

Minutes of the 46th Meeting of the English UK Board

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

Date: Tuesday 3 December 2013 from 15:30

Present: Sue Edwards (Chair) Sarah Cooper (Vice-chair), Andrew Hjort, Richard Day, Caroline Hugo, Steve Phillips, Shane Wilkinson, Daphne Laing, Kevin McNally, Jane Dancaster and Simon Cleaver (SCle)

Attending: Tony Millns, Huan Japes and Annie Wright (minutes)

Constitutional business

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from John Barnett.

2. Declarations of interest

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting on 17 October 2013

The minutes of the meeting on Thursday 17 October 2013 were agreed as an accurate record.

4. Matters arising and updates (paper B46/1)

TM spoke to the paper.

FE/HE Sub-group

TM confirmed Mark Allen of Sussex Downs College and Janette Donjon of The Sheffield College have agreed to facilitate a meeting between English UK and the international directors of the 157 group of FE colleges, at which the formation of a FE/HE ELT sub-group can be discussed.

Heathrow meeting

TM provided further details on the productive meeting he and JD had with Marc Owen, Head of UK Border Force at LHR, and two of his frontline staff on 7 November 2013. Issues discussed included confusing notices in the immigration areas, the VST stamp, entering the UK from the Republic of Ireland, and general reception/welcome. Good progress was made on all issues.

Subscriptions 214 ballot

Following the Board decision to increase subscriptions by 2% for 2014, an explanatory note was sent with a ballot form to all members. A total of 40 ballot forms were returned by the deadline of Friday 29 November 2013, of which 38 were in favour and 2 were against. The resolution was therefore carried and 2014 subscriptions will be invoiced on the new basis.

Annual Conference 2014

TM informed the Board that a provisional booking of a room at the Oxford & Cambridge Club on Pall Mall has been made for the tenth anniversary dinner on Wednesday 14 May 2014, the evening of the first day of the conference. TM advised that booking charges are waived for club members so it is a relatively inexpensive option.

The Board approved the proposed speakers and topics for the conference programme.

5. Membership of the association (paper B46/2)

TM spoke to the paper.

Current position

The Board noted the current number of member centres – 474 accreditations (386 private and 88 state sector).

Withdrawals/closures/mergers

The Board noted the withdrawals, closures and merges since the last meeting held on 17 October 2013.

New members

The Board admitted to membership the two new applications received from Oscars International in Edinburgh and Stafford House School of English in Brighton. The Board delegated authority to the chief executive to admit an expected applicant, The Language Gallery at LSBF in Manchester, under the group rules.

The Board requested future papers include a centre's location.

2013 basic and supplementary subscription debtors

TM informed the Board Cardiff Management and Languages Academy's bad debt of £652 would be written off. The centre has had accreditation withdrawn, is no longer a member, and has closed.

With regard to Glasgow Clyde College (previously Anniesland College) TM noted he expected to receive the 2013 debt owed but anticipates it will be difficult to get them to accept payment terms for 2014. A payment schedule for Shane Global Language Centres has been agreed and will be closely monitored.

Other membership issues and updates including changes of premises

The Board noted the additional updates including the change of branding of the ELC group.

Accreditation Consultancy Service

The Board noted the number of current subscribers to the service.

Corporate members

The Board noted James Lee Consultancy's conditions of membership, which permit them to join as a guardianship organisation only.

Matters for discussion and decision

6. UK International education strategy (paper B46/3)

SE requested agenda items 6, 7, 8 and 9 (papers B46/3, B46/4, B46/5 and B46/6) be taken together as a single discussion due to the interconnected nature of their content.

TM spoke to the papers at the Board meeting held on 17 October 2013, which is when they first appeared on the agenda and when it was agreed they would be revisited at the December meeting.

SE updated the Board on the CEO recruitment.

The discussion continued in the Board only session.

7. English Language Working Group (paper B46/4)

See notes in agenda item 6 above.

8. English UK: strategic context and framework (paper B46/5)

See notes in agenda item 6 above.

9. New CEO transition plan (paper B46/6)

See notes in agenda item 6 above.

10. VAT and agents (paper B46/7)

TM spoke to the paper and the Board agreed the proposed action to appoint PWC to act on English UK's behalf. The Board agreed with the suggested initial payment of £10,000 on account and agreed this should be taken from the 2013 accounts. (Post meeting note: following the news about the outcome of the OISE and BEET cases, this action was put on hold until the circumstances of those cases have been clarified, and no payment has been made to PWC.)

The meeting closed after the Board only session at 17:50.