

National Adult Literacy Agency	
Minutes of the NALA Board	
Date:	8 December 2021
Time:	4.30pm-7pm
Venue:	Virtual (Zoom)

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

<b>2. Conflicts of Interest</b>
None
<b>3. Minutes of 20 October 2021 Board meeting on</b>
The minutes for the meeting held on 20 October 2021 were approved.
<b>Matters arising</b>
<b>Landlord Construction Work at Sandford Close Location</b>
<b>NOTED:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demolition works will take place before Christmas</li> <li>• The disruptions has been minimal to date</li> </ul>
<b>4. CEO’s Report</b>
<b>4.1 Annual &amp; Strategic Plan Review</b>
<b>4.2 Implementation Framework</b>
<b>NOTED:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEO’s presentation on NALA’s work in 2021, Review of the Strategic Plan / Activity, Proposed reframing of the Strategic Plan</li> <li>• NALA has been working at a frenetic pace and huge amount has been achieved already but it is not sustainable</li> <li>• NALA and Board needs to take time to take stock / agree priorities</li> </ul>

- in a time of uncertainty with the implementation of the Adult Literacy for Life Strategy
- to reach the hardest to reach, marginalised communities, digitally excluded
- to understand the changing needs / spiky profiles of literacy learners / emerging needs such as ESOL
- the main body of students are attending ETB, supporting what is going on there needs to be done by
  - Identifying the needs of and supporting / training tutors / literacy organisers to share best practice so it can be implemented locally
  - referring learners to ETBs should be a priority
  - Working in partnership with ETBs; how to add value to what they are doing
  - Huge opportunities and willingness for ETB – NALA collaboration that needs to be shared / communicated more widely including
    - streamlining / extending the pilot direct referral protocol
    - mutual recognition of each other's efforts / learners and interdependence
- Values as well as priorities may need to be examined such as transformation rather than transparency
- NALA needs to identify a clear future pathway / unique selling point for NALA in light of the 10 year strategy / its publicly funded status. This could include
  - national research / figures that could inform ETBs and other organisations that need to know how to make their communications more accessible
  - awareness campaigns to support ETBs to reach the hardest to reach
  - pulling in partners to work with them
  - sharing all this experience and expertise
  - NALA having a seat on ETBs which was provided for under the new legislation
  - forming strategic alliances to support the implementation of the Adult Literacy for Life Strategy
  - literacy awareness raising campaigns with / possible responses from the private sector as the Adult Literacy for Life Strategy is focussed on the public sector
- Further consideration / discussion required on
  - NALA's research focus / priorities / policy to identify gaps to be explored and partnerships to progress. Current research is focussing on completing previous research and recently commissioned research in the areas of financial literacy, numeracy and family literacy
  - The specific vulnerable groups identified in the ALL Strategy that NALA should focus on / raise awareness of. Initial focus will be on groups represented in NALA's membership base such as Travelling Community along with groups that NALA

currently has working relationship / partnerships such as incarcerated persons

- The specific thematic areas that NALA should focus on particularly where NALA has expertise including family, health, financial and, or where NALA identifies needs / gaps including transitioning from ESOL to literacy, Irish, Digital and could broker partnerships
- The range of / specific partners and partnerships to be developed in the private, public and community / social sectors along with collaborations with professional associations such as ALOA and AEOA.
- Identifying high profile ambassadors / spokespeople such as Keith Earls to be incorporated into awareness campaigns / programmes

**APPROVED:**

**Strategic Objectives for 2022**

1. To support the implementation of FET and ALL strategies through continued advocacy, research and evaluation, development / delivery of resources to address gaps, collaboration with policy makers, practitioners and learners
2. To promote and share best practice on literacy with literacy practitioners and policy makers
3. To support organisations and society to be more aware of literacy inequalities and to deliver literacy friendly services
4. To continuously enhance and evolve NALA's people and processes to deliver on NALA's mission, vision, purpose and objectives

**4.3. 2022 Draft Budget**

**NOTED:**

Draft 2022 Budget is subject to approval from SOLAS

**Total estimated income** €2,900,000 from 3 sources

1. SOLAS for Core and Projects
2. EU projects
3. Unrestricted primarily Plain English

**Total estimated expenditure** €2,698,855 with provision for increased salary costs arising from annual increments / pay alignment and new recruitment (subject to SOLAS approval), external costs for annual planning, increases to printing but largely static other costs

**Total Projected Surplus** € 201,145 which includes re-allocation of unrestricted income from the CITO project

**APPROVED**

#### **4.4. 10 Year Strategy Update**

**NOTED:**

- **11 January 2022:** CEO and Chair to meet Minister of DFRHEIS

### **5. Sub-committee reports and minutes**

#### **5.1 Student Subcommittee**

##### **5.1.1 Minutes of 5 October 2021 meeting**

**NOTED:**

- The importance of resuming face:face, 1:1 tuition which is still happening in ETBs according to a recent ALAO survey.
- The ongoing provision / importance to be raised with the Minister by NALA and how 1:1 tuition is integrated in ongoing literacy provision continues to be examined

**APPROVED**

#### **5.2 Education, Training and Assessment Subcommittee**

##### **5.2.1 Minutes of 22 November 2021 meeting**

**APPROVED**

##### **5.2.2 Programme Approval & Development Procedures**

**NOTED:** A process / procedure for quality assurance of NALA's short – term, non-accredited programmes will need to be developed by the Education, Training and Assessment Subcommittee in 2022.

**APPROVED**

#### **5.3 Audit, Risk and Finance Subcommittee**

##### **5.3.1 Minutes of 24 November 2021 meeting**

**NOTED:**

- 2021 Audit has commenced, Auditors will spend 16 & 17 December 2021 on the audit and will be in NALA's offices subject to public health advice the week beginning commencing 24 January 2022
- NALA is still awaiting a response from Revenue on the VAT treatment of Plain English services
- NALA is awaiting a formal response from SOLAS on the 2015-2019 cash review submission that NALA has submitted confirming its understanding that it does not have surplus funds from those years
- The ARF approved the projected restructuring costs for the tutoring service that is significantly less than initially budgeted.

**APPROVED**

##### **5.3.2 Management Accounts / Audit**

**NOTED**

- €2,430,000 received from SOLAS

- NALA anticipates spending the majority of that funding by year end though there may be a slight underspend for Learn with NALA
- NALA has had an increase in Plain English income over budget
- The current projected surplus in unrestricted income will allow NALA to reach its contingency budget target of €575,000
- NALA anticipates receiving 20% of its 2022 Funding request in January / February 2022 but does not anticipate receiving formal approval until May.
- NALA has repeatedly requested confirmation of funding approval / drawdown timelines with SOLAS and will seek confirmation in writing of the timeframes for approval / drawdown when the 2022 Funding Allocation Request is submitted
- NALA to raise the possibility of multi-annual funding with the Minister in January 2022

**APPROVED**

### **5.3.3. Statement of Internal Financial Controls**

**NOTED:**

- thanks to all subcommittee and Board members for their inputs
- the approved document will be submitted to the auditors as part of the 2021 audit

**APPROVED** subject to changes proposed by Chairperson on pages 5, 9 and Sections 5.1.1., 5.1.4, 5.1.10, 6.2.3.

## **5.4 Literacy and Staff Policies and Governance Subcommittee**

### **5.4.1 Minutes of 24 November meeting**

**NOTED:**

- LSPG recommended
  - The redundancy packages for the Distance Learning Service staff
  - That revised job description / rate of remuneration for the Learn With NALA Co-ordinator position to be developed for submission to the LSPG Board in March 2022
  - The four job descriptions outlined in Agenda Items 5.2 – 5.4
- Consideration to be given to developing a research policy in 2022 that would identify the most appropriate structures / processes for the Board to consider NALA's Research projects at key stages

**APPROVED**

### **5.4.2. Job Description - Governance & Compliance Officer**

**NOTED:**

- This is a replacement post

**APPROVED** with amendment to the text regarding starting salary.

### **5.4.3. Job Description - Digital Marketing, Information and Content Officer**

**NOTED:**

- Funding for this post will come from NALA's core budget

**APPROVED** with amendment to the text regarding starting salary.

#### 5.4.4 Job Description - eLearning Content Creator

**NOTED:**

- This is and the post in 5.5 are to replace one previous post.
- The funding has been included in the 2022 Learn with NALA funding request
- NALA's currently only offers 1 year fixed term contracts except in specific cases to cover secondments or where multi-annual funding has been confirm in the case of EU projects. The ability to offer longer term contracts would enhance recruitment efforts

**APPROVED** with amendment to the text regarding starting salary.

#### 5.4.5 Job Description - Data & Systems Officer

**NOTED:**

- This is and the post in 5.4 are to replace one previous post.
- The funding has been included in the 2022 Learn with NALA funding request
- All positions will be advertised in December with an end January 2022 closing date.

**APPROVED** with amendment to the text regarding starting salary.

### 6. GDPR

#### 6.1. Data Protection Policy

**NOTED:**

- Chairperson requested clarification that requires further consideration / advice.

**APPROVED:**

- Data Protection Policy to be resubmitted to the Board for review / consideration pending review of Chairperson's comments

### 7. 2022 Schedule of Meetings

#### 7.1. 2022 Schedule of Meetings

**APPROVED**

- 2022 schedule of meetings (See Appendix 1)
- Meetings will be continue to be held virtually subject to changes in public health guidelines.

### 8. Any other Business

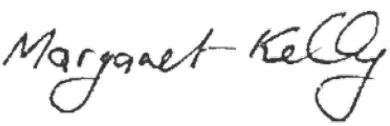
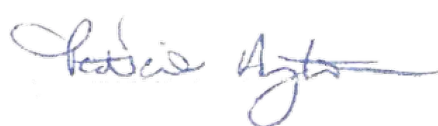
**APPROVED:**

- Items requiring approval by the Board to be summarised on separate cover sheet in future Board packs

- CEO to draft and submit draft job description / hiring booklet for Literacy Development & Outreach Worker to the Literacies and Staff Policies & Governance Subcommittee for consideration and recommendation to the Board for approval for the post to be recruited in early 2022

Next Meeting	
Date:	9 March 2022
Time:	4:30 – 7:00 pm
Venue:	Zoom

Actions Arising from This Meeting:			
Item	Action	Person Applicable	Timeframe
5.3.2	Request Multi-Annual Funding from SOLAS / Minister	CD / MK	December 2021 – January 2022
5.3.3	Amend Statement of Financial Controls with changes proposed by Chairperson	PC	December 2021
5.4.2 5.4.3. 5.4.4. 5.4.5.	Hiring Booklets to be Finalised and Recruitment Campaigns Implemented	CD	December 2021- February 2022
6.1.	Data Protection Policy to be resubmitted to the Board for review / consideration pending review of Chairperson's comments	CD	March 2022
8	Items requiring approval by the Board to be summarised on separate cover sheet in future Board packs	CD	March 2022
8	Draft and submit draft job description / hiring booklet for Literacy Development & Outreach Worker to the Literacies and Staff Policies & Governance Subcommittee for consideration and recommendation to the Board for approval for the post to be recruited in early 2022	CD	January 2022

	
Chairperson's Signature and date	Secretary Signature and date
MARGARET KELLY: Mar 9th 2022	PATRICIA AYTON: Mar 9th 2022

**APPENDIX 1**

2022 Schedule of Meetings

**AGM - Saturday, 30 April at 11 am**

<b>BOARD</b> <b>Wednesdays, 4:30 – 7 pm</b> 9 March 27 April 29 June 28 September 26 October 7 December	<b>AUDIT, RISK &amp; FINANCE Mondays,</b> <b>10 am – 1 pm</b> 21 February 13 June 10 October 21 November
<b>LITERACY &amp; STAFF POLICIES &amp; GOVERNANCE</b> <b>Wednesdays, 2 – 4 pm</b> 16 February 6 April 8 June 5 October 16 November	<b>EDUCATION, TRAINING &amp; ASSESSMENT</b> <b>Wednesdays, 10 – 11:30 am</b> 23 February 15 June 12 October
<b>STUDENT</b> <b>Tuesdays, 11:30 am – 1 pm</b> 18 January 22 February 5 April 14 June 13 September 11 October 22 November	