



Taith Advisory Board Meeting - Minutes
Thursday, 9th February 2023
10.30am – 12.30pm
Meeting held via Teams

Attendance List	
In Attendance:	<p>(KW) Kirsty Williams, Advisory Board Chair (AW) Amanda Wilkinson, Universities Wales (MH) Maria Hinfelaar, Wrexham Glyndwr University (CM) Craig Matthews, The Local Authorities' Principal Youth Officers Group (SH) Siân Holleran, ColegauCymru (DL) Delyth Lewis, Welsh Youth Parliament (GM) Gareth Morgans, Welsh Local Government Association/Association of Directors of Education in Wales (HJ) Helen Jones, Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Service (RH) Rob Humphreys, Learning and Work Institute Wales (ZE) Zachary Edge, NUS Wales (BC) Ben Calvert, Global Wales Partnership</p>
Alternates:	<p>(APE) Angharad Penny Evans, Welsh Government (BO) Bethan Owen, Higher Education Funding Council Wales</p>
Apologies:	<p>John Nash, National Training Federation Wales Calum White, Welsh Government Colin McInnes, Wales Higher Education Brussels Harriet Barnes, Higher Education Funding Council Wales</p>
Taith Programme Executive (TPE):	<p>(SG) Susana Galván (EM) Dr Elid Morris (EB) Ellie Bevan (WB) Walter Brooks (HG) Helen Gentle (CR) Claire Richardson (SJ) Sion James (BW) Bethan Williams</p>
Secretariat support:	<p>Michele Convery</p>

Minutes		
Agenda item	Item	Actions (A) - Discussion (D)
1	Welcome and introductions	
1.1	The members were welcomed to the meeting and specifically Zachary Edge who has replaced Joe Atkinson on the Advisory Board (AB), representing NUS Wales. Joe was thanked for his contribution to the AB. Angharad Penny Evans was also welcomed, who was attending on behalf of Calum White from Welsh Government and Bethan Owen who was attending on behalf of Harriet Barnes from Higher Education Funding Council Wales.	
1.2	The AB were informed that the meeting was being recorded to support minute taking and members were asked to reserve the chat function for the purposes of operational matters.	
1.3	The AB were advised that there is now a dedicated email address for members to contact the Chair for any issues they wish to raise directly or for future agenda items. The email address is – TaithABChair@taith.wales	
1.4	The format of the meeting would be slightly different to previous meetings. The first half will be the usual papers and reports from the Taith Programme Executive and the second part will be smaller groups workshop/discussions, which will allow for more in-depth discussion.	
1.5	It was reflected that February 2023 marks the first anniversary of the Taith programme, and the meeting was a good time to, not just celebrate the programme but also reflect on the journey so far, lessons learned and the role of the AB moving forward.	
2	Minutes and actions of the last meeting	
2.1	A referral was made to the extraordinary meeting which took place on 10 January 2023, and the consensus regarding the tight timescales given to AB members when receiving papers and being able to consult with sector colleagues. Moving forward, the Taith Programme Executive aims to provide recommended policy adjustments for the next round of Pathway 2 2023 (launching in the autumn) and of Pathway 1 2024 (launching January 2024) at the next AB meeting, scheduled for June.	A – Taith Programme Executive to provide recommended policy adjustments for Pathway 2 2023 and

		Pathway 1 2024 at the next AB meeting in June.
3	Matters arising	
3.1	There were no comments from the AB on the previous minutes and actions.	
4	Update from the Taith Executive	
4.1	A highlighted update was presented from the Taith Programme Executive as the detailed paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting. These highlights included advising the AB that:	
4.1a	The outcomes for Pathway 1 2022 have been published on the website.	
4.1b	Pathway 2 2022 is currently at the Funding Committee stage of assessment The final sign-off goes to the ILEP Ltd. Board of Directors on 20 February and it is hopeful that Beneficiaries will be notified of the outcomes from 28 February onwards.	
4.1c	Pathway 1 2023 opened on 19 January and will close in March.	
4.1d	This year there will be much more emphasis on the stories and outcomes of Taith Beneficiaries and this will be reflected on the website.	
4.1e	The AB were asked to share any reflection pieces (link on the circulated paper) to celebrate Taith's first birthday to feature on the website or social media.	
4.1f	TPE has worked hard to be active in terms of engaging with all the eligible sectors and have delivered many events to raise awareness of Taith and to support the sectors with understanding how Taith works and in encouraging organisations to apply.	
4.1g	The Programme has received considerable interest from stakeholders outside of Wales and SG has been invited to several events to talk about and promote Taith.	
4.1h	Prior to the Christmas break, all the Grant Agreement Letters (GAL) were signed for all successful Pathway 1, Round 1 (2022) applicants. The total value of grant awarded being a little over £10 million. The GAL for Global Wales was also signed before Christmas 2022, with the grant value of £10.28 million.	
4.1i	A new Beneficiaries' area has been launched on the website and all current Beneficiaries have been sent information on how to navigate this. In addition, support sessions will also be offered.	
4.2	The AB were asked if they had any questions on the Taith Executive update.	

<p>4.2a</p> <p>4.2a(i)</p> <p>4.2a(ii)</p> <p>4.2a(iii)</p> <p>4.2b</p> <p>4.2b(i)</p> <p>4.2b(ii)</p> <p>4.2b(iii)</p> <p>4.2b(iv)</p> <p>4.2c</p> <p>4.2c(i)</p> <p>4.2c(ii)</p>	<p>Questions on the Taith Executive update</p> <p>The team were thanked for all their hard work and asked if the AB could be given an overview of all the successful and unsuccessful applicants as there is a need to know who is being reached and not being reached. There is a need to be as transparent as possible.</p> <p>It was understood that data sharing can be a barrier but there is a need to understand and support and suggested that a simple tick box exercise may help with this hurdle.</p> <p>Taith Programme Executive (TPE) response to 4.2a & 4.2a(i)</p> <p>TPE will look to see what information can be shared and that analysis and discussion are ongoing with the Sector Organising Bodies (SOBs) in terms of raising awareness of Taith.</p> <p>It was added that these points were relevant and there is a need to see and understand this data as there is such diversity within the sectors creating complexities.</p> <p>Questions on the Taith Executive update</p> <p>It asked how Taith will determine how projects have improved people’s career prospects and how the programme will devise a structured approach to understanding impact beyond participation?</p> <p>TPE response</p> <p>Acknowledged the importance of the question, and that the TPE were very aware of the need to collect this data.</p> <p>Currently, a specification (or research methodology) is being collated to allow for the collection of participation feedback.</p> <p>There will be an independent evaluation in place in terms of reporting Beneficiary impact and this will also include Global Wales.</p> <p>A monthly reporting tool has been launched which requires all Beneficiaries of live projects to report on their targets and there is a plethora of participant data subsets and an indication of spend. This will allow the programme to become data rich and how this data is utilised and structured will be examined in terms of short- and long-term impacts.</p> <p>A question was asked about the balance of reporting and what is being reported. What does the monthly information give and why is it monthly? What is being achieved with the money given to Beneficiaries?</p> <p>TPE response</p> <p>Monthly reporting tool gives numbers on participants in terms of mobility activities which have already occurred.</p> <p>In terms of expenditure, it’s money that has already been spent by the Beneficiary.</p>	<p>A – Taith Programme Executive will review further in terms of what information can be shared.</p>
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4.2c(iii)	Emphasised the importance of the monthly tool in terms of demonstrating progress of how the programme is doing as it is the only real time information the TEP receives from Beneficiaries.	<p>A – Taith Programme Executive will prepare an analysis of outcomes and share with the AB.</p> <p>A – AB to provide any specific requests or any requests they would like to see in the Beneficiary reporting tool.</p>
4.2c(iv)	The Beneficiaries are required to complete a spreadsheet, there is no narrative information required.	
4.2c(v)	In terms of the assurance, the monthly report is a pivotal piece.	
4.2c(vi)	Secondary part of the report is an assignment of risk rating for each Beneficiary, and these determine if a quarterly or interim report is required.	
4.2c(vii)	Every project is required to submit a final report, and this triggers a series of payments. This is not too dissimilar to other international exchange programme’s reporting requirements.	
4.2c(viii)	Every project is required to submit a final report, and this triggers a series of payments. This is not too dissimilar to other international exchange programme’s reporting requirements.	
4.2d	TPE acknowledged that admin procedures can be cumbersome (hearing this from Beneficiaries) but there is a minimum requirement from Welsh Government when reporting. However, any feedback the AB can provide is always very useful as simplifying processes will always be addressed where possible.	
4.2e	There was interest to know more about the profile of the mobilities, i.e., what countries are being linked up with and are these predominantly in Europe or is it also the U.S. More of a flavour of the footprint would be appreciated.	
4.2e(i)	TPE confirmed that this information was available, and analysis of outcomes will be prepared and shared with the AB, and this will include information regarding countries.	
4.2f	Concern was expressed with the amount of work required by the Beneficiaries (especially for small organisations) for the monthly reporting but reflected that the TPE had alleviated this concern in explaining that there was not too much required from stakeholders.	
4.2g	This item was concluded by clarifying that more detail around the applications and the Beneficiaries were required and asked the AB to provide any specific requests or ideas on what they would like to see in the reporting tool.	
5	Update on Sector Organising Bodies	
5.1	A highlighted update on the recommendations of Arad Research’s report on the Sector Organising Bodies (SOBs) was given as the detailed paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The highlights on the recommendations were:	

<p>5.1a</p> <p>5.1b</p> <p>5.1c</p> <p>5.1d</p> <p>5.1e</p> <p>5.1f</p> <p>5.1g</p> <p>5.1h</p>	<p>The SOBs have met their original aim and the recommendation is that the model is continued.</p> <p>There is a need to consider including the Further Education (FE) and Vocational Education and Training (VET) sectors in the next round of the SOB body of work.</p> <p>There is a need for transparency and the Taith Executive, ILEP Ltd. Board of Directors and the SOBs should work to ensure this, especially as the SOBs are also eligible for funding from Taith and this could be considered an advantage and disadvantage other organisations.</p> <p>There is a need to develop better links with Local Authorities.</p> <p>To develop an approach to monitoring and evaluation of outcomes and impact.</p> <p>A need to identify gaps in engagement.</p> <p>To regularly review the SOB model to ensure transparency and consistency in decision making with partners.</p> <p>SOBs to have a forum to share best practice amongst themselves.</p>	
<p>5.2</p> <p>5.2a</p> <p>5.2b</p> <p>5.2b(i)</p> <p>5.2b(ii)</p> <p>5.2b(iii)</p> <p>5.2c</p>	<p>The TPE added that the SOBs were successful in the initial pilot stage in the first year of Taith and, according to the report, the principles were good and should be continued.</p> <p>However, it is recognised for the TPE to consider how the context has changed from the first year as there is more capacity within the team and there is more awareness of the Programme.</p> <p>There is a need to consider the level of support needed by the different sectors and organisations to engage with Taith and make the most of the opportunities available.</p> <p>A workshop will be held in early March where the AB will be invited to contribute to the development of the SOB model going forward.</p> <p>TPE will also be engaging with other stakeholders outside of the AB, on the specific challenges and barriers to the work of the SOB.</p> <p>TPE will issue a proposal for the criteria and the area of focus for the next round of SOBs based on the input of the AB members and from sector consultation.</p> <p>Applications for the next round of SOBs will open in May 2023 and it is the aim of the TPE to provide the AB with an update at the next meeting on the 21st of June.</p>	<p>A – Taith Programme Executive to schedule a workshop in March with AB to discuss future model of SOBs which will be followed by an open call in May/June.</p> <p>A – Taith Programme Executive to provide the AB with an update on the Sector</p>

5.2d	The AB were reminded that the workshop in March will give more of an in-depth opportunity to examine the next version of the model using the experience from this meeting and the report circulated prior to this meeting. The meeting was then opened to questions.	Organising Bodies' call at the June meeting.
5.2e	It was asked if the next SOB would be operational from the next academic year or in time for the next Pathway 1 funding call?	
5.2e(i)	TPE advised that the aim is to have it operational to support with the next round of Pathway 2 between October and December.	
5.2f	This item was concluded by reiterating that it is good practice to keep the SOBs under review and to make sure that they are there to do a job which reflects the evolution and growth of the Programme.	
6	Advisory Board and Taith Governance: Workshop/Discussion	
6.1	The following questions were given to the AB for discussion in three Breakout rooms:	
6.1a	Taith Strategy one year on – is it good as it is, or does it need reviewing updating?	
6.1b	The role and effectiveness of the Board – what is working and what needs to change?	
6.1c	Membership of the Board - is it right, identifying conflicts, why are you here and who for?	
	Collective feedback from the three groups:	
6.1a(i)	Taith is a superb programme and broadly the group were content with the strategy.	
6.1a(ii)	It is too early to make changes to the strategy. Allow the programme to run for longer before assessing.	
6.1a(iii)	Concerns on how strategies are to be measured. Some aims and objectives of the programme are harder to capture than others.	
6.1a(iv)	Concerns that some of the organisations may not have the capacity to measure the success of a programme.	
6.1a(v)	Should Taith develop an evaluation tool?	
6.1a(vi)	Value of experience may not be realised until much further down the line and not captured in studies.	
6.1a(vii)	Should Taith develop a methodology tool?	
6.1a(viii)	Important that a strategy exists which looks at how the Taith Programme continues to exist and ensure it remains a Welsh Government priority and part of a government manifesto.	
6.1a(ix)	Taith profile could be higher.	
6.1a(x)	Queries raised about the amount of regulatory burden for organisation in running programme and this may deter applications.	
6.1a(xi)	Risk of developing a risk averse internal culture, which may depress demand.	
6.1a(xii)	Taith strategy can be built on strength that already exists in different sectors.	

6.1a(xiii)	The long-term impact of mobility experiences should be built into the strategy.	
6.1a(xiv)	Data which can be collected quickly should be used to communicate the benefits of Taith.	
6.1a(xv)	Can the strategy be more cross cutting for FE, HE and VET offer more operational ways of working?	
6.1b(i)	Any overlap with the work of the ILEP Board of Directors (BoD) and the discussions of the AB.	
6.1b(ii)	More transparency and communication between the ILEP Ltd BoD and AB needed.	
6.1b(iii)	Longer timeframes should be given to AB to consult to enhance effectiveness.	
6.1b(iv)	Planning meetings would be helpful so the AB can be aware of key decisions and when they need to be made.	
6.1b(v)	The AB having a high-level oversight on the development of Taith, and policy changes has started to manifest.	
6.1b(vi)	Clarification is still needed on the terms of reference for the AB, how it relates and what happens to the advice the AB gives.	
6.1b(vii)	Suggested coversheet to outline the role of an AB member to ensure they know what is expected of them before attending meetings.	
6.1c(i)	Questioned whether Higher Education was overrepresented on the AB and if it needs a SOB.	
6.1c(ii)	Schools are not adequately represented on the AB and having more representation from this sector would create some sort of parity.	
6.1c(iii)	SOBs and the organisations that make up the SOBs each have an opportunity to be part of the AB.	
6.1c(iv)	AB would benefit from having some genuine externality, possibly from outside of the UK.	
6.1d	It was added there had been a group discussion about the eligibility of local authority education support staff and consortia staff who are not directly employed by schools and asked for clarification on this.	
6.1d(i)	TPE clarified that they are eligible, they just need to have school on board and the point of the verification was to avoid organisations who do not have any links to schools applying and to make sure there are genuine contacts and links and partnerships with schools.	
6.1e	The AB were thanked for their feedback and were informed that this information will be used as part of continuous discussion/conversation. It will also form part of wider information which is being collected and will build a bigger picture and help Taith improve.	
6.1e(i)	The meeting was closed by asking the AB to keep in touch (outside of the scheduled meetings) with any concerns or have feedback they may have.	

7	Any Other Business	
7.1	No other business was raised.	
8	Date of next meeting	
8.1	21 st June 2023	