

Minutes of the 39th Meeting of the English UK Main Board

Held at: English UK, 219 St John Street, London EC1V 4LY

Date: Wednesday 4 April 2012, 13:00 - 14:45

Present: Sarah Cooper (Vice-Chair and chair of this meeting), John Barnett, Richard Day, Caroline Hugo, Kevin McNally, Steve Phillips, Sarah Schechter, Graham Simpson, Shane Wilkinson

Attending: Andrew Hjort (Chair, APSB); Tony Millns; Huan Japes

Constitutional business

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Steve Phillips, Sarah Schechter, Andrew Hjort, Graham Simpson, Kevin McNally, Sarah Cooper and Tony Millns.

2. Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interests in the business of the meeting.

3. Minutes of the meeting on 9 February 2012 (B38)

The Minutes of the 38th meeting were accepted as being an accurate record. JD raised the issue of St Nicholas' School being eligible for the SESF despite being a member for only six months. Should there be conditions on access to the fund, such as a year's probation, in order to safeguard the interests of current members? This was felt to be particularly necessary as Accreditation UK (and ISI) do not inspect the financial standing of an organisation.

There were suggestions that new members could pay a bond (RD), or open their accounts to English UK, or be required to provide supplier or bank references (SW).

Action: MC agreed to refer this issue to the finance panel for further discussion.

4. Matters arising and updates (paper B39/1)

It was noted that there had been a high number of withdrawals from BAC, but there was evidence that ASIC had (perhaps surprisingly) been doing better.

The dates of the next meetings (June 14 and October 18) were confirmed.

5. Membership of the association (paper B39/2)

JD expressed concern that organisations such as the 'UK College for Business and Computing' (judging purely from the name) might be eligible for English UK membership. SE asked if eligible organisations needed a particular ratio of ELT classes relative to its business as a whole? Furthermore MC wondered how can organisations with only a handful of learners be accurately inspected?

Action: TM to report at the next meeting on school closures, particularly those organisations accessing the SESF: how long had they been accredited or had been English UK members? Also, can website details be added to the lists of new or eligible members for future board papers? Note also point 3 above.

Matters for decision and discussion

6. English UK and Enterprises Annual Report and Accounts 2011 (paper B39/3)

MC spoke to paper B39/3.

- It was agreed to increase the funds for the SESF by 25K, using funds from the surplus. The remainder of the surplus (£17K) should be added to the general reserves
- The costs for international fairs exceed the income by approximately 100K. This is down to mis-coding and the accounts should not be signed off with this figure
- VAT payable under TOMS prior to August 2011 has built up as a reserve of c. 50K rather than being paid over to HMRC. English UK therefore needs to make a voluntary disclosure, asking the auditors to help mitigate any penalty as the error is largely theirs

JB asked about the rise in administration costs. MC pointed out that this was due to particular costs for 2011 only, specifically maternity payment costs.

Action: TM to liaise with Buzzacotts to resolve the VAT-related error and the mis-coding of international fair costs. Accounts should be signed off only once these have been resolved.

7. Annual Conference and AGM arrangements (paper B39/4)

Action points:

TM to liaise with Neil Hughes of UKBA to ensure his AGM talk is sufficiently sector specific.

For future AGMs, EUK should bulk-book accommodation for an early-bird rate. Information on available accommodation, with a range of alternatives, should be provided (already circulated – HJ).

8. Accreditation UK Agreement (paper B39/5)

JB asked that for annex 2, point 1, the different areas of expertise be specified, to include ESP and TEYL. SW and CH agreed.

SE asked for clarification of Accreditation UK's remit – e.g. they should never observe non-ELT-based programmes. CH pointed out that if a class does have an ELT dimension (e.g. a CLIL-type session on a YL summer programme) then it should be observed.

Action: please ensure that Accreditation UK's remit is clarified to the board's satisfaction.

9. Public affairs (paper B39/6)

TM was commended for the comprehensiveness and tone of his letter to Damian Green.

10. A nominated charity? (paper B39/7)

JD expressed a degree of annoyance that the agreement that English UK would invite board members to nominate a charity, as minuted in meeting 34 of the board, had been apparently ignored in paper B39/7. There was general agreement that the paper should stand as it is, although the publicity benefits of supporting a charity should be acknowledged: members should be reminded that they can support a charity themselves (MC) and JB suggested a discussion at the next Enterprise board on how members could best publicise their charitable efforts.

Matters for report and information

11. Finance Panel meeting on 21 March 2012 (Minutes attached)

MC suggested the Endsleigh quote to set up a pension scheme (3-10K) was too high. JD requested an update on pensions/NEST at the AGM - this could be delivered by Endsleigh but would need to be an objective information-sharing session. SE thanked MC for his hard work as chair of the finance panel.

Action:

HJ to contact Endsleigh re-the affordability of their proposed scheme.

Endsleigh to be invited to deliver an appropriate presentation on NEST at the May AGM (already done).

12. Enterprises Board meeting on 9 February 2012 (Minutes attached)

JD questioned the proposal to open the boutique fairs to non-UK-based educators. SE asked for further research to be done before this step can be considered. SW mentioned the need to keep a careful eye on the market viability of future fair locations.

Other business

13. Dates and venues of future meetings (paper B39/1 refers)

June 14 and October 18 2012 were confirmed as the dates of the next two meetings, with the potential for further meetings at the May AGM and StudyWorld, if required.

14. Any other urgent business

a) SE raised the issue of Accreditation UK publishable statements, where points of excellence are often partial and not transparent to a wider audience – e.g. when reproduced in the EL Gazette. RD agreed that the new ‘areas of strength’ (which are to replace the ‘points of excellence’) need to be objectively related to those points listed in the full report.

Action: raise this matter with the Accreditation UK Executive Board

b) JB gave an update on the formation of English UK East: they will meet to agree a constitution on May 11th, with a confirmation letter sent to English UK by June. RD asked that details of familiarisation trips be sent to the relevant regional groups.

The meeting ended at 14:45.