

***Minutes of the third Annual General Meeting of the Association for Learning Development in Higher Education (ALDinHE)***

***Held at Bournemouth University, Allsebrooke Lecture Theatre, Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2009.***

Chair: John Hilsdon

Minutes: Caroline Cash

Documents provided to those in attendance:

- Chair's Report
- Membership Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Letter of proposal to incorporate LearnHigher CETL

**Item 1 – Verification of the minutes of the Second Annual General Meeting**

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

**Item 2 – Matters arising from the minutes**

It had been proposed at the last meeting that a proposal should be made at the third AGM to reduce the number of days needed for constitutional changes to less than 21 days. The proposal has not been submitted according to the existing 21 day requirement and any change to the constitution will be held until the next AGM, to be submitted by John Hilsdon with the required notice.

**Item 3 – Chair's Report**

John Hilsdon thanked the ALDinHE membership for their interest and activity since the last Symposium and made reference to the increased activity of the Association in the past year including production of the first issue of the Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education (JLDHE); the response to the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills Committee inquiry: '*Students and Universities*'; work with the Staff and Educational Development Association and the Higher Education Academy to raise the profile of learning development and towards professional development opportunities. A joint one-day conference, '*Teaching Quality and Student Success*', was held in December 2008, in collaboration with SEDA, to address the changes in funding for student support. The Association is now represented on the HEA's 'reference group', though was not called to respond to the DIUS enquiry as

there was a perceived overlap with the work of SEDA (represented by Gina Wisker).

The Journal has been well received and there is sufficient material for a further publication.

John pointed towards future aims of the Association including a 'Learning Live' student conference focused on students as researchers in an on-line networking forum. It is intended to negotiate accredited recognition for student participation in this event and discussion is already underway with the Student Learning and Teaching Network. Ideas and participation from ALDinHE members in the organisation of this event will be welcomed as this event is still in its formative stages.

International links to continue to expand with the suggestion of an overseas learning development conference. There may be issues of funding to be addressed for this but this might be mitigated through uses of technology and global networking. Alan Bartell of AAL in Australia has expressed interest in hosting the conference.

A key aspect for the coming year is the post-funding consideration of the LearnHigher CETL. This is discussed further under Item 7.

#### **Item 4 – Membership Secretary's Report**

Caroline Cash reported that the last year has seen a healthy growth in both individual and institutional membership of ALDinHE and there are currently 54 institutions represented in the Association. She reiterated that individual membership is now included in the Symposium fee and that non-attending members will be invoiced for their subscription following the event.

The institutional membership fee will remain at £100 for this subscription year, but will be reviewed by the Steering Group in discussions around the continuation of LearnHigher.

The key aim of this year is for the work of the Association to reach out to institutions not currently represented and to increase membership through their inclusion. ALDinHE members are encouraged to use their networks and events to invite new members. A list of existing institutions represented on the Association will be made available in the 'Working Documents' section of the website for reference.

#### **Item 5 – Treasurer's Report**

Andy Hagyard reported that much of the Association's income and expenditure takes place around the Symposium so it is difficult to provide a comprehensive balance sheet at this time. Following the Symposium full accounts will be prepared and externally audited and it is expected that there will be a healthy balance of approximately £15,000.

Key costs in the past year have been concerned with the external hosting of the website, including the installation and maintenance of the Open Journal System that supports the Journal. Future costs may include supporting the integration of LearnHigher, though funds from the CETL have also been set aside to support this.

## **Item 6 – Election of Steering Group Officers**

The Steering Group consists of four officers and 6 elected members. This year two members are standing down and two nominations were received from ALDinHE membership within the deadline prescribed. It was deemed that an election was not necessary in this instance. Thanks were expressed for the work of the two members leaving the Steering Group, Becka Currant and Judy Turner, who have both contributed significantly to the formative years of the Association. The Steering Group welcomes Michelle Reid and Sandra Sinfield. Becka's particular interest in the professional development opportunities for learning developers will be taken forward by Sandra. Becka expressed interest in being co-opted to fulfil a marketing and recruitment function for the Association through other networks with which she has contact such as AMOSHI.

Officers of the ALDinHE Steering Group are as follows:

Chair	John Hilsdon
Vice-Chair	Pauline Ridley
Treasurer	Andy Hagyard
Secretary	Caroline Cash

Additional officers: Jonathan Staal, Michelle Reid, Julia Braham, Chris Keenan, Jan Sellers and Sandra Sinfield

Discussion raised the issue that nominations received after the deadline might be avoided if timely reminders are sent out. This will be actioned in advance of the next AGM.

Rebecca O'Rourke raised a query as to how long the individuals may serve on the Steering Group and that continued representation may lead to the risk that a group of enthusiasts risk creating a self-perpetuating clique. John Hilsdon responded that there is a clear election process and that the Steering Group are keen to receive nominations to refresh the group.

Pauline Ridley suggested that it would be helpful, on inviting ALDinHE members to put themselves forward, to make clear the level of commitment required. She explained the FlashMeeting process to provide an example of the ways in which the Steering Group endeavour to be time-efficient in working and communication practices.

John Hilsdon also pointed out that another mechanism for being involved more centrally in the Association's business is via the review/editorial process

of the Journal. Further information will be circulated via the Jiscmail discussion list.

## **Item 7 – Motion to adopt LearnHigher as part of the Association**

The AGM papers included an open letter to the membership proposing a motion that:

- 1) As of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2010 ALDinHE will incorporate LearnHigher and take responsibility for its continued operation and development.
- 2) For the period from April 2009 to April 2010, a LearnHigher Transition Group (LHTG) will be established to represent
  - a. All HEI partners who have memoranda of agreement with LearnHigher
  - b. The Association's Steering Group
- 3) The LHTG will develop plans for how LearnHigher may operate in future, including undertaking a review of LearnHigher's aims and objectives; its day-to-day functioning and key aspects of its operation; the development of new partnerships and memoranda of agreement.
- 4) The LHTG will report to the Association's Steering Group and any resulting proposals for continuing the work of LearnHigher will be presented to the membership of the Association at the AGM to be held at Nottingham Trent University in April 2010.

The wording above was amended to correct a previous version: Existing memoranda of agreement are between LearnHigher and individual HEIs, rather than with ALDinHE (as in the version presented to the meeting). Future memoranda will be negotiated between ALDinHE and HEIs. The amended motion was proposed by John Hilsdon, Chair of ALDinHE and seconded by Christine Keenan, Steering Group member and accepted with one abstention.

Discussion of the motion:

A question was raised as to the future funding of the LearnHigher activities. John responded by stating that new memoranda of agreement with participating institutions would be proposed and that HEI contributions would be required in order to develop activities. The minimum maintenance activities of hosting the website and existing resources would be cost-free.

Maggie Boyle questioned whether other options had been considered for the post-funding support of LearnHigher – e.g. having a 'lead institution'. John responded that this had been explored but it was felt that a) no single institution would be likely to be able to afford to take the total responsibility of the future of the CETL and b) in both pragmatic and philosophical senses it was felt that a coalition model was preferable to achieve sector wide buy-in. It was pointed out that the successful bid for LearnHigher arose from a group of members of the LDHEN network; it was conceived as a collaborative venture and should continue as such.

Jonathan Staal commented that it would be beneficial to target institutions beyond England to encourage HEI involvement beyond 2010.

Terry Finnigan asked what overlap there was between the LearnHigher steering group and the ALDinHE steering group. John responded by saying that there was overlap, but that in both groups there existed members that were not involved in both and that the LHTG would comprise members of each group, not just those involved in both.

Linda Murray asked whether the £10,000 mentioned to facilitate the transfer of the LearnHigher resources and website was set aside from ALDinHE funds. John clarified this by saying that this is LearnHigher CETL funding, ring-fenced to facilitate the technical transition.

### **Item 8 – Any other business**

None