreed that the priority should be to regularise the current situation and terms and conditions and that the 2% increase will be reviewed together with the ongoing review of the whole service. It was important that staff be treated fairly but in line with the law and the NALA budget. Overall, the board highlighted the critical need for a fundamental review of tutor pay and conditions throughout the education and training sector.

**Sub-committee membership overview and update**

LK agreed to join LPSG Sub-committee. MM also noted she was happy to join a subcommittee wherever there is a vacancy.

**Strategic Plan**

CD gave an update on the implementation document. She noted there were a few delays with projects, this was primarily down to 3rd parties and internal capacity. She further noted there have been challenges on the Partnership side in relation to the marking progress projects and other projects.

**Items for noting**

MK asked board members whether they would be willing to start at 4.30 pm if there is a particularly long agenda. The board agreed.

**Any other business (AOB):**

None

**Next Meeting**

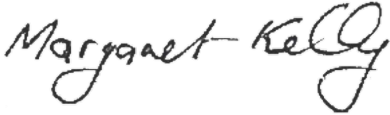
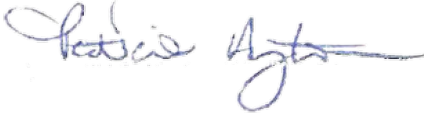
**Date:** 1 September 2021

**Time:** 5pm – 7pm

**Venue:** Virtual

**Actions Arising From This Meeting:**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Person Applicable</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
CEO's Report	Report back on Distance Learning Service	CD	Sept/Oct
Mid Term review	Report back on Mid-term review of NALA Strategic Plan	CD	Sept/Oct

	
<b>Chairperson's Signature and date</b>	<b>Secretary Signature and date</b>
MARGARET KELLY      1 September 2021	PATRICIA AYTON      1 September 2021