

**MINUTES OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE  
GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND  
THE STORMONT HOTEL, BELFAST  
TUESDAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2002**

**Present:**

Mr Ivan Arbuthnot	Mr Dominic McElholm
Mrs Jeannette Chapman	Mr Ray McGuigan
Mr John Colgan	Mr Ian McInnes
Ms Monica Cummings	Mrs Sally McKee
Mrs Mary E Devine	Mr Paddy McAllister
Mrs Frances Donnelly	Dr Marie Murphy
Mr Richard Egan	Ms Aedin Ní Ghadhra
Mr Eddie Ferguson	Mr David Oldfield
Mrs Teresa Graham	Mr Alistair Orr
Dr Desmond Hamilton	Mrs Thea Patton
Mr Patrick Kinney	Rev Dr Derek Poots
Mr Tony Lappin	Mr Philip Sheerin
Mr Alan Longman	Mr Gordon Topping
Very Rev John Walsh	

Mr Ron Armstrong (Department of Education Assessor)  
Mr Vivian McIver (Department of Education Assessor)

**In Attendance:** Mr Eddie McArdle (Registrar)  
Ms Beth McMaw (Minute Secretary)  
Mr Paul Sloan - Note-taker (Department of Education)

**Apologies:** Ms Marie Graham  
Prof. John Gardner  
Dr. Bob Rodgers  
Mr Peter Scott  
Mrs La'Verne Montgomery

## **1. Welcome and Introduction**

- 1.1 In advance of the election for a Chairperson, the Council's Registrar, Mr E McArdle, assumed the Chair and informed members that following the adoption of Standing Orders for GTCNI, members could proceed to the election of a Chairperson. The Registrar then welcomed members to the inaugural meeting and outlined briefly his hopes for GTCNI.
- 1.2 The Registrar noted that whilst the minute taker for the meeting would be Ms Beth McMaw, however, given that this was the Council's first meeting, he suggested that there was merit in having another note-taker for this meeting

only. The Registrar asked the Council's approval for Mr Paul Sloan of the Department of Education to operate in this capacity which was duly granted.

## **2. Standing Orders**

- 2.1 The Registrar introduced this item and indicated that in drawing up this preliminary draft he had drawn on comparable documents from GTC Wales/Scotland and a range of Non-Departmental Public bodies.
- 2.2 In the ensuing discussion, concern was expressed in regard to the dissemination of papers. The Registrar indicated that this was due to circumstances beyond control, namely, the scheduling of the meeting to facilitate the Minister, the absence of staff within GTCNI and the fact that the Registrar had been committed to meetings in Scotland and England in regard to the procurement of a "managed registration" service.
- 2.3 Following general discussion, the members reviewed the Draft Standing Orders in detail and outlined inclusions and amendments to be incorporated in a revised Standing Orders. The existing Standing Orders were then adopted on an interim basis to facilitate further business. The revised Standing Orders to feature as a substantive item at the next meeting of the Council.
- 2.4 It was agreed that the Standing Orders would be subject to periodic review.
- 2.5 The Department undertook to provide clarification as to the legal status of the Council in respect to "Section 75" obligations.

## **3. Election of Chairperson**

- 3.1 The Registrar introduced this item and noted that there was a degree of urgency with the matter, given the difficulties arising in respect of NILGOS registration requirements.
- 3.2 Discussion ensued as to:
  - a) the timing of the process;
  - b) the knowledge base of members vis-a-vis possible candidates;
  - c) the election mechanism.
- 3.3 Following detailed discussions it was agreed that the Chair should be assumed by Mr Ray McGuigan who was duly elected. Mr McGuigan indicated that this was a temporary arrangement and the Council agreed to initiate an election process using STV.
- 3.4 The Registrar undertook to expedite the arrangements for same with a view to finalising the election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson as soon as possible.

## **4. Standing Committee Structures**

- 4.1 The Registrar outlined the proposed structures and indicated that they mirrored those of sister GTC's.
- 4.2 Discussion ensued as to the nature of the Committees, i.e. roles and responsibilities, and the frequency and timing of meetings.
- 4.3 The Registrar indicated that in the initial stages much of the business of the Committees will be routine as they establish core business and modus operandi.
- 4.4 With regard to the scheduling of meetings, concerns were expressed as to the use of "core days". The Registrar undertook to review the schedule which he indicated was not a final listing.

## **5. Nursery Representation**

- 5.1 The Registrar introduced this topic and outlined for members the reasons for the vacancy.
- 5.2 Discussion ensued as to how the vacancy might be filled, with two options being considered, namely:
  - 1. Co-option
  - 2. Direct election using STV.

The Department undertook to clarify the position in regard to co-option under Article 9 of the GTC Regulations.

- 5.3 It was further agreed that the Nursery Sector would be trawled with a view to establish the potential interest in candidature. The Department would help expedite this. Elections would ensue thereafter.

## **6. Council Staffing**

- 6.1 The Registrar outlined the proposals in respect of senior posts. It was agreed that these posts should be filled as soon as possible.
- 6.2 The Registrar indicated that in the absence of agreed GTCNI appointment procedures the process would be expedited using "best practice" as employed within other Public bodies, the Registrar and Chairperson to convene the panel. Further, the Registrar would update the Terms and Conditions documentation with the aid of Mr McInnes.

**7. Continuing Professional Development Proposal**

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

**8. Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2003.

**Signature..... Date.....**