**AGENDA ITEM #6: NEAS AUSTRALIA RESOURCES REVIEW 2022**

**OVERVIEW**

* NEAS Australia is the global leader in quality assurance for the English Language Teaching Community.
* Planning is underway for four key elements of the NEAS Revive Plan as we prepare for 2022:
  + Staffing profile for the NEAS core team
  + Board profile for growth
  + Resources planning for growth including office space in Sydney
  + Tech Stack Review and Recommendations

**RECOMMENDATIONS REQUIRING BOARD APPROVAL**

It is recommended that NEAS invest in the following initiatives over the next 12 months:

1. Appoint a part-time administrative assistant from 10 January 2022.
2. Appoint a Participating Consultant to the NEAS Board with a skill set related to one or all of the proposed new member categories (education agents, service organisations or ELT professionals) from February 2022 with the intention to appoint as Independent Director after 6-12 months.
3. Include an additional member from the Board on the FAIC and the FAIC to be held alongside Board Meetings, so other Board members can attend.
4. Formalise the role of Deputy Chair and secure formal appointment of a Board member in this role.

**FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS NOT REQUIRING BOARD APPROVAL BUT PRESENTED HERE FOR INFORMATION**

1. Establish a physical office from 10 January 2022, located onsite rent free at a Sydney member campus. Sydney staff to work full time from office from 10 January 2022, with flexible options for up to 40% remote working (i.e., minimum 3 days per week in office).
2. Undertake an internal review to see what recommendations from the Tech Stack external audit can be undertaken by current NEAS Staff and Contractors prior to 30 June 2022 to (a) better align Xero (invoicing) and HubSpot and (b) export data from the NEAS legacy CRM to import into HubSpot.
3. Appoint a Business Systems Manager from 1 July 2022 to manage NEAS Virtual Business Systems.

**BACKGROUND**

* Key principles of the NEAS 2020-2023 Strategic Plan focus on people development:
  + People and Culture Principle:
    - We strive for excellence, we listen, we learn.
    - We are here to make a difference.
  + Goal: Ensure all assets and resources within NEAS are aligned and support NEAS mission.
  + Goal: Empower stakeholders through professional development, continuous engagement, reflective practice and open communication.
  + Goal: Communicate and demonstrate international leadership in a culture of quality.
* Industry Stakeholders indicate that international students will be able to return in controlled circumstances once 80% vaccination is achieved in Australia (currently projected to be in November 2021 with flights opening up 18 December 2021), with some universities aiming for 10% return of pathway students by March 2022 and 50% return by August 2022, with ELICOS-only centres trailing far behind that at 5% by March 2022, 25% by August 2022 and 50% by November 2022. Full return of international students to 2019 levels to Australia is unlikely but may come close in January 2023.
* NEAS membership has increased slightly over the last 12 months, increasing from 107 members across 186 centres to 108 members across 189 centres between Oct 2020 and Oct 2021 (one additional net member and three additional net centres). However, the number of members entering Pending / Hibernation Status has increased. In the last 12 months, one member has formally ceased, 10 members are requiring fee discounting, reduction or payment plans, 20 providers have entered pending status/ hibernation and an additional 4 providers have been identified by NEAS as at risk, totalling a potential maximum loss of 34 members out of 108 in total (32%).
* These estimates reflect a slower recovery than expected to the sector and the need to balance caution with preparation and readiness for growth.

**Ongoing Member Tally**



**CURRENT ORGANISATIONAL CHART**

**INDENTIFIED GAPS AND ISSUES WITH NEAS RESOURCES**

* Board
  + There are three elected directors and three independent directors with a Chair and Deputy Chair (unofficial). There is no representation of education agents, service organisations or teachers / academic managers. If these cohorts are to be made full members as proposed in the Business Case for NEAS Professional, then ideally there should be representation at the board level.
  + There is no formal succession plan or contingency for absence of Chair. If this is to be the Deputy Chair, then this would need to be formalised.
  + The Finance Audit and Investment Committee is proposed to be held independently to the Board meetings, but to include an additional member from the Board and to be held alongside Board Meetings, so other Board members can attend (key recommendation from most recent FAIC meeting in Sep 2021).
* Core Staff
  + Four key staff currently manage the operations of the organisation. CEO (Patrick Pheasant), Operations Manager (Daniel Yuen), Communications Officer (Jacky Ronan) and Member Services Officer (Cameron Heath).
  + This structure is currently designed in a quadrant approach, whereby Operations Manager and Member Services Officer generally back up one another and CEO and Communications Officer back up one another, with all four team members having delegations and specific roles and duties. It is recommended this move in the short term to a more formalised triad approach, where Operations Manager, Communications Office and Member Services Officer have specific responsibilities but be trained to cover for each other for all core business. The CEO will support where necessary and allocate more time to strategy, advocacy and member retention.
  + It is recommended to appoint an Education Manager from 1 January 2022 to support ongoing content and program creation, all professional development activities, management of individual database, administrative and quality control over the badging, micro-credentialing and award of the Master Practitioner program and related pre-requisite programs. This role will alleviate some of the key operational responsibilities currently undertaken by the CEO and the Operations Manager and also act as a second back up for the CEO (currently the Operations Manager is the 2IC).
* NEAS Tech Stack Audit
  + The review of the NEAS Tech Stack ([see Appendix A](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TxZ6jlYy2H9ZuGVv2PThJAG6Tihb3g05/view?usp=sharing)) and specifically the risk associated the NEAS Legacy CRM and the cost to implement a full technology solution to managing NEAS data and CRM has revealed a heavy reliance on the Member Services Officer for transfer of data between all the NEAS systems. Further issues highlighted from the report include:
    - The need for better processes between systems, automating processes and data-syncing wherever possible, reducing manual efforts in maintaining the NEAS database.
    - The NEAS manual billing process. This represents a reasonable operational risk to the business. NEAS Xero / HubSpot / CRM platforms are not synced, the data is not consistent across platforms and the organisation has no ﬁrm source of truth.
  + Three phases were proposed in the audit to rectify these issues:
    - Phase 1: Replacing NEAS CRM with HubSpot ($40K not currently budgeted in FY22)
    - Phase 2: Integrations & Automation ($50K-$60K not budgeted but could be completed in FY23/FY24).
    - Phase 3: Improving Processes with HubSpot ($10K not budgeted but could be completed in FY23/24)
  + It is recommended that an internal review first be undertaken to see what recommendations from the external audit can be undertaken by current NEAS Staff and Contractors prior to 31 December 2021 to (a) better align Xero (invoicing) and HubSpot and (b) export data from the NEAS legacy CRM to import into HubSpot.
  + It is recommended that NEAS initially invest in more people, rather than more technology.
    - It is recommended that a part-time administrative assisted be recruited and appointed from 10 January 2022 and trained to undertake data entry and clean up, allowing for 20% release of the Member Services Officer to undertake HubSpot Training and upskilling.
    - It is recommended that a Business Systems Manager be recruited and appointed from 1 July 2022 to internally manage the NEAS tech stack including HubSpot as its CRM, Xero (financial reporting and invoicing), Word Press (website), LearnDash (LMS), Campaign Monitor (newsletters), Jotform (forms, surveys and health checks), Zoom (phone, meetings, webinars), Microsoft 365 (emailing and software), Google Suite (internal files including client QA reporting).

**PROPOSED ORGANISATIONAL CHART BY END OF 2022**