# **Minutes of the CCDG Board, November 23, 2021**

**Present:**Erica Cassin Andrew Clark   
Neil Coughlan   
Sam Evans (Welsh Government)   
Dave Hagendyk  
Liz Harris  
Sue Maguire  
Ceri Noble  
Sue Price   
Emma Richards  
Tony Smith   
Richard Thomas   
Helen White Debra Williams (Chair)  **From Careers Wales:**Nikki Lawrence  
Shirley Rogers  
Ruth Ryder  
 **In Attendance**  
Emma Blandon, Careers Wales  
  
**Apologies:**  
Dave Mathews  
Mary Van Den Heuvel  
  
**Absent:**  
Taslima Begum  
  
**Secretariat:**   
Jayne Pritchard

## Declarations of Interest

No further declarations of interest were noted.

## Minutes of the Previous Meeting, August 19 2021

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved, subject to the following amendment:

Item 2.1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:  
An error was reported under conflicts of interest and minor changes were required to reflect that the Board member was a member of the audit committee.

## Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

* 1. **Chair’s Update (Minute 4)**

The Chair advised the Board that she would circulate a paper regarding

membership of the Board’s Sub-Committees, champions role, and the SIRO.  
  
**ACTION 1:** Paper to be circulated re champions role and SIRO

* 1. **Careers Wales Glossary of Terms (Minute 14)**The Board requested a glossary of Careers Wales terms.

**ACTION 2:** Glossary of terms to be circulated to the Board

## Chair’s Update

The following key points were noted:  
  
**Board Member Leaving**

The Chair announced that a Board member was due to step down and thanked them for their contributions to Careers Wales.  
  
**Papers RE Committees, Champion Roles and SIRO**

The Chair explained that the delay in circulating a paper outlining the renewed membership of Sub-Committees was due to the fact that WG was in the process of appointing a new Chair and therefore any other adjustments would be confirmed in light of that appointment. It was hoped the matter would be resolved in the next coming weeks. The Chair was, however, pleased to announce that the SIRO post had now been filled by Mr Dave Mathews.  
  
**Planned Board Away Day**

The Chair explained the challenges surrounding the Board away day and emphasised the importance of maintaining safety during the pandemic and it was for this reason that the Board away day was cancelled.

## Chief Executive’s Report

Members had received a previously circulated paper from the Chief Executive, which was noted. The following items were highlighted verbally:  
  
**Pay Award**It was noted that Unison members had rejected the most recent pay award offer.  
 **ESTYN**Members were advised that ESTYN was due to complete interviews by 17th December 2021, with Executive and members of the senior management team due to receive initial feedback on 30th November. **Minister Meetings**

The Chief Executive was in the process of arranging meetings with both the Minister for the Economy and also with the Minister for Education.

**Compliments and Complaints**In response to a question previously asked, it was noted that the Company had received 13 complaints in total for the current year. The CE advised that a paper would be brought forward to the next Board meeting providing an overview of the complaints and compliments received.  
  
**ACTION 3:** Compliments and complaints paper to be brought to the next CCDG Board meeting

## Half Year Progress Report

The Board discussed the previously circulated report with the key areas of discussion focussing on the points below.  
  
In order to gain a better understanding of the role of a trainee Careers Adviser, The Chair asked SR to talk the Board through the journey of a trainee Careers Advisor. SR provided a description of a Career advisers journey and SR invited comments from the Board.

* 1. **LMI Strategy**A discussion ensued around advisors keeping up to date on labour market information, and the Board was advised how this takes place. It was also noted that the company had recently produced an updated LMI strategy, and this could be included on the agenda for the next Board meeting.  
       
     **ACTION 4:** Updated LMI strategy to be presented at the next CCDG Board meeting
  2. **Labour Market Predictions**The Board discussed labour market concerns and future gaps.
  3. **Working Wales**The Board asked if Working Wales was providing mid-career support to the 50+ age group and was advised that exploration was currently taking place to target full and part-time learners in FE, and this would affect work support which would include the mid-career (50+ age) group.
  4. **Employer Expectations – Skills and Development**A discussion was had on employer engagement work. It was noted that a piece of work had been commissioned by the Welsh Government looking into this area of work, which will help inform the direction of travel for the company’s work in this area.

## Digital Strategy

The key features of the Digital Strategy were highlighted, and the Board were invited to give comments and questions.

**7.1 Risk**The Board asked what the biggest risks were with delivering the new strategy. EB acknowledged that the strategy was ambitious but deemed that the biggest challenge would be to align the plans that sit under the new strategy with the ambitions set out in the digital strategy.

## 8. Bilingualism and Brighter Futures

The Board received an overview of the Company’s position regarding the delivery of bilingual provision which had come forward following a request in the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee. At that Committee it was felt that a broader discussion at the Board was required about its position and thinking in relation to the Company’s work in this area. Board members were therefore asked for their thoughts and opinions, and any recommendations they could make in relation to the activity being undertaken. Two key areas were noted in the discussions.

* 1. **Auditing Staff’s Welsh Language Skills**  
     A discussion was had around the audits of the organisation around Welsh language skills. It was noted that the last audit was completed in 2020 and that there would be another audit in the next business year. The Board also heard that the Company would be establishing a Task and Finish Group to review all areas of the Company’s bilingual provision, which would include and updated analysis of the level of skills across the Company.
  2. **Challenges RE Staff Recruitment**

The Board raised concerns over recruiting bilingual staff due to the shortage of Welsh speakers and considered the matter to be a high-risk issue which required regular reviewing. This risk was acknowledged and advised that the task and finish group would be looking at supply and demand and how the Company could offer further development opportunities to its current staff.

## Activate Update Report

The Chief Executive highlighted some of the key issues within the activate update report, these included:

* 1. **Shared Prosperity Fund**The Chief Executive continued to meet local authorities regarding this fund and was pleased to announce that the bid with Neath Port Talbot had been successful.
  2. **Tailored Work Experience**  
     Discussions remained ongoing with Welsh Government regarding the future delivery of this aspect of the project.
  3. **Careers Advisers**  
     The organisation had identified a potential risk attributed to an insufficient level of careers advisers and as consequence career adviser posts were currently being advertised.

## Transforming the Workplace – Project Update

An overview was given on the Transforming the Workplace Project and the Board were invited to make comments and questions.

* 1. **Efficiency and Effectiveness**The Board stressed the importance of maintaining efficiency and effectiveness in any future papers concerning hybrid working.
  2. **ESTYN Future Thematic**  
     A review meeting had not been arranged, although it was believed that an ESTYN thematic would be arranged in the next business year.

## 11. Committee Meetings Update

### 11.1 Finance, Audit and Risk Committee Meeting – 15th November 2021

The Chair advised that there were not specific issues to bring to the attention of the full Board.

### 11.2 Performance and Impact Committee Meeting – 26th October 2021

The Chair for the Performance & Impact Committee provided an update and applauded the findings from the Home Education Tracking Report**.**

### 11.3 People Matters Committee Meeting – 11th November 2021

In the absence of the Chair, a committee member from the People Matters Committee provided feedback from the last meeting and highlighted the discussion on the termination of the activate project.

## 12. Any Other Business

**12.1 Valued Partner Awards**  
The Chair asked if Board members could attend the Valued Partner Awards. The Chief Executive confirmed that the event would be recorded, and it was agreed that all Board members would receive an invitation to the virtual event.  
  
**ACTION 5**: All Board members to receive an invitation to the Valued Partner Awards

**12.2** **Front Cover for Papers**  
The Board requested job titles to be included on the committee report front covers.  
  
**ACTION 6:** All future front cover sheets to include author’s job title