



*Association for Achievement and Improvement through
Assessment*

Leading in learning through Assessment

President's Report for the Annual General Meeting, Thursday 1st October 2020

As it is of the utmost importance to all our members, may I begin by saying that I hope everyone is safe and in good health.

This year will be remembered for any number of reasons, many of which are less than positive – the additional workload imposed by remote learning, challenges with technologies, anxieties about the future, schools expanding their roles in support of their communities and more 3 point turns in the government's policies than a driving instructor supervises. All of these have been recognised as impacting negatively on the wellbeing of everyone involved in education, adults and children alike.

Executive members have not been immune from these effects and, as with schools and LAs, peer and school support has been important. This can be summed up by the phrase 'together while apart'. Since the sad but inevitable cancellation of the 2020 conference at the beginning of the year, the Executive has been active in a number of ways, all of which had to be facilitated by email and Zoom of course. Many of these are ongoing, additional to the Executive's more usual work and will be operational for some considerable time. They include an in-depth evaluation of AAIA and its fitness for purpose and the development of an action plan to address urgent issues. I am grateful to our Secretary, Pauline Cue, who has outlined some of these in her report.

As you are probably aware, there have been repeated but unsuccessful pleas to the membership over the years for 'fresh blood' on the Executive. The situation is now at crisis point as officers need to retire at the end of next year and, currently there are only two potential replacements. I need hardly add that without a functioning Executive, there can be no AAIA at least as it is currently constituted. If members wish the organisation to continue, then volunteers simply must step forward. Full support will be given to ease recruits into their role and this could be a 'job share' or held on a temporary basis if needs be. I cannot stress strongly enough that **the future of AAIA lies in the hands of the membership and without members' direct support it cannot survive in its present form.** Never in its 31 year history has it been more in need of members' professional skills and their personal backing.

I would urge anyone who can help in any way with finance, membership management, website development etc. and/or is able to put together material that could be published on the website to assist the development of assessment for learning in schools or LAs to contact me or any member of the Executive. Financial support to assist with exploring an Executive role, shadowing an Executive member or compiling material will be available.

The outlook may be bleak but it does not affect the Executive's promise to members to mount a conference in 2021, Covid 19 permitting. To that end the Conference Team began planning in July. With the effects of the virus on schools and LAs very much centre stage

currently, they have the difficult task of ensuring that the programme for 2021 addresses the assessment – related priorities that schools and LAs will be facing in a year's time. A draft programme will be published in due course and tickets will be on sale in January 2021 for the event at the **Highcliff Marriott Hotel, Bournemouth from Thursday 7th October to Saturday 9th October 2021**. I hope to welcome many members to this event and share with delegates the pleasure of hearing inspirational speakers, gleaning practical ideas and making the most of the networking opportunities that every AAIA conference offers.

Liz Depper, President

September 2020