



Minutes for the 96th Meeting of the English UK Board of Trustees (MB96)

Date: Wednesday 5 June 2024, 13:00 - 16:00

Venue: Greet, The Print Rooms, 164/180 Union Street, Waterloo, London, SE1 0LH and via Zoom

Present: Shoko Doherty [chair], Mary Doody (MD), Spencer Fordham (SF), Francesca Giacomini (FG), James Herbertson (JH), Farhan Quraishi (FQ), Mark Rendell (MR), Victoria Paterson (VP), Justin Quinn (JQ)

Attending: Jodie Gray (JG), Huan Japes (HJ), Annie Wright (AW), Nuria Felip Puignou (NFP) and Susan Young (SY) [minutes]

Constitutional business

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Fiona Dunlop.

2. Declarations of interest in any item of business on the agenda

None declared.

3. Draft minutes of the 95th meeting of the English UK Board of Trustees held on Wednesday 17 April 2024

Action points:

- a. (If SD is re-elected as a trustee, she will become the chair at the first meeting of the new board). SD, the new chair, thanked MR for chairing the board for the past three years.
- b. (The wording of 1.6.1 in the rules for the AGM to be clarified that an unlimited number of motions is allowed, each with a proposer and seconder) – done.
- c. (Arrange a meeting of the accommodation working group) - HJ said this was done.
- d. (A webinar on youth mobility should be arranged) – HJ said this had not been done as there had been hopes of more deals which could be included. It would be possible to do one just for Japan and Korea. SD said this would be a good idea and should be done as soon as possible as centres were working on publicity material. This rolls to the next board meeting.
- e. (HJ to write to the new minister for the economy in NI) – not done, rolls to the next board meeting.

The minutes were approved.

Action point/s

- a. Member webinar on making the most of YMS in Korea and Japan to be discussed at the next meeting.
- b. HJ to write to the new minister for the economy in Northern Ireland.
- c. Trustees with ideas for the 20 Faces project should contact the executive team.

4. Matters arising and updates

Asked about the accommodation working group, HJ said this had met and was using Bonard's survey report. It was decided to approach major residence providers to allocate time periods to language school students. Corporate members would be used as intermediaries, with the proposal that more income could be generated during the summer by having rooms freed from the end of June until August. A second meeting would discuss homestays and the Bonard report would probably be published next week.

Action point/s

- d. JH to join the accommodation working group.

Matters for information and/ or report

5. Review of the 2024 management accounts and cashflow update (English UK Ltd & English UK Enterprises Ltd)

For the benefit of new board members, NFP gave a longer than usual outline of the financial position.

Highlights of the English UK Ltd figures included:

- A surplus of £8.5k was anticipated, with membership revenue the main source of income. Increased income was anticipated from events and training.
- AccessTEFL and the HE/FE conference had not been anticipated in the budget.
- Responding to a question about the outstanding CBILS loan, NFP said the finance panel was discussing paying it off more quickly.
- It was noted student weeks per centre were almost back to 2019, and that schools were doing reasonably well.

Turning to the Enterprises figures, NFP said:

- YTD revenue was £355,907. The forecast profit would be reduced, mainly because StudyWorld London raised a little less income than anticipated and a suggested overseas event would not run.
- StudyWorld China was expecting more income than budgeted: 22 members had already booked and the format had changed to include a third city.
- The Ents cash flow was also positive.

Matters for discussion and/ or decision

6. English UK Board of Trustees | code of conduct

JG and SD had been discussing a code of conduct for board members and they thought this would be a good idea. The rule book and articles of association covered legal and regulatory responsibilities: trustees could be removed only if incapacitated or if they brought the charity into disrepute.

It would be useful to have a code that everyone could get behind and a fallback in case of a situation where it was thought necessary.

JG discussed the Charity Governance Code, developed in 2017, which included recommended practice for good governance, is intentionally aspirational and supports continuous development. About more than compliance, it promoted ways in which everyone could work towards the charity's vision. It contained seven principles which should be discussed as a board before deciding whether or not to apply and why.

The steering group which developed the code had created a comprehensive mini site with a diagnostics tool which could be used. JG thought setting expectations around conduct would be helpful for board members in future as well as those standing for election, and suggested a discussion in the next board meeting. No fees were involved.

Several members indicated they supported the idea.

SD said it was about board engagement and would help to define how they could work together more closely. English UK liked to be a leader in international education and BC accreditation made members accountable for their actions. She thought a working group was required.

JG said it did not all have to be done in one go, and things which were already being done or which were irrelevant could be ignored. It could help the executive team support the board better.

- SD wanted to increase board members' engagement, including holding at least one board meeting outside London to help better understand different regions. She welcomed ideas about better engagement.
- It was suggested that board meetings outside London would be a good opportunity for the board to engage with members. This idea drew favour with the board, perhaps having a meeting in one region annually. Virtual meetings were also suggested.
- JG reminded trustees they were encouraged to attend English UK events – direct costs to the association had to be covered to avoid a benefits-in-kind issue. There were good opportunities to see and experience events but also talk to members.
- Were there other events that trustees should attend? JG said English UK tried to have a presence at sub-groups conferences and some group meetings, if only online.

- SD thought the November or February meeting should be outside London. AW suggested using the Manchester StudyWorld venue.
- There was a discussion about regional engagement and the possibility of a group for all the devolved nations which would have a larger pool of members and could discuss issues such as working with devolved governments. There could also be online conferences.

Action point/s

- e. Trustees to look at the code of practice before further discussion.
- f. English UK executive team to create a calendar of events which trustees are encouraged to attend.
- g. The November board meeting will be held at the Hilton Deansgate in Manchester.
- h. Investigate creating a group for members in devolved nations before the next meeting.

7. English UK Board of Trustees | election of vice chair/ chair-elect

JG reminded the board the 2022 changes to the chair and vice-chair election process had been adopted, and now a vice-chair needed to be chosen for a two-year term before, in turn, becoming chair. Trustees' total length of service was two terms of three years, but any time as chair or vice-chair was added to that.

SD said that as nearly half of the board were new perhaps they should get to know each other before making this decision, voting at an extraordinary meeting in September with names put forward in advance.

It was agreed that September's meeting would be held online on 25 September.

SD suggested that she, MR and JG could draft a job description for the vice chair to share with the rest of the board, JG pointed out that now the vice-chair was chair elect, it was one job rather than trying to split tasks.

MR commented that two years was a very short period, which the Board might like to revisit. SD noted that the Board could discuss this as it was part of the rulebook. After a discussion, it was unanimously voted to change the service period for the vice chair and chair to three years and three years.

Action point/s

- i. September's meeting to be online, on 25 September.
- j. The period of service as vice chair and chair to be changed to three years for each.
- k. Board members interested in putting themselves for vice-chair should do so by Thursday 5 September and could talk to SD, MR or JG if they wished.

8. AccessTEFL update

HJ said the scheme covered the main objectives of ensuring a pipeline of new teachers coming into the industry post-pandemic. He outlined how it would work, as an employee in an accredited UK language school and nine months to complete, extended to 18 if necessary for changing jobs. Centres had to provide an observer and a mentor, and there were four units to complete.

There would be a soft launch in June. The scheme could be available to accredited non-members for a higher fee.

From August, the English UK team would promote the scheme at careers fairs but the question remained of how willing trainees could find centres in which they could train – regional groups might be a possible route.

JG suggested centres could work together in partnership agreements. Should there be a register of centres willing to participate?

There was a discussion around how the scheme could meet the needs of summer schools where teachers might only work for a six-week peak. HJ said this was a start and would be developed, and JG said that more flexibility had been agreed with the British Council in this area of the framework after a great deal of discussion. There was also a need for year-round staff to be trained.

9. English UK board election, members' conference, AGM & parliamentary reception review

JG said there had been really positive feedback about the afternoon programme and the feeling was to do something similar next year.

There was a question mark over the parliamentary reception as this would work better earlier in the week when more MPs were in London but the members conference was usually on a Friday as it was a cheaper day. It might be advisable to run the parliamentary reception on Tuesday and the members' conference on Wednesday. The Parliamentary terrace would need to be booked now.

- One trustee thought this would be fine as people attending the members' conference did not usually have teaching commitments.
- Another asked if the member's conference could move around the country to use cheaper venues. JG was not against this but in practice there was often less engagement as it was more difficult to travel by train and local members might not attend. It was better to have a full room. SD said the area of London where the members' conference was held had expensive hotel accommodation. One member asked if deals were possible. JG also thought it would be possible to advise on cheaper accommodation.
- It was suggested that new members be welcomed at the members' conference.
- It was also suggested that unsuccessful candidates for the board this year be approached to stand again as there would be six seats available.

Action point/s

- l. The executive team would look into a hotel accommodation deal for the members' conference and consider advising on cheaper options nearby.
- m. Consider welcoming new members at the members' conference

10. Membership update

HJ said there were 323 members compared to 327 last year. There had been a call on the SES for the closure of the Capital School of English Cardiff, and two centres had booked accreditation consultancies.

11. Public affairs update

HJ said the election had meant junking some planned campaigns.

The parliamentary reception had been very successful, attracting 12 parliamentarians, and we had started to publicise the manifesto's recommendations with MPs until the election halted this.

The team had sent the manifesto to all MPs and parliamentary candidates in the hope that recommendations might be included in party manifestoes: it was hoped the LibDems would use material on YMS and ID cards.

Post-election engagement was now the focus and it was intended to have a new position paper in the autumn to include work rights and Erasmus +.

There was still some engagement with the devolved administrations and also the London mayor and these might be able to put pressure on the Labour government over issues such as YMS.

HJ confirmed that post-election congratulations would be sent to new MPs and a campaign run on ID cards. JG urged trustees to write to their MPs and invite them to visit centres in August while there were plenty of students there.

HJ said some ally MPs would not be returning in the new parliament so alliances would need to be rebuilt.

12. Capacity challenge update

HJ said the activity leader training was now live and proving to be very popular.

13. English UK staffing update

JG said there was a vacancy for a communications manager.

Meeting minutes & recent publications for info

14. English UK Student Statistics Report 2024: English language students in the UK in 2023

15. **QUIC 2023 Q1 report: executive summary edition (enclosed)**
16. **UK ELT & VAT: Guidance for members (enclosed)**
17. **Global language, global connections: A manifesto from English UK (enclosed)**
18. **Draft minutes of the 2024 English UK AGM held on 17 May 2024 (enclosed)**

The Board noted the reports and minutes.

Other business

19. AOB

- One trustee recommended attending the BETA event in Bristol.
- SD wanted a website update at the next meeting.

Action point/s

- n. **Website update to be agenda item for the next meeting.**

20. Dates of upcoming meetings in 2024:

MB96a: Optional extra meeting Wednesday 25 September (online)

MB97: Wednesday 13 November, 13:00 – 16:00 (Manchester)

The meeting closed at 15:49