

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the National Association of Language Advisers, Holiday Inn, Stratford-upon-Avon, 7th July 2008

Item 1 Apologies.

There were no apologies

Item 2 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting

Item 3 Matters arising

There were no matters arising

Item 4 Officers' reports

President JL tabled a written report. He had been surprised by the range of issues that officers were dealing with. He gave a short resumé of his own activities as president to illustrate these different issues. He thanked executive and members for their commitment to the association. Nikki Perry thanked Jeff Lee for his hard work.

Chair NP echoed JL's sentiments with a resumé of the different consultations and liaison meetings she had attended: she felt that NALA had a very significant role to play in assuring communications between different organisations and groups. The fact that NALA members have a day job makes our comments invaluable as a key partner in many national initiatives. She proposed a "mind map" of activities for the website. NP stated her commitment to continue the work of the virtual task groups as she felt they were improving the efficiency of the executive.

NP thanked David Mee for managing the website, a challenging feat. She thanked the regional convenors who keep the association together and also the executive for their flexibility.

Secretary Jim McElwee had recorded the minutes of all the executive committee meetings. He had written the annual report to ASPECT. He had represented NALA on the Early Language Learning Forum (ELLAF) and had supported the chair at meetings with the National Director for Languages.

Treasurer Adrian Finbow presented an audit of the accounts which indicated that the association is in a financially healthy position. There were now 161 fully paid up members. With the agreement of the executive he had removed from the membership list those who had not renewed their subscription. There was a substantial surplus in the 2007 account which was helped by the subsidy of £5.50 per member from Aspect and the slight surplus remaining from the 2007 conference. NALA is now into its second year of managing its own membership and AF asked members to ensure that, if their subscription were paid for by another organisation, e.g. a Local Authority, they check that they are indentified on any documentation. NP added that the executive had taken the decision not to raise the cost of subscription since paperless communication had saved a lot of money. The subscription, therefore, remains at £50 per annum.

Membership Secretary Geoff Swinn thanked DM and AF for unscrambling the membership list. The number of members leaving was balanced by the arrival of new members. The current membership reflected national interests and priorities, but some prospective members were not sure whether they were eligible to join.

Communications Secretary David Mee presented a written report. He acknowledged a kind letter from Harmer Parr congratulating the association on the website which he had passed on to Chris Gill, Peter Hall and Phil Dahl, all of whom had made an invaluable contribution to the design and maintenance of the website.

A decision had been taken to abandon Update and to replace it with Stop Press on the website. DM expressed hearty thanks to Peter Hall for his assistance and guidance. They were now looking at other improvements to the website, notably an improvement of the layout and the addition of visual elements such as photographs. He asked whether it was time to change the software for something more powerful whilst acknowledging that some members felt that the simplicity of the website was its strength.

PH remarked that, although the website was a small but significant tool, the role of the convenors was invaluable and should not be underestimated. Effective communication in the association required the participation of every member. On behalf of the membership PH proposed a vote of thanks to officers reporting to the AGM. The motion was seconded by Alison Edwards.

Item 5 Election of Officers

The posts of Treasurer and Secretary were open for election. Trish Smith proposed Jim McElwee for the post of secretary and Joan Hoggan seconded the proposal. Alison Gilvey proposed Adrian Finbow for the post of Treasurer and David Mee seconded the proposal. There were no other nominations for the posts so Jim McElwee was re-elected as secretary and Adrian Finbow was re-elected as Treasurer.

Item 6 Audit of Accounts

AF reported that there had been a rigorous audit of the accounts by an officer of Bury Council and proposed that the association continue this link. The proposal was seconded by Jeff Lee.

Item 7 AOB

There was no further business.

The meeting finished at 5.40 p.m.

J. McElwee (secretary)