

The Education & Training Foundation

Meeting of the Foundation Board
11 a.m. Tuesday 4th February 2014
The Goldsmiths Centre

MINUTES

The Board

Steve Freer (Independent Chair of Audit and Risk)

Don Hayes (TSNLA/AELP)

Lynsi Hayward-Smith (AAETO)

David Hughes (Independent)

John Hyde (AELP)

Christine Jeffery (AELP) **Apologies**

Asha Khemka (AOC)

Peter McCann (AOC)

Paul Mullins (CHAIR)

Joe Vinson (NUS)

Mark White (AOC)

Officers In Attendance

David Russell - Chief Executive

Maria Semak – Interim Head of Chief Executive Office (Minutes)

Gina Hobson – Head of Chief Executive Office Designate (observing)

1. Opening remarks

The Chair opened the meeting with formal congratulations to Asha Khemka on her appointment as Dame Commander of the British Empire.

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The Chair also welcomed Joe Vinson to his first meeting and welcomed Gina Hobson who would join the Foundation as Head of the Chief Executive's Office on 24th Feb.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Christine Jeffery; the apologies were noted and accepted by the Board.

3. Declaration of interest in agenda items

The Board noted the previously declared interests of the Directors/Trustees.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2013

The Board agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 5th December were a true record, and approved them for signature by the Chair and publication.

5. Matters arising

Item 6 Appointment of Directors – The Chair reported that the Search Committee, Paul Mullins (Chair), Asha Khemka and Peter McCann, had met on 29th January 2014 to consider and interview the two candidates whose nominations had been received for the final Board vacancy (workforce). The Chair stated that the committee was not able to recommend the appointment of either candidate and that an open recruitment process would be determined and the vacancy advertised widely. The Board assented to this course of action.

6. Draft Strategic and delivery plan

The Board welcomed the CEO, David Russell, to his first Board meeting and received two papers which had been drafted by Peter Davies, the Interim CEO.

The CEO before presenting the documents stated that he had a simple and straightforward vision; namely that the FE system in England should be the best in the world, that employers would feel confident in and proud of our vocational education and training system, and that we would have the best and strongest provision for second chance learners.

The CEO outlined the changes which would have to happen in order for this vision to become reality, and circulated a slide showing that ETF was

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responsible for two of the six key reform areas vis. workforce standards and leadership and governance.

The CEO introduced the Strategic Plan, commending its vision, its thorough treatment of sector engagement and its overall prioritisation. He stated that he would like to develop it further by shortening it, adding hard contextual data, and giving it a clearer focus on ultimate customers of our work i.e. learners and employers.

The CEO also introduced the Delivery Plan, explaining that it set out the work already in train in 13-14 which would carry-in to 14-15, and the new areas of proposed work. He asked for both general steers on the prioritisation and specific approval for the lines of expenditure detailed.

The Board noted the Strategic Plan and confirmed that they broadly supported the priorities outlined in the text. Further drafting was required in order to clarify the approach to and outcomes of sector engagement, and to derive supporting evidence from research and data sources to substantiate each of the priorities identified. The Board further concurred with the CEO that the document should be more succinct and accessible to the diverse audiences with whom the Foundation sought to engage.

The Board asked that for each priority area the plan should set out the nature and scale of the problem or opportunity; the nature of our planned activity; the degree to which our planned activity would address the issue; and a clear set of performance indicators by which they could judge success.

The Board further considered in detail the Foundation Delivery Plan, which developed in detail the priorities from the Strategic Plan, mapping spend against individual lines of commissioning activity. The Board were invited to consider the balance and distribution of resources and to note spend committed to programmes which had commenced or were being tendered in 2013/14.

The Board had a detailed discussion about priorities, with the conclusion being that the Foundation is right to focus on maths and English; on employer engagement; and on leadership and governance.

The Board requested that the context of the Policy environment be made more explicit and that the plan and strategy made clear links to existing bodies of research and reports, in addition to clarification of the landscape, illustrating the links and leverage potential between the work of the Foundation and Government, sector, employer and regional bodies. The Board noted that the

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credibility of the Foundation rested upon the demonstrable quality, impact and outcomes of work which it commissioned and the value that it added to the sector.

It was agreed that the Strategic Plan and Delivery Plan would be re-drafted and circulated to the Board ahead of the Board residential over 5-6th March.

The Chair stated that for the next iteration he would like to see one combined document, not two, and that the Strategy section of the document should be 10-20% of length of the draft Strategic Plan.

The CEO was also invited to consider in re-drafting the plan, the role of the Foundation in disseminating existing excellence within the sector. The Board further requested information regarding the programmes currently in train, what has been achieved and what the impact had been as this would support decision making about forward priorities.

David Hughes left the meeting at 1.30 p.m.

7. Any other business

The Board noted that its next meeting was scheduled for 19th June. However, rearranging the meeting would be investigated to facilitate the attendance of Andreas Schleicher and, if possible, Simon Field from the OECD. In addition, Board members would be gathering on 5th and 6th March at Chesterfield College to engage with local and national representatives from employers, colleges and training providers, to consider some of the operational and strategic issues being faced by the sector.