

Notes of the Advisory Council Meeting May 2011

President's Address

John Chorley welcomed everyone to his last Advisory Council (AC) meeting as elected President; his term is coming to an end in August 2011.

He was pleased to announce that Margot Skelton had given birth to a healthy baby girl. Tony Armstrong had received his PhD, and sadly noted that Ade Lawal (constituency place on Council) had passed away.

The President fed back on the business of the Non Executive Board (NEB) since the last Advisory Council meeting, noting that the self-financing issue had been the main topic of discussion. The NEB (as the decision making body of IfL) sets the fees. The chief executive, Toni Fazaeli, and deputy chief executive, Lee Davies, have been meeting with an Employer Organisation, Unions and BIS to move things forward.

Aims of the Day:

- To consider the potential role of Advisory Council member in a) the election process b) governance annual self-assessment
- To begin a professional dialogue about the development of Teaching and Learning in the further education and skills sector and IfL's role in taking forward developments.

Intended Outcomes:

- Expert views to inform the IfL policy decisions about teaching, learning assessment and pedagogy over the next 3-5 years.
 - Volunteers to contribute to the annual self-assessment of governance in relation to the role of Advisory Council
 - Increased clarity about the implications of self-financing.
1. The Chair of NEB, Sue Crowley, talked through the election timelines for governance. Finalised election timelines will be distributed to all AC members soon.
Action: members to alert colleagues about the opportunities to stand for election
 2. The chair introduced the workshops. The workshops were run by Advisory Council members and the topics were based on feedback from the last AC meeting. They provided opportunity for AC members to brainstorm and share their views on specific topics. Feedback from these sessions will help shape IfL's policy positions in these areas. Members had opportunity to attend two workshops.

Workshop themes:

The future of teaching and learning in adult and community learning
Our ultimate professional Identity
The future of teaching and learning in Work-based learning providers
The pedagogy of the future
Initial Teacher Training

The agenda was adjusted to give more time *to discuss in greater depth issues relating to transition to self-financing*. Members listed areas/ questions that they wished to discuss.

The group discussed the role of the Advisory Council, the Governance structure and self- financing and noted their thoughts, which were collected into the following themes:

- How IfL can support you in your role as an AC member
- How can IfL AC I members support IfL in achieving its strategic purpose

Governance Annual Self-Assessment

The chair explained that the role of governance is basically two-fold. Firstly governance is about setting the strategic direction of the organisation and secondly ensuring financial viability and business probity, and the staff seek to deliver that strategic direction. Good strategic planning whilst primarily the role of the governing body also includes the views of stakeholders, staff and all importantly in a professional body, its membership.

The annual self- assessment enables us to consider how we can improve our performance. This assessment should include:

- Internal audit – this has been carried out and given a green rating with only two low priority recommendations. These are currently being implemented. Internal audit tends to reflect the **governance procedures** and as such is more focussed on efficiency than the effectiveness of governance.
- Self-assessment should be for both the non-executive board (NEB) and the Advisory Council (AC). This will tend to focus more on **effectiveness**.
- Good governance guidelines suggest that self-assessment should be supported by an **external analysis**.

Two experts in governance and leadership development were introduced and they outlined their role. AC members and the NEB will be invited to interview to share their thoughts; AC members who wanted to participate in the individual interviews gave their details.

Self-financing and fees

The Group had a full discussion about self-financing and feedback from the wider membership.

Action: LD to email an individual member who wrote to AC to say that the AC meeting took place and that the AC would be responding to him shortly.

Action: SC and JC to draft a response and email it to AC members so they can look at it and then send to AC.

The president concluded the day by inviting members to contact him and continue their dialogue in the membership area online community.