

Minutes of the 24th Meeting of the English UK Enterprises Board

Held at: English UK, 219 St John Street, London EC1V 4LY
Date: Thursday 28 February 2013 from 13:30
Present: Steve Phillips, Shane Wilkinson, Clare Gossage
In attendance: Annie Wright, Jodie Gray, Siobhan Baccas and Phoebe Allen (minutes)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Kevin McNally, Heidi Gon-Paz, Stephan Roussounis, Huan Japes and Tony Millns. In the absence of the Chair of the Enterprises Board (Kevin McNally) Steve Phillips agreed to Chair the meeting.

2. Minutes of the 23rd Meeting of the English UK Enterprises Board

The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the Meeting held on 18 October 2012.

3. Matters arising and updates (paper EB24/3)

Staff matters

AW gave a review of the International Team. Customer Service Officer, Laura Underwood, will start to manage the Partner Agency Scheme on a project basis. Matthias Hofmarcher joined the team in the role of International Assistant on 25 February. Ngoc Le Diep will start on 15 March as IA, taking the place of Antonia Mai.

Membership of the Board

The Board noted that CG will go on maternity leave in April and that Sarah Schechter had resigned from the Enterprises Board. CG suggested that Hannah Alexander at the University of the Arts may be able to join the Board as maternity cover.

AW raised the issue of poor attendance at Enterprise Board meetings, pointing out that many board members travel frequently. It was agreed that a pool of eight candidates could help improve the continuity of the Board. Potential candidates were discussed; suggestions included Mick Davies at Anglia Ruskin University, Janette Donjon from The Sheffield College, Patrick Lawlor from Waltham Forest College, Mark Allen from Sussex Downs College, David Walker from Ardmere Language Schools, and David Boydon from De Montfort University.

SW suggested introducing a web based conference from the English UK office. The Board agreed that this was a good idea.

SIEM

JG highlighted the positive change in SIEM no longer being restricted to centres with HTS status. JG added that SIEM is now very transparent and the prices are reasonable. SIEM regional managers will attend the English UK Fairs in Prague and Lima. JG confirmed that information regarding SIEM has been sent out to members in monthly online newsflash and newsletter articles. SP suggested that English UK could send a separate email reminding members that it's worthwhile and free to join.

StudyWorld & the Park Plaza Westminster Bridge Hotel

SB spoke to the paper. An overview of the feasibility study holding StudyWorld on the Westminster Park Plaza (WPP) was presented. The Board noted the pros and cons of the WPP. The WPP sales team are loyal to their current client and Alphe have already confirmed dates until 2016.

SW suggested the possibility of moving the StudyWorld dates back to slot alongside Alphe at the WPP. SB pointed out that moving the dates back to the end of August would clash with the bank holiday.

AW highlighted that StudyWorld has the capacity to grow at the Hilton and that it is possible to sit all delegates for lunch and host the seminar programme. CG acknowledged that it is good to continue with the things that differentiate Alphe and StudyWorld.

SB highlighted plans for a large refurbishment of the East Wing lobby/bar area of the Hilton London Metropole. The Board agreed these changes could make a big difference to the first impression of the hotel. AW added that this area can also be branded better and noted the team plans to look into this.

SW suggested the possibility of using two hotels to accommodate delegates. AW mentioned that four hotels were used when StudyWorld was in Brighton and that this option is feasible if the hotels are located within close proximity to one another. JG mentioned that the Hilton have a rolling programme for refurbishing bedrooms. SB informed that a supplement would be paid this year to secure the newer West Wing and premier bedrooms for delegates.

SW noticed there was a large discrepancy in costs between the Hilton and WPP. SB pointed out that paying for the use of two floors at the Hilton increases the costs and the daily delegate rate is also higher due to extras such as coffee service. SB added that the three year contract signed last year is better than percentage increases in previous years. The Board agreed the difference in costs reflected reasonable value. The Board also agreed that no further action was necessary at this time.

Action points:

- CG to approach Hannah Alexander about joining the Board as maternity cover.
- AW to approach Mick Davies about joining the Board.
- SP to approach David Walker about joining the Board.
- JG to approach Janette Donjon and David Boydon about joining the Board.
- JG to send an email encouraging English UK members to join SIEM.

Updates for information, discussion and decision

4. UK International education strategy (as featured on the agenda for the January meeting of the main Board of English UK) (paper EB24/4)

AW informed the Board that TM had planned to speak to the paper. In the absence of TM, AW agreed to include an update on the strategy in the meeting.

5. Marketing update – review of activities since October 2012 and plans for the next 6 months (paper EB24/5)

JG spoke to the paper. Particular points to note include:

- The international team will continue with the programme of profile raising activities planned for the next 6 months.
- Sarah Wang will attend the BC's East Asia Agent Conference in March.

- The UK SSP China Road Show was a success and will be repeated again this summer.
- The EUK mission to Libya has been postponed and will now take place in May. The funding is secure. Members have until 1 March to reconfirm participation, if there are vacancies, the trip will be advertised again.
- The autumn inward mission went well. The next inward mission will be in the South West in May and will include workshops in London and Bristol.
- The agreement between EUK and the BC to deliver market reports will continue with Japan and Russia (to be delivered by the authors at the Annual Conference) and Colombia and Brazil (to be launched later in the year).

AW presented the Board with an update on digital marketing. The Board agreed that the social media figures look great.

JG spoke to the paper about strategic partnerships. JG pointed out that English UK has strong relationships with the BC and UKTI. UKTI is changing the way it works with trade associations, they now have operational and strategic teams. The funding stream is also slightly different. JG added that English UK has applied to be a Trade Challenge Partner.

6. StudyWorld London 2013 – update and plans (paper EB24/6)

SB spoke to the paper. Cambridge English are platinum sponsors in celebration of their centenary, and PPI have taken a silver package. There is one silver and one gold sponsorship package still available and despite promotion, no educators have come forward.

JG suggested that large groups may feel sponsorship would not add anything for them. SP mentioned that LSBF have sponsored ICEF Berlin for the last couple of years. AW felt it would be a shame not to follow on educator sponsorship from last year. CG informed the Board that St Giles will be celebrating their 60th anniversary in 2015.

SB informed the Board that Tuesday night's English UK party will once again be held at Bloomsbury Bowling Lanes as the price is reasonable and the location is good. The party will be opened up to all participants, but spaces will be limited. JG mentioned the only negative feedback from last year was the food, so this will be changed. The Board made suggestions, including pizza, the circulation of food and deserts on trays, and mini ice cream tubs. SW added that it would be good to film the event.

JG highlighted that International House will celebrate their anniversary this year and the Board felt they should be approached about possible sponsorship.

SB drew the Board's attention to new events and increased advertising planned for 2013. SB mentioned that an information brochure is being produced to take to exhibitions. New promotional materials are being considered and some samples will be brought to the next meeting for review.

Action point:

- *SB to try and negotiate gold sponsorship with IH at the agent workshop in Italy.*

7. StudyWorld and English UK's smaller members – feedback results (paper EB24/7)

SB presented the Board with an evaluation of the survey of EUK member centres in subscription bands 0 and 1. SB confirmed that Bucksmore Summer Programmes had won the prize draw and will attend SW free of charge this year.

CG suggested that the perception of agent workshops amongst smaller schools may be inaccurate and felt that direct feedback from other small schools that attend StudyWorld may change their opinion. JG felt that this message may be stronger coming from Board members as they are not perceived to be selling anything.

SW suggested that there could be a designated area for 'boutique schools' which would be attractive to agents and encourage schools to sign up. SB added that the online booking form could ask for student enrolment numbers so that agents could filter schools accordingly. It was agreed that there should also be an option not to divulge this information.

The Board agreed payment instalments for educators in bands 0 and 1 should commence for StudyWorld 2014 and if possible for 2013. SW pointed out that a substantial number of member centres should not feel excluded due to fees as StudyWorld is EUK's flagship event. SW questioned the possibility of a payment programme being developed for all member centres.

SW felt that the Chair person of each EUK regional group could take an active role in contacting members to persuade them of the benefits in attending SW.

Action points:

- SB to contact the 20 'small' educators attending StudyWorld for targeted testimonials.
- SB to inform smaller educators of payment instalments for StudyWorld.
- AW to look into the possibility of payment instalments for all educators from 2014.

8. English UK Fairs – update and plans for 2013/14 (paper EB24/8)

JG spoke to the paper. The Macau fair was successful and the biggest yet. Prague sold out for educators and agents. Lima has sold out for educators and was the fastest selling to date; it is also doing very well for agents.

Bookings are open for the 2013 fairs in Beirut and Chiang Mai. The British Embassy in Burma is keen to do something at the fair in Chiang Mai.

The Latin America fair is likely to be held in Colombia in 2014 and Brazil the following year. UKTI and BIS are looking to do something in Brazil so are keen to join up.

The 2014 fair for agents in Europe will be held in Vienna. Possible destinations for other fairs in 2014 include Turkey, and China/Japan. SW suggested India as a possibility, pointing out that it is a huge market for students needing to improve IELTS for university admission. SW also suggested an inward mission targeting educators with training programmes.

9. English UK's online student strategy – discussion (paper EB24/9)

JG spoke to the paper. An overview of EUK's current websites and other online presence was presented to the Board. JG explained that the re-skinned version of the current site is nearing completion and was likely to be launched in May.

JG informed the Board that the EUK website gets 7-8,000 hits per week and the majority of these are to the student section. JG explained that it would be very expensive and complicated to develop an entirely new EUK website incorporating the student section.

AW pointed out that the idea was to have a separate URL for students with a different feel, more dynamic student content, and an enhanced course finder. AW added that the re-skin could continue to exist as the corporate site. One brand with two identities could be developed.

The Board were open to the idea of having a separate site and alternative identity for students.

Action point:

- AW to look further into the student strategy and develop a more detailed proposal.

10. English UK Marketing Conference 2013 – review and feedback

AW reported the conference was well-attended with 139 delegates in total; it has grown from last year. Feedback was good, particularly the food. The average rating was 3.5 out of 5 for the sessions. A power cut interrupted the final speaker, Adrian Liley, but this was dealt with well and Adrian has been re-scheduled to speak at the Annual Conference in May.

JG and SP felt that the etc. venue, Dexter House, was not ideal. JG added that Prospero House might work better for the future. SW suggested the Russell Hotel. The Board recommended looking at other possible venues.

Action point:

- HJ to look into alternative venues for the 2014 Marketing Conference.

Matters for information and report

11. English UK Partner Agency Scheme update (paper EB24/11)

JG outlined the success of the scheme which is continuing to grow at a steady pace (20 new agents since the last Board meeting). There are 175 partner agencies to date. Laura Underwood will account manage the agents and push the scheme forward to grow numbers.

AW highlighted that the agent section of the website can be developed and time will be also be spent looking at emerging markets to increase numbers.

12. English Language Promotions Group (ELPG) Meeting 11 December 2012

The Board noted the draft minutes of the meeting.

Other business

13. Dates of Enterprises Board meetings in 2013/14

Thursday 9 May (confirmed), Thursday 26 September or Thursday 10 October or Thursday 17 October (TBC).

Action Point:

- AW to look at dates for APSB and main Board meetings and confirm Sept/Oct date.

14. Any other urgent business

None.

The meeting concluded at 16:10.