

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY (the “Company”)

Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting of the Company held at the Ashling Hotel, Parkgate Street, Dublin 8 and online over Zoom, on the 22nd day of March 2024 at 11am.

Present:

Officers: Margaret Kelly (Chairperson), Maria O’Gorman (Vice-Chairperson), Ciaran Casey (Honorary Treasurer), Pat Ayton (Honorary Secretary).

Officials In attendance: Colleen Dube, NALA Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Aoife Crawford (NALA), Jennifer Dowling (NALA), Michelle Lynch (NALA), Michelle Reade (NALA), Monica Quinn (NALA), Paul Cahill (NALA), Suzanne O’Beirne (NALA), Aedín Morkan (Mazars).

24 other voting members were present in person and 8 other voting members were online. There were 3 other non-voting attendees.

Commencement

The event commenced at 11am when Colleen Dube, NALA’s Chief Executive Officer welcomed attendees. She introduced the NALA staff that were present and available to provide any help necessary. She informed the attendees of the nearest exits in case of emergency. She gave an overview of the agenda for the day and invited Members to ask questions. She noted that a quorum (the minimum number needed) of voting members were present and that the business of the meeting could begin.

Presentation

Colleen Dube gave a presentation highlighting the background, rationale and history to the changes that NALA wants to make to its Constitution. Colleen invited questions from both the audience in attendance and those online. There were none. Colleen pointed out that there were copies of the documents that Members are being asked to vote on at each table, and they are labelled in accordance with the wording of each of the relevant resolutions.

Resolution Voting

The following Special resolution was presented to the Members:

That the Memorandum of Association of the Company be amended by the deletion of the existing clauses 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 in their entirety and replacing the existing clauses 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10 and 11 with the new clauses numbered 3, 4, 5, 8, 9,

10, and 11 as set out in the attached and marked with an “A” for the purposes of identification.

The resolution was passed.

The following Special resolution was presented to the Members:

To adopt the updated Articles of Association, attached and marked with a “A” for the purposes of identification, in substitution for and to the exclusion of the existing Articles of Association of the Company.

The resolution was passed.

The following Ordinary resolution was presented to the Members:

To approve the updated NALA Procedural Rules (document marked with a “C” for the purposes of identification) and adopt those procedural rules.

The resolution was passed.

Break

Strategic Planning Presentation

Colleen Dube gave a presentation on the journey NALA’s Strategic Planning process has taken since September 2023. She gave an overview of what is being proposed in the current draft. She opened the floor to questions.

Questions

Maria O’Gorman, Board Member, highlighted the impact of digital exclusion noting that it is not within NALA’s Remit. Colleen Dube, CEO advised that we do advocate at policy level and do cover digital skills in our phone tutoring service. She highlighted that some of our learners were reluctant to use our online LWN platform but with support many embraced it. However, NALA doesn’t have the resources to provide the support to everyone who needs it.

Frances Ward, Board Member asked about the current status of arrangement to share data with ETBs so that callers to NALA do not have to make two phone calls to find suitable learning opportunities. Colleen Dube stated that GDPR requirements has made this challenging however agreements have been put in place with some ETBs and after a number of years there is finally some progress in setting up an arrangement with the remaining ETBs.

Paul, Member, highlighted the challenge with ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) Services. The government need to recognise it needs its own strategy apart from literacy. Colleen Dube agreed and added that NALA’s role needs to be clarified. She

highlighted that there is a cohort within ESOL that need further supports and they are those that have unmet literacy needs even in their own language. NALA may not take on this role but will be advocating for appropriate services.

Eileen, Member, highlighted that access remains an issue in many centres for people with disabilities. Colleen Dube informed Eileen that ETBs have a requirement to find learners an accessible centre. Eileen is considering arranging a talk in Clonskeagh. Colleen will put Eileen in touch with our learning ambassadors.

Michael, Member noted that the push for people within the literacy services to progress is sidelining many people. Many learners don't want formal progression, they just want to learn and get together with similar people. Colleen confirmed NALA are aligned on that view. Both are important and NALA raise that with SOLAS frequently. Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) also recognise the wider benefits of learning.

Wayne, Member enquired if the threat of AI has been considered. Colleen advised that it has been considered particularly in relation to the threat and opportunity it poses to our plain English service.

There were no further questions or comments.

Strategic Planning Roundtable Discussions

Colleen and NALA Staff facilitated a discussion at each table and with the online attendees on the draft Strategic Plan. Each table considered the following questions:

1. What will success look like at the end of Phase 1?
2. What questions do you have on the plan / process so far?
3. What suggestions do you have on the plan / process so far?

NALA staff members gave an overview of the discussions held at each table. Colleen instructed NALA staff to send her the feedback afterwards for consideration for reflecting in the final Strategic Plan.

Closing Comments

That concluded the business of NALA's 2024 EGM. Margaret Kelly, NALA Chairperson thanked all the attendees for their support and their voting and gave some final thoughts on the strategic direction of NALA. She brought the meeting to a close and invited the attendees to stay for some lunch.

Pat Ayton
Company Secretary

Date