

**MINUTES OF THE TWELFTH MEETING OF THE
GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND
HELD ON THURSDAY 10TH MARCH 2005,
AT MALONE HOUSE, BELFAST**

Present:

Mr Ivan Arbuthnot	Mr Paddy McAllister
Dr Leslie Caul	Mr Dominic McElholm
Mr John Colgan	Mr Ray McGuigan
Mr Malachy Doherty	Mrs Sally McKee
Mrs Frances Donnelly	Ms Aedín ní Ghadhra
Mr Eddie Ferguson	Mr Alistair Orr
Ms Maria Graham	Mrs Thea Patton
Mrs Teresa Graham	Dr Derek Poots
Mr Patrick Kinney	Mr Peter Scott
Mr Tony Lappin	Father John Walsh

In Attendance:

- Mr Eddie McArdle (Registrar)
- Mr Barney Ball (Policy & Registration Manager)
- Mr Gerard Devlin (Senior Education Officer)
- Mrs Yvonne McCool (Corporate Services Manager)
- Ms Geraldine Garnett-Frizelle (Minute Secretary)

Apologies:

Mrs Jeannette Chapman	Dr Marie Murphy
Ms Monica Cummings	Mr David Oldfield
Mrs Mary Elizabeth Devine	Mr Philip Sheerin
Mr Richard Egan	Mr Gordon Topping
Mr Alan Longman	Mrs Grace Trimble
Mrs La'Verne Montgomery	

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted.

2. Council Minutes (GTC/05/Min11)

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the last meeting, (proposed by Mr Dominic McElholm and seconded by Mrs Teresa Graham).

3. Matters Arising

GTCNI Reviews of Teacher Competences & CPD – Draft Final Report (GTC111/05/P1)

The Registrar informed members that, following the last meeting of Council, the report had been submitted to the Department of Education for their consideration.

4. Chair's Business

The Chair informed members that he, together with two officers and representatives of the Department of Education for Northern Ireland, had recently attended the Launch of the Teaching Council in the Republic of Ireland.

5. Officers' Business

The Registrar informed members that an election would be held at the next meeting of the Audit Committee for the position of Chair and Vice-Chair.

He updated members on the work that had been undertaken on Data Protection and Freedom of Information.

6. Annual Business Plan 2005 – 2006 (GTC12/05/P1)

The Registrar presented this paper to members. He drew their attention to particular sections for comment:

Objective 1

Target 1.1 – ensure the establishment of a coherent framework for initial and ongoing professional development.

The Department of Education had indicated that they would be publishing a composite report of all the commissioned reviews, including the contributions of the Council on Teacher Competences and CPD, towards the end of the summer, and it was hoped that a Strategic Group could be set up soon after this.

Target 1.3 – develop a positive image of the profession.

The Registrar informed members that due to the financial uncertainties earlier in the year, the issue of the Annual Lecture had not progressed. However, term talk had been issued and the next edition was already in the planning stage. It was hoped that the summer issue would be a themed issue and officers were planning to have a guest editor.

Target 3.2 – establish and maintain a register of teachers.

The Registration Manager informed members that some questions regarding the accuracy of the initial data supplied remained, but that both the Registration Team and the Department were working towards further data cleansing.

Target 4.1 – optimise the use of human and financial resources through careful planning, monitoring, financial control and policy development

The Registrar informed members that work was underway on the development of both the 5 year Capital Plan and the 5 year Maintenance Plan.

Members of the Policy Committee expressed a concern that more time be given to discussing some of the issues raised through Committees, and the Registrar agreed to take the Business Plan back to the next meeting of the Policy Committee for further consideration.

7. Annual Estimates of Expenditure 2005 – 2006 (GTC12/05/P2)

The Corporate Services Manager presented this paper to members. She explained that the estimates of expenditure contained within this document had been based on the 2004/05 outturn figures. The projected income is based on a fee being collected from 25,000 teachers, with the fee set at £44 per teacher. It was hoped there might be a contingency fund available from the Department.

The Corporate Services Manager indicated the basis for cost projections in respect of a variety of budgets.

8. Registration Fee (GTC12/05/P3)

The Registration Manager presented this paper to members. He informed them that, although the processes for handling of fee allowance payments and the deduction at source were the Department's responsibility, it was important, from the Council's perspective that these worked well. There was still some uncertainty over the exact number of teachers from whom a fee could be collected, but it was estimated that it would be 25,000. The Department confirmed the process for the collection of the fee from teachers' salaries. This would involve a non-superannuable addition to salary and a net pay deduction – not attracting tax or insurance, resulting in no actual alteration to net pay. He further explained that the deduction at source of the fee would apply to those teachers paid by the Department of Education and the Voluntary Grammar schools. A further 3 thousand teachers on the register would be directly invoiced for the fee. The fee deduction is scheduled to take place in May. Members asked for clarification on future fee reimbursement and whether or not there was a definite end point after which teachers would no longer receive the fee allowance payment. The Registrar informed members that the payment of an allowance was not linked to a specific period of time.

9. IT Security Policy (GTC12/05/P4)

The Corporate Services Manager presented this paper to members. She informed them that, the Security, E-mail and Internet policies have been revised to encompass the new systems which had been developed. Members were advised that written procedures for all work to be undertaken by officers of Council are being drawn up for contingency purposes. The Corporate Services Manager also explained that a Business Continuity Plan was being developed and would be presented to members when completed.

10. Consultation on New Admissions Arrangements for Post Primary Schools (GTC12/05/P5)

The Senior Education Officer presented this paper to members. He explained that the draft response represented exploratory thoughts on this consultation, but that officers felt that the Council was being asked to comment on arrangements for post-primary schools, when it was not yet clear, following the Costello report, what situation would pertain in relation to post-primary education in Northern Ireland in the future.

Members discussed the document at some length, but also felt that there were too many unknown factors which would need to be clarified before Council would be in a position to make an informed comment on the proposed new arrangements. They also expressed concern

that, although the Minister for Education had publicly committed Northern Ireland to the establishment of Specialist Schools, there was no mention of them in this consultation.

Of particular concern to member was the issue of profiling. Members asked that this paper be taken back to the Policy Committee for further discussion and the Registrar agreed that he would contact CCEA and invite them to send a representative to the next meeting of the Policy Committee to talk to members about the current CCEA proposals re profiles.

11. Committee Minutes

Audit Committee (AC/05/Min6)

The minutes were presented to Council as an accurate record of the Audit Committee meeting by the Committee Chair.

General Purposes and Finance Committee (GP&F/05/Min12)

The minutes were presented to Council as an accurate record of the General Purpose and Finance Committee meeting by the Committee Chair.

Policy Committee (PC/05/Min13)

The Chair of the Policy Committee reported that members had made enquiries regarding ownership of the Teacher Competences and CPD review and had asked Officers to clarify this with the Department of Education. Officers will report back to the next meeting of the Policy Committee. The Registrar informed members that, following the recent meeting with the Permanent Secretary, Mr McGinn, his belief was that whilst the document itself could not currently be disseminated, the ideas contained within it can. Members also asked about the projected publication date of the Review and the Registrar said that it should be published by September.

Registration Committee (RC/05/Min8)

The Chair of the Registration Committee informed members that the Registration Committee was not yet in a position to bring anything before Council regarding Disciplinary Procedures and Rules, but that it was hoped that the Disciplinary Sub-Committee would meet shortly to discuss these issues.

12. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

13. Venue, Date and Time for Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Council will take place on Friday, 17th June 2005.

Signature.....

Date.....